



# 101BP Board Operations

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## LEGAL REFERENCE:

- *Education Act*
- *Education Act Board Procedures Regulation*

## CROSS REFERENCE:

- [101.01BP Board Operations - Role of the Superintendent](#)
  - [101.02BP Board Operations - Board Roles](#)
  - [101.03BP Board Operations - Trustee Code of Conduct](#)
  - Alberta School Boards' Association Trusteeship documents
  - [101BP Exhibit 1](#) Summary of Public Disclosure of Travel & Expenses by Trustees, Superintendent & Secretary Treasurer of Buffalo Trail Public Schools
  - [102BP Board Committees](#)
  - [103BP Policy Development](#)
  - [104BP Ward Establishment](#)
  - [502.5AP Delegations to the Board](#)
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## 1. Meetings:

The Board desires that board meetings be informal enough to encourage discussion and to promote collaboration. If procedural questions arise, *Robert's Rules of Order* shall prevail.

Public attendance is welcomed at organizational meetings, regular meetings, and special meetings in person at the division office in Wainwright. Should the meeting be held electronically, a streaming link will be made available.

### 1.1 Organizational Meeting

1.1.1 An Organizational Meeting of the Board shall be held annually.

- 1.1.2 In a general election year, the organizational meeting will be held on the fourth Wednesday of October. The Superintendent or designate will give notice of the Organizational Meeting to each trustee as if it were a special meeting.
- 1.1.3 Each trustee will take the oath/affirmation of office immediately following the call to order of the Organizational Meeting after a general election. Special provisions will be made for a trustee taking office following a by-election.
- 1.1.4 The Superintendent or designate shall act as Chair of the meeting for the purpose of the election of the Board Chair and Vice Chair. Upon election of the Vice Chair, the Board Chair shall preside over the remainder of the organizational meeting.
- 1.1.5 The Organizational Meeting shall, in addition include, but not be restricted to, the following:
- Establish a schedule (date, time, and place) for regular meetings, and any additional required meetings;
  - Create such standing or ad hoc committees of the Board as are deemed appropriate, and appoint members;
  - Elect Board representatives to the various Boards or committees of organizations or agencies where the Board has regular representation, as appropriate;
  - Review Board member conflict of interest stipulations and determine any disclosure of information requirements;
  - Determine Trustee compensation and-reimbursements.
  - Approve signing authority.

## 1.2 Regular Meetings

- 1.2.1 Regular Board meetings shall be as established at the annual Organizational Meeting.
- All meetings will ordinarily be held in the Division Board office in Wainwright.
  - The Board may, by resolution, alter the schedule in such manner as it deems appropriate.
  - All trustees shall notify the Board Chair or the Superintendent if they are unable to attend a Board meeting.
  - All trustees who are absent from three consecutive regular meetings shall:
    - Obtain authorization by resolution of the Board to do so; or
    - Provide to the Board Chair or Superintendent evidence of illness in the form of a medical certificate respecting the period of absence.
  - Failure to attend may result in disqualification.
  - If both the Chair or Vice-Chair through illness or other cause are unable to perform the duties of the office or are absent, the Board shall appoint from among its members an Acting Chair, who on being so appointed has all the powers and shall perform all the duties of the Chair during the Chair's and Vice-Chair's inability to act or absence.

## 1.3 Electronic Attendance at Meetings

Electronic attendance is to be utilized in extenuating circumstances and not to be considered the standard for attendance.

- 1.3.1 At the discretion of the Board Chair a situation may arise that requires a meeting to be moved to electronic means, including in-camera sessions.
- 1.3.2 At times it is recognized that a Board Member may need to attend any Committee of the Whole, Regular, Organizational or Special Meetings of the Board by electronic means and the member would be deemed present.
- 1.3.3 The following will direct the electronic attendance of meetings;
- All electronic attendance will be pre-arranged with the Board Chair or Committee Chair a minimum of one working day in advance of the meeting in order to prepare technology;

