

<b>ROLE OF THE BOARD</b>	No.: A-2
	Effective: June 23/26 Revised: Reviewed: May 21/26; June 23/26

## SCHOOL BOARD POLICY

The Board of Education of School District No. 62 (Sooke) (the “Board”) is responsible for the development of goals and policies to guide the provision of educational services to students attending schools and program within School District No. 62 (Sooke) (the “District”), in a manner consistent with the *School Act* and other legislation.

### The Board

Specific areas of Board responsibility include:

1. Accountability to Comply with Law
  - a. The Board must act in accordance with all legal requirements established by statute, regulation or order binding upon it, including but not limited to the *School Act*, School Regulation, and Ministerial Orders.
2. Accountability to and Engagement with Community
  - a. The Board shall:
    - i. Establish processes and provide opportunities for community engagement;
    - ii. Ensure Board decisions are responsive to the needs of the student population and community;
    - iii. Comply with all reporting requirements and communicate District results to the community at least annually;
    - iv. Develop procedures for and hear appeals as required by statute and/or Board policy;
    - v. Model a culture of respect and integrity; and
    - vi. Maintain collaborative relationships with all levels of government, rightsholders, students, parents and guardians and employees.
3. Strategic Planning
  - a. The Board shall:
    - i. Provide overall direction for the District by establishing the mission, vision, values, guiding principles and strategic direction;
    - ii. Approve the District's strategic plan;
    - iii. Set District goals and monitor key results and progress contained in the Framework for Enhancing Student Learning (educational goals), and other results in the strategic plan; and
    - iv. Approve other plans as required by the *School Act*.
4. Fiscal Responsibility
  - a. The Board shall:
    - i. Approve the budget guiding principles and decision-making criteria;
    - ii. Approve the engagement process and timeline for budget deliberations;
    - iii. Approve the annual budget, amended budget and three-year financial plan;
    - iv. Monitor financial performance and fiscal management;
    - v. Appoint external auditor and review financial results and related reports;
    - vi. Approve the annual five-year capital plan and Long-Range Facilities Plan;
    - vii. Approve the acquisition and disposition of District land and buildings;
    - viii. Provide direction regarding the mandate for local employee negotiations;
    - ix. Ratify memoranda of agreement with employee bargaining units;

- x. Review and monitor all accumulated surpluses and reserve funds to ensure financial health and stability; and
- xi. Regularly monitor the Enterprise Risk Management Plan (ERM).

## 5. Policy Development

### a. The Board shall:

- i. Create or amend Board policies as appropriate;
- ii. Identify the reason and/or intended purpose before creating a new policy;
- iii. Approve all policy statements;
- iv. Regularly review and evaluate policies; and
- v. Delegate authority to the Superintendent with respect to the creation, amendment or deletion of operational procedures, regulations or guidelines not specifically reserved to the Board.

## 6. Board/Superintendent Relations

### a. The Board shall:

- i. Select the Superintendent;
- ii. Provide the Superintendent with clear corporate direction;
- iii. Delegate in writing, administrative authority and identify responsibilities subject to the provisions and restrictions in provincial legislation and regulations;
- iv. Evaluate the Superintendent and review compensation in accordance with the Superintendent's contract;
- v. Respect the delegated authority of the Superintendent to carry out executive action and support those actions which are exercised within the delegated discretionary powers of the position;
- vi. Ensure that all Board members interact and treat the Superintendent in a respectful manner; and
- vii. Upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the appointment of the Secretary-Treasurer.

## 7. Political Advocacy and Influence

### a. The Board shall:

- i. Identify priorities for advocacy, including key messaging and focus;
- ii. Recognize the municipal/civic responsibilities of local governments and focus district partnerships on student success and positive District business outcomes; and
- iii. Advocate for the District's strategic priorities through appropriate channels, including the British Columbia School Trustees Association, British Columbia Public Sector Employees' Association and directly with the Provincial Government.

## 8. Board Development

### a. The Board shall:

- i. Undertake a self-evaluation at least once during each Board term, and more frequently as the Board considers appropriate. The purpose of the self-evaluation is to support continuous improvement of the Board's governance practices. The Board shall determine the timing and process of self-evaluation for each cycle. Responsibility for coordinating the self-evaluation rests with the Board Chair or Vice Chair; and
- ii. Engage in professional development to ensure accountability, transparency and effective leadership.

