



# 101.02BP Board Operations – Board Roles

**APPROVED:** 2023.01.17  
**AMENDED:** 2022.12.13  
**REVIEWED:** 2023.01.10

---

## LEGAL REFERENCE:

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

## CROSS REFERENCE:

- 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
- 

## 1. Role of the Board:

1.1 Buffalo Trail Public Schools' Board of Trustees is responsible for the development of goals and policies to maximize student learning within the Division, in keeping with the requirements of government legislation, the values of the electorate and fiscal responsibility.

### 1.2 Specific Areas of Responsibility:

#### 1.2.1 Accountability to Community

1.2.1.1 Identify student needs and develop mechanisms to address those needs.

1.2.1.2 Make decisions that reflect community values and represent the interests of the entire Division.

1.2.1.3 Establish processes and provide opportunities for community input.

1.2.1.4 Report Division results to the community annually.

1.2.1.5 Develop an appeals process as required by statute and/or Board policy.

1.2.1.6 Model a culture of caring, integrity and commitment.

#### 1.2.2 Accountability to Provincial Government

1.2.2.1 Act in accordance with all statutory requirements to implement provincial and educational standards and policies.

- 1.2.2.2 Perform Board functions required by governing legislation and existing Board policy.
- 1.2.3 Four-Year Education Plan
  - 1.2.3.1 Provide overall direction for the Division by establishing mission, vision, priorities and guiding principles.
  - 1.2.3.2 The Board will engage stakeholders to gather input for the development of the four-year plan.
  - 1.2.3.3 Identify Board priorities at the outset of the annual Four-Year Education Planning process.
  - 1.2.3.4 Monitor progress toward the achievement of student outcomes and other desired results.
  - 1.2.3.5 Through the Annual Education Results Report, annually evaluate the effectiveness of the Division in achieving established goals and desired results.
  - 1.2.3.6 The Board will annually engage with stakeholders to share results of education strategies.
- 1.2.4 Policy
  - 1.2.4.1 Establish the goals and objectives of the Division.
  - 1.2.4.2 Determine how the Board is to function.
  - 1.2.4.3 Develop policy as required to ensure smooth and effective operations of the jurisdiction.
  - 1.2.4.4 Monitor policy impact to determine if policy is producing the desired results.
  - 1.2.4.5 Delegate authority to the Superintendent and define commensurate responsibilities.
  - 1.2.4.6 Provide direction in those areas over which the Board wishes to retain authority.
- 1.2.5 Superintendent / Board Relations
  - 1.2.5.1 Provide the Superintendent with clear corporate direction.
  - 1.2.5.2 Delegate, in writing, administrative authority and identify responsibility subject to provisions and restrictions in the Education Act.
  - 1.2.5.3 Respect and support the authority of the Superintendent to carry out executive action.
  - 1.2.5.4 Annually evaluate the Superintendent.
  - 1.2.5.5 Annually review compensation of the Superintendent.
  - 1.2.5.6 Provide for Superintendent succession planning.
- 1.2.6 Political Advocacy
  - 1.2.6.1 Advocate at all levels of government for the best interest of students, staff and division on an ongoing basis.
- 1.2.7 Board Development
  - 1.2.7.1 Annually evaluate Board effectiveness.
  - 1.2.7.2 Develop a plan for Board/trustee development.
  - 1.2.7.3 Develop an annual work plan outlining its key activities along with appropriate timelines.

### 1.2.8 Fiscal Accountability

- 1.2.8.1 Approve budget annually and ensure resources are allocated to achieve desired results.
- 1.2.8.2 Approve annually the Three-Year Capital Plan.
- 1.2.8.3 Approve Audited Financial Statement and ensure quality indicators are met.
- 1.2.8.4 Monitor fiscal management of the Division.
- 1.2.8.5 Ratify Memoranda of Agreement with bargaining units.
- 1.2.8.6 Approve the transfer of funds to capital reserves.
- 1.2.8.7 Approve all contracts for goods and services within the Division as per Board policy.
- 1.2.8.8 Provide a Summary of Public Disclosure of Travel and Expenses for trustees, the Superintendent and the Secretary Treasurer within Buffalo Trail Public Schools.