- All electronic attendance will be using a BTPS owned device using a BTPS email address;
- Board members attending by electronic means will ensure they are in a secure and confidential location;
- All Board members attending by electronic means will be actively engaged with cameras on, when possible, participating in discussions and engaging in called votes for motions;

1.3.4 To ensure the confidentiality of the meeting;

- Board members attending by electronic means will ensure they are in a secure location to which the public does not have access;
- In-camera portion(s) of a regular board meeting will be electronic with cameras open and turned on. In-camera agenda and/or materials will be shared electronically by a screen simultaneously;

1.3.5 Unless there are extenuating circumstances: i.e. medical or inclement weather, the respective Trustee must notify the Board Chair or designate in advance of their need to attend more than 2 consecutive meetings via electronic means, as per 1.3.2.

### 1.3 Special Meetings

Occasionally, unanticipated, or emergent issues require immediate Board attention and/or action. Special meetings of the Board may be held from time to time as provided for under Section 3 of the *Education Act* Board Procedures Regulation. These are public meetings.

The nature of the business to be transacted must be clearly specified in the notice of the meeting. Unless all trustees are present at the special meeting, no other business may be transacted. Items can be added to the agenda only by the unanimous consent of the entire Board.

### 1.4 In-Camera Sessions

The Board may, by resolution, schedule an in-camera meeting at a time or place agreeable to the Board or recess a meeting in progress for the purpose of meeting in-camera. Such resolutions shall be recorded in the minutes of the Board and shall specify those individuals eligible to attend in addition to trustees and the Superintendent.

1.4.1 The reason for the In-Camera session shall be limited to discussion pertaining to the following stated reasons:

- Individual students;
- Individual employees;
- Collective bargaining issues;
- Litigation issues;
- Acquisition/disposal of property; and
- Other topics that a majority of the trustees present feel, in the public interest, should be held in private.

1.4.2 Such sessions shall be closed to the public and press. The Board shall only discuss the matter that gave rise to the closed meeting. Board members and other persons attending the session shall maintain confidentiality and not disclose the substance of deliberations at such sessions.

The only resolution during an in-camera session is a motion to re-convene the Board in an open, public meeting.

### 1.5 Committee of the Whole Meetings

In order to provide the Board with information required to make informed decisions and to allow time for clarification, Committee of the Whole meetings will be held prior to Board meetings. No debate of opposing arguments will be put forward at Committee of the Whole meetings.

### 1.6 Other committee meetings may make recommendations to the Board for action.

## 1.7 Agenda for Regular Meetings

1.7.1 The Board Chair is responsible for preparing an agenda for Board meetings in consultation with the Vice-Chair and the Superintendent.

1.7.2 The order of business at a regular meeting shall generally be as follows:

- Call to Order
- Approval of Agenda
- Approval of Minutes
  - Minutes of Regular Board Meetings
  - Minutes of Special Board Meetings
- Petitions & Delegations
- In-Camera Session (if required)
- Superintendent's Reports
- Committee Reports
- Business Arising out of Minutes
- New Business
- Trustee Reports
- Information Items
- Communication Strategy
- Items for Next Meeting
- Adjournment

1.7.3 Items scheduled for a specific time shall be clearly identified on the agenda.

1.7.4 The agenda will be supported by copies of letters, reports, contracts, and other materials as are pertinent to the business that will come before the Board and will be of value to the Board in the performance of its duties.

1.7.5 Items may be placed on the agenda in one of the following ways:

- By notifying the Board Chair, Superintendent or Board Secretary at least fourteen days prior to the Board meeting.
- By notice of motion at the previous meeting of the Board.
- As a request from a committee of the Board.
- Emergent issues that require Board action may arise after the agenda has been prepared. The Board Chair, at the beginning of the meeting, shall ask for additions to and/or deletions from the agenda prior to agenda approval. Changes to the agenda may be made by a majority of those present.

1.7.6 The agenda package, containing the agenda and such supporting information as is available, will be provided to each trustee at least four (4) days prior to the date of the meeting by electronic means. Trustees may request a paper copy, which will be provided as soon as possible. Subsequently, additional information may be sent electronically or will be available in paper format at the meeting.