## 9. Additional Responsibilities

### The Board shall:

- i. Approve annual local school calendars in accordance with legislation;
- ii. Approve Board/Authority Authorized Courses;
- iii. Approve the naming and renaming of District facilities, land and portions thereof;
- iv. Approve school catchment areas;
- v. Approve the "Board Annual Work Plan";

- vi. Work alongside the Indigenous Education Council to achieve the purposes established by legislation;
- vii. Hear appeals on the reconsideration of resource materials which are challenged; and
- viii. Approve District partnerships and associated contracts.

### **Trustees' Duties and Responsibilities**

Trustees are members of a corporate board responsible for governing the District to improve student achievement. Trustees shall act in good faith, comply with the *School Act* and discharge their duties with care, skill, diligence, and integrity, in accordance with their oath of office.

The *School Act* gives no individual authority to Trustees. As members of the corporate board, Trustees are accountable to the public for the collective decisions of the Board and for the delivery and quality of educational services.

The Board is a single entity and a representative assembly, and no individual Trustee has any right of access to, or of agency, within or on behalf of the organization or operations of the District except as the result of a prior and express decision of the Board. Specifically, individual Trustees have no right to access information kept by the District regarding individual students and/or their parents or guardians, staff, volunteers, suppliers or contractors, or the public.

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 District. A Trustee may not act as representing the Board or District, except as the result of a specific delegation of that representative function.

### **Trustee Orientation**

The Board believes that an orientation program is necessary for effective governance.

As a result of elections, the Board may experience changes in membership. To ensure continuity and facilitate smooth transition from one Board to the next following an election, Trustees must be adequately briefed concerning existing Board policy and practice, statutory requirements, initiatives and long-range plans.

The District will provide an orientation program for newly elected Trustees to support effective governance and continuity of the District. Trustees are expected to participate in orientation sessions and review the materials provided.

The orientation program will provide information on:

1. Role of the Trustees, role of the Board, and role of management;
2. Organizational structures and procedures of the District;
3. Board policies, agenda setting process, meeting proceedings and decorum;
4. Duties with respect to preventing and addressing bullying and harassment, including that of employees, District Leadership team members, and other Trustees;
5. Existing District strategic plan, annual reports, budgets, budget process, financial statements, capital plans, key initiatives and other long-range plan;
6. District programs and services;
7. Board's function as an appeal body; and
8. Statutory and regulatory requirements, including responsibilities regarding conflict of interest, freedom of information and protection of privacy, and human rights.

The Board Chairperson, the Superintendent and the Secretary-Treasurer are responsible for ensuring the development and implementation of the District's orientation program for Trustees.

Incumbent Trustees are encouraged to help newly elected Trustees become informed about the history, functions, policies and procedures of the District and Board.

The Board governs the District on a continuing basis. Changes in Board membership do not interrupt the authority or strategic direction of the Board. All duly adopted policies, bylaws, and resolutions remain in effect unless amended or repealed by formal Board action. The Board is committed to continuity in long-term initiatives and strategic priorities across election cycles.

### **Trustee Responsibilities**

1. Specific responsibilities of individual Trustees include the responsibility to:
  - a. Become familiar with District and Board policies and procedures, meeting agendas, and reports to effectively participate in Board business.
  - b. Refer governance queries, issues and problems not covered by Board policy to the Board for consideration.
  - c. Refer queries, issues or problems raised by a parent or community member about a school or school policy to the Superintendent or designate.
  - d. Keep the Board and the Superintendent informed of all matters that might affect the District.
  - e. Provide the Superintendent with counsel and advice, giving the benefit of the Trustee's judgment, experience and familiarity with the community.
  - f. Regularly attend meetings of the Board and committee meetings as assigned by the chairperson; participate in, and contribute to, the decisions of the Board in order to provide the best possible solutions for the education of children within the District.
  - g. Support the decisions of the Board.
  - h. When delegated responsibility, exercise such authority within the defined limits in a responsible and effective way.
  - i. Participate in Board/Trustee development sessions as described in the Annual Board Work Plan so that the quality of leadership and service in the District can be enhanced.
  - j. Share the materials and ideas gained from a Trustee professional development activity with fellow Trustees at the next available opportunity.
  - k. Stay current with respect to provincial, national and international educational issues and trends.
  - l. Strive to develop a positive and respectful learning and working culture both within the Board and the District.
  - m. Become familiar with, and adhere to, the *School Act* and all relevant legislation.
  - n. Become familiar with, and adhere to, the Trustee Code of Conduct.
  - o. Report any violations of the Trustee Code of Conduct to the Board during a closed session.

### **References**

*School Act*, R.S.B.C., 1996, c. 412

*Local Government Act*, R.S.B.C., 2015, c. 1.