



## **Board Operations**

The Board of Trustees is committed to representing the best interests of the entire community that comprises Pine Creek School Division through effective governance.

### **Board Organization**

It is the Board as a body that speaks for the Division and Board practice recognizes that it is the Board, not individual Board members, who have authority. There are roles and responsibilities for each Board member derived from the roles and responsibilities of the Board as a whole group. Therefore, an individual Trustee has authority only when the Board, by vote, has delegated authority to that Trustee.

### **Role of the Chairperson**

In accordance with *The Public Schools Act (PSA)*, the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson are elected by the Trustees at the inaugural meeting to lead the processes of the Board. The Board recognizes that the Chairperson is not the head of the division. The Chairperson is typically the official spokesperson of the Board, signs all legal documents on behalf of the Board and chairs most of the meetings of the Board. The Chair is an ex officio member of all committees of the Board. The Vice-Chairperson assumes the role of the Chairperson in the event of the Chairperson's absence.

### **Principles Surrounding Committee Structure**

Committees of the Board are established to enhance and complement the work of governance. Standing committees and ad hoc committees of the Board are established by the Board for a specified purpose. Committee responsibilities and processes are outlined in terms of reference which are approved by the Board. Committees make recommendations to the Board for approval and may not cause any action to be taken on any matter unless such authority is specified in the terms of reference.

Board committees are different from administrative committees. Board committees do not assist or advise staff. Information is requested from staff through Senior Administration or their delegates. In keeping with the broad focus of the Board, Board committees do not normally have direct dealings with staff operations.

Board committee membership is decided upon at the annual inaugural meeting. The recommended Committee membership list is submitted for approval at the first regular meeting of the Board following the inaugural meeting.



### *Committee of the Whole*

The Committee of the Whole is used for two purposes. One purpose is to allow the Board to deal with confidential or sensitive matters in camera. (In camera proceedings are addressed later in this policy.) Secondly, unless a standing or ad hoc committee is struck by the board to deal with matters in a particular area, all other areas are dealt with within the Committee of the Whole. Such areas include, but are not limited to:

- Finance and Audit; and
- Education Programming.

### *Standing Committees*

The Board has the following standing committees:

- Policy;
- Strategic Planning;
- Negotiations
- Liaison; and
- Community Engagement.

The terms for reference for each committee are in Appendix A

### *Ad Hoc Committees*

The Board may create ad hoc committees as required. An ad hoc committee deals only with specific matters that have been referred to it by the Board and exists only until the matter is addressed to the satisfaction of the Board. Ad hoc committees are responsible for action and policy recommendations to the Board on all matters referred to them. Terms of reference are developed and approved by the Board. Unless otherwise noted, ad hoc committees operate under the same protocols as other all committees (see Appendix A).

## **Appointment of Senior Administration**

The Board appoints, sets remuneration and defines duties for Senior Administration positions.

## **Meetings**

In accordance with the *PSA* Board procedures are outlined in the Division by-laws.



### *Inaugural Meeting*

The *PSA* requires the first meeting of the Board take place in September except in an election year, when the inaugural meeting of the Board takes place within 14 days after Trustee general elections.

### *Regular Meetings*

The Secretary-Treasurer maintains an annual work plan to ensure the Board addresses all the necessary areas of business the Trustees must monitor, attend to and pursue in their governance role. The Secretary-Treasurer uses this work plan to draft an agenda for each regular meeting. The proposed agenda is presented for adoption at the beginning of each regular Board meeting.

Meetings are generally conducted using the parliamentary procedures of *Roberts Rules of Order*. Senior Administration or their delegates, attend all meetings of the Board and Board Committees, except where their own tenure, salary and efficiency are under consideration.

### *Special Meetings*

Special Board meetings may be convened as outlined in the by-laws. Special meetings are not usually convened without Senior Administration present except where their own tenure, salary and efficiency are under consideration.

### *In Camera Meetings*

The Board believes that the public trust is preserved through the conduct of Board and committee meetings which are open to the public. The Board recognizes, however, that occasions may arise from time to time where it is in the best public interest to discuss confidential or sensitive matters in closed meetings. As allowed by the *PSA*, such confidential or sensitive matters are discussed in camera by the Committee of the Whole. Examples include negotiations, personnel matters, litigation, student files, land acquisitions/disposal, significant financial transactions, security and disciplinary matters. All discussion is confidential.

### *Electronic Meetings*

A Trustee may participate in a meeting using electronic means by making a request to the Chair of the Board via the Secretary-Treasurer. In accordance with the *PSA*, every Trustee must be physically present at a regular meeting at least once every three months. Electronic meetings are conducted in accordance with *PSA Regulation 201/2004*.



### *Public Participation at Board Meetings*

The Board invites public participation at public Board meetings and provides an opportunity for the public to ask questions at the end of the meeting.

### *Delegations*

A delegation wishing to address the Board at a meeting must first advise the Secretary-Treasurer. The Secretary-Treasurer advises the delegation of guidelines as outlined in Board by-laws.

The official position of the Board is communicated to the delegation by letter, following the next Board meeting. If the Board requires more time to consider the matter, the delegation advised of the expected timeline.

### **Commitment to the Decisions of the Board**

As members of a democratically-elected body established to provide governance and leadership, it is important and necessary for individual Trustees to be active participants at Board meetings, and to encourage and represent a diversity of viewpoints. Individual trustees are ultimately accountable to the public to bring forward the voice and views of the people within the jurisdiction of the Division. Demonstrating a commitment to the decisions of the Board does not demand unanimous decisions, rather Trustees:

- Support Board decisions that have been voted upon and are reflected in the minutes of the Board meetings as policies or resolutions. Once the Board has made a decision, each Trustee will respect the decision of the Board and be prepared to explain the decision of the Board to the public.
- Never attempt to exercise individual authority over the organization or Senior Administration. While the Board expects individual Trustees to be given common courtesy, it does not require Senior Administration or any other staff member to heed an individual Trustee's opinions or instructions. Individual Trustees have no authority over staff and staff operations.
- As members of a governance board, focus on what needs to be accomplished for effective governance while at the Board table.
- State the applicable policy when issues are raised by community members, staff or Trustees. Board discussions center on whether the concerns justify changes to the policy or whether monitoring of the policy is necessary, not on the details of an issue.



- Refer community members to the correct channels if necessary and inform Senior Management of any substantial issues.
- Recognize that the Chairperson is the official spokesperson of the Board, unless that responsibility has been delegated by the Board, by resolution.

### **Community Engagement**

The Board recognizes the importance of community input to Board decisions, policy and planning and establishes formal connections with the community, government and other relevant agencies and organizations to support the achievement of Board goals for the Division. To this end, the Board shares information, proactively identifies issues of importance, works collaboratively and builds relationships.

From time to time, the Division enters into formal partnerships with other organizations within the community. In such situations, the Board may appoint a Trustee to represent the Board on related community committees. Such representation is determined at each inaugural meeting and reconsidered annually. Trustees appointed to community committees are expected to report relevant information at the next regular Board meeting.

### **Liaison with School Boards Associations**

The Pine Creek School Division Board is a member of the Manitoba School Boards Association and pays such fees as are levied by that association unless otherwise decided by a majority vote.