1.7.7 The list of agenda items shall be posted on the Division website and be available in the Division office. Any elector may inspect the agenda and request a copy. Copies of the agenda will be sent electronically to all schools for distribution to staff, school councils and media. The Board will follow the order of business set by the agenda unless the order is altered, or new items are added by agreement of the Board.

1.7.8 During the course of the Board meeting, the majority of trustees present may amend the agenda and place items before the Board for discussion. The Board may take action on such items.

## 1.8 Minutes for Regular or Special Meetings

1.8.1 The Board shall maintain and preserve by means of minutes a record of its proceedings and resolutions.

1.8.2 The minutes shall record:

- Date, time and place of meeting;
- Type of meeting;
- Name of presiding Chair;
- Names of those trustees and administration in attendance;
- Approval of preceding minutes;
- Whenever possible, a brief summary of the circumstances which gave rise to the matter being debated by the Board;
- All motions placed before the Board are to be entered in full, including the Board's decision on the motion;
- Names of persons making the motion;
- Points of order and appeals;
- Appointments;
- Summarized reports of committees;
- Recording of the vote on a motion (when requested pursuant to *the Education Act Board Procedures Regulation Section 8 (3)*); and
- Trustee declaration pursuant to the *Education Act Section 88*.

1.8.3 The minutes shall:

- Be prepared as directed by the Superintendent;
- Be prepared in a manner that respects and adheres to the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*;
- Be reviewed by the Superintendent prior to submission to the Board;
- Be considered an unofficial record of proceedings until such time as adopted by a resolution of the Board;
- Upon adoption by the Board, be deemed to be the official and sole record of the Board's business.

1.8.4 The Superintendent or designate shall ensure, upon acceptance by the Board, that appropriate signatures are affixed to the concluding page of the minutes.

1.8.5 The Superintendent or designate shall establish and maintain a file of all Board minutes.

Upon adoption by the Board, the official minutes shall be distributed to central office personnel, schools, and school councils and open to public scrutiny through posting on the division website or availability at the Board office.

## 1.9 Motions

### 1.9.1 Notice of Motion

1.9.1.1 The notice of motion serves the purpose of officially putting an item on the agenda of the next or future regular meeting and gives notice to all trustees of the item to be discussed. A notice of motion is not debatable and may not be voted on.

1.9.1.2 A trustee may present a notice of motion for consideration at the next regular meeting of the Board or may specify another meeting date. A trustee may also provide the Superintendent with a written notice of motion and ask that it be placed on the agenda of the next regular meeting and read at the meeting. The trustee will need not be present during the reading of the motion, however if the trustee is not present, a seconder is required at the meeting at which the notice is given, otherwise the item will be dropped.

### 1.9.2 Discussion on Motions

1.9.2.1 The custom of addressing comments to the Board Chair is to be followed by all persons in attendance.

1.9.2.2 A Board motion or a recommendation from administration must generally be placed before the Board prior to any discussion taking place on an issue. Once a motion is before the Board and until it is passed or defeated, all speakers shall confine their remarks to the motion or to the information pertinent to the motion.

#### 1.9.3 Speaking to the Motion

1.9.3.1 The mover of a motion first and every trustee shall have an opportunity to speak to the motion before any trustee is allowed to speak a second time.

1.9.3.2 The mover of the motion is permitted to close debate on the motion.

1.9.3.3 As a general guide, a trustee should not speak longer than five minutes on any motion.

1.9.3.4 The Board Chair has the responsibility to limit the discussion by a trustee when such a discussion is repetitive or digresses from the topic at hand, or where discussion takes place prior to the acceptance of a motion.

1.9.3.5 No one shall interrupt a speaker, unless it is to ask for important clarification of the speaker's remarks, and any such interruption shall not be permitted without permission of the Board Chair.

1.9.3.6 Should a trustee arrive at the meeting after a motion has been made and prior to taking a vote, the trustee may request further discussion prior to the vote. The Board Chair shall rule on further discussion.

#### 1.9.4 Reading of the Motion

A trustee may require the motion under discussion to be read or displayed electronically at any time during the debate.