### 1.3 Selected Responsibilities:

#### 1.3.1 The Board shall;

- 1.3.1.1 Select a Superintendent
- 1.3.1.2 Approve the appointment of a Secretary and a Treasurer, or one person to act as Secretary-Treasurer.
- 1.3.1.3 Acquire and dispose of land and buildings.
- 1.3.1.4 Approve alternative programs.
- 1.3.1.5 Approve religious instruction in any school.
- 1.3.1.6 Approve locally developed/acquired junior and senior high school complementary courses.
- 1.3.1.7 Approve international travel study trips.
- 1.3.1.8 Name schools and other Board-owned facilities.
- 1.3.1.9 Approve Division school-year calendars.
- 1.3.1.10 Establish school attendance areas and transportation service areas.
- 1.3.1.11 Establish entrance ages for student admission.
- 1.3.1.12 Approve leaves of absence with pay for employees other than those specified in the Collective Agreement.
- 1.3.1.13 Provide for recognition of students, staff and community.
- 1.3.1.14 Make a recommendation to the Minister for the dissolution of a School Council.
- 1.3.1.15 Hear appeals of the Superintendent's decision on policy appeal matters within the Education Act.
- 1.3.1.16 Approve school fees.
- 1.3.1.17 Approve specific initiatives to be funded from the Board's Projects fund.
- 1.3.1.18 Approve facility Joint Use Agreements when required.
- 1.3.1.19 Approve new leases that require placement or modification of facilities by outside agencies.
- 1.3.1.20 Name trustee(s) to serve on committees where Board representation is deemed appropriate by the Board.
- 1.3.1.21 Provide experiences for all trustees that may support succession planning for all Board roles where possible.

## **2. Role of the Trustee:**

The Board of Trustees is a corporation. The decisions of the Board in a properly constituted meeting are those of the corporation. A trustee who is given corporate authority to act on behalf of the Board may carry out duties individually but only as an agent of the Board. In such cases, the actions of the trustee are those of the Board, which is then responsible for them. A trustee acting individually has only the authority and status of any other citizen of the Division.

- 2.1 The role of the trustee is to contribute to the Board as it carries out its mandate in order to achieve its mission and goals.
- 2.2 The oath of office taken by each trustee when s/he assumes office binds that person to work diligently and faithfully in the cause of public education.
- 2.3 The Board will offer an orientation program following an election that provides information on:
  - 2.3.1 Role of the trustee and the Board;
  - 2.3.2 Organizational structures and procedures of the Division;
  - 2.3.3 Board policy, agendas, minutes and calendars;
  - 2.3.4 Existing Division initiatives, annual reports, budgets, financial statements and long-range plans;
  - 2.3.5 Division programs and services;
  - 2.3.6 Board's function as an appeal body;
  - 2.3.7 Statutory and regulatory requirements, including responsibilities with regard to conflict of interest.
  - 2.3.8 Any other documentation necessary to Board operations.
- 2.4 The Board Chair and Superintendent are responsible for ensuring the development and implementation of the Board's orientation program for newly elected trustees.
- 2.5 Incumbent trustees are encouraged to help newly elected trustees become informed about the history, functions, policies, procedures, and issues.

## **3. Role of Individual Trustees:**

- 3.1 Attend Board meetings; participate in, and contribute to, the decisions of the Board in order to provide the best solutions possible for education within the Division.
- 3.2 Become familiar with, and adhere to, the Trustee Code of Conduct.
- 3.3 Report any violation of the Trustee Code of Conduct to the Board-as per the Code of Conduct.
- 3.4 Become familiar with Division policies and procedures, meeting agendas, and reports in order to participate in Board business.
- 3.5 Refer queries, or issues and problems not covered by Board policy, to the Board for corporate discussion and decision.
- 3.6 Refer administrative matters to the Superintendent. The trustee, upon receiving a complaint from a parent or community member about operations, will refer the parent or community member back to the school or department and will inform the Superintendent of this action.
- 3.7 Keep the Superintendent and the Board informed in a timely manner of all matters coming to his/her attention that might affect the Division.
- 3.8 Assist the Superintendent with counsel and advice, providing the benefit of the trustee's judgment, experience, and familiarity with the community.
- 3.9 Respect the decisions of the Board.
- 3.10 Refrain from making any statements that may give the impression that such a statement reflects the corporate opinion of the Board when it does not.
- 3.11 When delegated responsibility, will exercise such authority in a responsible and effective way.

- 3.12 Participate, subject to Board approval, in Board/trustee development sessions so that the quality of leadership and service in the Division can be enhanced.
- 3.13 Stay current with respect to provincial, national, and international educational issues and trends.
- 3.14 Report information and ideas gained at the Board meeting immediately following a trustee development activity.
- 3.15 Strive to develop a positive and respectful learning and working culture both within the Board and the Division.
- 3.16 Attend Division or school community functions when possible.