#### 1.9.5 Required Votes

The Board Chair, and all trustees present, unless excused by resolution of the Board or by the provisions of the *Education Act or Education Act Board Procedures Regulation*, shall vote on each question. Each question shall be decided by a majority of the votes of those trustees present. A simple majority of a quorum of the Board will decide in favour of the question. In the case of an equality of votes, the question is defeated. A vote on a question shall be taken by open vote, expressed by show of hands, except the vote to elect the Board Chair or Vice-Chair, which is by secret ballot, unless there is unanimous agreement among the trustees to use a show of hands.

#### 1.9.6 Recorded Vote

A recorded vote, if requested by a trustee;

1.9.6.1 Prior to the vote, the name of each trustee present and whether the trustee voted for or against the motion;

1.9.6.2 Following the vote, only the name of the trustee requesting the vote, and whether that trustee voted for or against the motion or abstained under the provisions of the *Education Act Board Procedures Regulation Section 8 (3)*.

## 2. Delegations to Board Meetings:

The Board of Trustees values the views of all stakeholders relating to educational matters and seeks to provide opportunities to hear from the public in various ways. In support, this procedure is to clarify BTPS' policy related to delegations to the board during monthly official business meetings. (See 502.5AP Delegations to the Board)

## 3. Recording Devices:

The Board expects that anyone wanting to use a recording device at a public Board meeting shall obtain prior approval of the Chair.

## 4. Trustee Compensation:

Trustees who incur expenses and expend time in fulfilling their obligations shall be reimbursed upon submission of a properly completed expense form with supporting receipts attached.

4.1 The Board will establish amounts and guidelines for the payment of honoraria and expenses.

4.2 Trustees fulfilling their authorized duties will be expected to do so in a cost-effective manner.

4.3 Per diems will be provided for attendance at:

- Regular and special meetings of the Board
- Committee meetings
- ASBA meetings
- PSBAA meetings
- School council meetings
- School activities where attendance is in the capacity as trustee
- Meetings, professional development, and other activities approved by the Board or Chair.
- Informal, unsolicited school or office visits and individual meetings with members of the staff or public will not be compensated.

4.4 Per Diem:

4.4.1 Per Diem will be based on travel time plus meeting time. If that elapsed time is four hours or less, it constitutes a half day; over four hours constitutes a full day; and over eight hours constitutes a day and a half.

4.4.2 Per Diem is \$225.00. Per Diem will be reviewed annually at the Organizational Meeting.

4.4.3 For basic jurisdiction-related business beyond scheduled meetings, seminars, and conferences:

- The Board Chair shall receive four (4) basic days for jurisdictional business,
- The Vice Chair shall receive three (3) basic days,
- Trustees shall receive two (2) basic days at the per diem rate.

4.5 Expenses will be reimbursed at rates established annually for:

4.5.1 Actual distance traveled in the trustee's vehicle; or actual voucher expenses incurred for travel by means other than the use of the trustee's vehicle; and

4.5.2 Actual voucher expenses for accommodations and parking

4.5.2.1 Expenses: Expense reimbursement outside the Division is \$60.00 per day.

Expense reimbursement inside the Division is \$30 per day or \$15.00 per half day.

4.5.2.2 Mileage: In-town transportation will be \$10.00. Effective November 1, 2023, the mileage rate is set as \$0.55 per kilometer and will be reviewed annually at the time of the Organizational Meeting.

4.5.2.3 Communication Expense Reimbursement: \$100.00 per month per trustee, to be reviewed annually.

4.5.2.4 Benefits: Benefits as per Alberta Health Care and ASEBP will be available to trustees.

4.5.2.5 Alcohol: Alcohol is not a reimbursable expense.

4.6 Claims for per diems and expense reimbursement shall be approved by the Board Chair or Vice-Chair and submitted to the Secretary-Treasurer as soon as possible.

## 5. Professional Development:

- It is both an expectation and responsibility of Board members to exemplify lifelong learning and to be aware of the latest developments in Board Governance and Education.

- The Board supports attendance at learning opportunities provided by Alberta Education, Alberta School Boards Association, and the Public School Boards' Association of Alberta. Trustees are encouraged to attend professional learning opportunities made available in the province of Alberta.
- All requests for professional learning are subject to Board approval.
- Trustees are eligible to attend two major national or international conferences during an electoral term, but no more than one in a given year.
- Trustees will be provided with a list of potential conferences at the August committee meeting.
- For budgeting purposes, Trustees will inform the Board of their intention and seek approval to attend a major conference at the annual Organizational Meeting.
- Trustees are expected to submit a report following attendance at a conference.

## **6. Use of Electronic Devices:**

- It is expected that when technology is being used, it is in a purposeful manner for Board business.
- Members will maintain the decorum of the meeting by using electronic devices without distracting others.

## **7. Use of School Division Property and Resources:**

- 7.1 Members shall use School Division property, equipment, services, supplies, and staff time only for the performance of their duties as a Member, subject to the following limited exceptions:
- 7.1.2 Board property, equipment, service, supplies, and staff time that is available to the general public may be used by a Member for personal use upon the same terms and conditions as members of the general public, including booking and payment of any applicable fees or charges;
- 7.1.3 Electronic communication devices, including but not limited to desktop computers, laptops, tablets, and smartphones, which are supplied by the School Division to a Member, may be used by the Member for personal use, subject to the terms and conditions described below.
- 7.2 Electronic communication devices provided by the School Division are the property of the School Division, and shall, at all times, be treated as the School Division's property. Members are hereby notified that they are to have no expectation of privacy in the use of these devices and further that:
- 7.2.1 All emails or messages sent or received on School Division devices are subject to the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*;
- 7.2.2 All files stored on School Division devices, all use of internal email and all use of the Internet through the School Division's firewall may be inspected, traced, or logged by the School Division;
- 7.2.3 In the event of a complaint pursuant to the Code of Conduct, the Board may require that any or all of the electronic communication devices provided by the School Division to Members may be confiscated and inspected as part of the investigation including downloading information which is considered relevant to the investigation. All email messages or Internet connections may be retrieved.

## **8. Trustee Pecuniary Interest and Conflict of Interest:**

- 8.1 The Board member is directly responsible to the electorate of the Division and to the Board. Upon election to office the Board members must accept a position of public trust and are expected to conduct themselves in a manner which will enhance the trust accorded them, and through them, the trust accorded to the Board.
- 8.2 The Board expects that:
- Each Board member will be knowledgeable of Sections 85 – 96 of the *Education Act*.
  - The Board member will accept sole responsibility for declaring a conflict of interest.



- Members shall disclose the nature of any pecuniary interest and abstain and absent themselves from discussion or voting on the matter in question.
- Members are to be free from undue influence and not act or appear to act in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, family, friends or associates, business or otherwise.
- Where a member(s) has a loyalty to more than one board and when the actions of one board affect the operation of the other board, it is that member's responsibility to abstain from involvement in discussion and voting on the matter in question.
- No Member shall, in the exercise of an official power, duty or function, give preferential treatment to any individual or organization if a reasonably well-informed person would conclude that the preferential treatment was advancing a private interest.
- No Member shall initiate, endorse, support, or otherwise participate in any proceeding being brought against the Board or Buffalo Trail Public Schools.
- Each Board member shall file a disclosure of information as required Section 86 of the *Education Act*.
- With respect to either a pecuniary interest or conflict of interest the Board member will make such a declaration prior to discussion of the subject matter the Board member deems to be a potential conflict of interest and comply with Section 88 of the *Education Act*.
- The Board Secretary will record in the minutes:
  - the Board member's declaration; and
  - the Board member's abstention from the discussion, the vote, or absence from the room.

## 9. Communications:

The Board believes open, honest, and consistent communication with stakeholders is important to accurately inform and increase awareness of public education.

- As official spokesperson for the Board of Trustees, the Board Chair or designate shall release all formal statements concerning Board activities or issues.
- Individual members may be requested to provide information informally. Statements must be consistent with the position of the Board.