#### **4. Role of the Board Chair:**

The Board, at the Organizational Meeting and thereafter at any time as determined by the Board, shall elect one of its members to serve as Board Chair, to hold office at the pleasure of the Board. The Board entrusts to its Chair primary responsibility for providing leadership and guidance.

The Board delegates to the Chair the following powers and duties:

- 4.1 Preside over all Board meetings and ensure that such meetings are conducted in accordance with the *Education Act* and the policies and procedures as established by the Board.
- 4.2 Prior to each Board meeting, confer with the Vice-Chair and the Superintendent on the items to be included on the agenda, the order of these items, and become thoroughly familiar with them.
- 4.3 Perform the following duties during Board meetings:
  - 4.3.1 Maintain the order and proper conduct and decorum of the meeting so that motions may be formally debated.
  - 4.3.2 Ensure that all issues before the Board are well-stated and clearly expressed.
  - 4.3.3 Display firmness, courtesy, tact, impartiality, and willingness to give everyone an opportunity to speak on the subject under consideration.
  - 4.3.4 Ensure that debate is relevant. The Chair, in keeping with his/her responsibility to ensure that debate must be relevant to the question, shall, when s/he is of the opinion that the discussion is not relevant to the question, remind members that they must speak to the question.
  - 4.3.5 Decide questions of order and procedure, subject to an appeal to the rest of the Board. The Chair may speak to points of order in preference to other members, and shall decide questions of order, subject to an appeal to the Board by any member duly moved.
  - 4.3.6 Submit motions or other proposals to the final decision of the meeting by a formal show of hands.
  - 4.3.7 Ensure that each trustee present votes on all issues before the Board.
  - 4.3.8 Extend hospitality to trustees, officials of the Board, the press, and members of the public.
  - 4.3.9 Keep informed of significant developments within the Division.
  - 4.3.10 Be responsible for ensuring the development and implementation of the Board's orientation program for newly elected trustees.
  - 4.3.11 Keep the Superintendent and the Board informed in a timely manner of all matters coming to his/her attention that might affect the Division.
  - 4.3.12 Be in regular contact with the Superintendent and Vice Chair to maintain a working knowledge of current issues and events.
  - 4.3.13 Convey directly to the Superintendent such concerns as are related to him/her by trustees, parents, or students that may affect the administration of the Division.
  - 4.3.14 Provide counsel to the Superintendent, when requested to do so.
  - 4.3.15 Bring to the Board all matters requiring a corporate decision of the Board.
  - 4.3.16 Act as the chief spokesperson for the Board except for those instances where the Board has delegated this role to another individual or group.

- 4.3.17 Act as ex-officio member of all committees appointed by the Board.
- 4.3.18 Act as a signing officer for the Division.
- 4.3.19 Represent the Board, or arrange alternative representation, at official meetings or other public functions.
- 4.3.20 Address inappropriate behaviour on the part of a trustee.
- 4.3.21 Ensure that the Board engages in annual assessments of its effectiveness as a Board.

## **5. Role of the Vice-Chair:**

The Vice-Chair shall be elected by the Board at its Organizational Meeting, and thereafter at any time determined by the Board, to hold office during the pleasure of the Board.

### **Specific Responsibilities;**

- 5.1 The Vice-Chair shall act on behalf of the Board Chair, in the Chair's absence and shall have all the duties and responsibilities of the Board Chair.
- 5.2 The Vice-Chair shall assist the Board Chair in ensuring that the Board operates in accordance with its own policies and procedures and in providing leadership and guidance to the Board.
- 5.3 Prior to each Board meeting, the Vice-Chair shall confer with the Board Chair and the Superintendent on items to be included on the agenda, the order of these items and become thoroughly familiar with them.
- 5.4 The Vice-Chair may be assigned other duties and responsibilities by the Board Chair.
- 5.5 The Vice-Chair shall be an alternate signing authority for the Division.

## **6. Board Self Evaluation:**

Annually, the Board will undergo a self-evaluation process that will coincide with the Superintendent/CEO evaluation process.

The components of the Board self-evaluation may include:

- 6.1 Review of Board Role Performance
- 6.2 Monitoring Interpersonal Working Relationships
- 6.3 Monitoring Board Representation/Communication
- 6.4 Review of Annual Work Plan Completion
- 6.5 Monitoring Board-Superintendent Relations
- 6.6 Review of Board Motions
- 6.7 Review of Board Governance Policies
- 6.8 Creating a Positive Path Forward