



Policy #7: Board Operations

The Board of Trustees is committed to representing the interests of the Sunrise School Division through effective governance.

7.1 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 individual Board members derived from the roles and responsibilities of the Board as a whole group.

7.2 Role of the Chair

The Chairperson is elected by the Trustees 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.

7.3 Principles Surrounding Committee Structure

Committees of the Board are established to enhance and complement the work of governance; they report to the Board and are different from administrative committees. Board Committees do not assist or advise staff and shall only request information from staff through the Superintendent. Standing Committees and Ad Hoc Committees of the Board are established by the Board for a specified purpose. In keeping with the broad focus of the Board, Board committees will not normally have direct dealings with staff operations.

7.4 Standing Committees

The Board elects committee responsibilities to individual trustees in the following areas:

- **Audit/Finance Committee**
- **Negotiation Committees**
- **Policy Committee**



7.5 Ad Hoc Committees

The Board may create ad hoc committees as required. Ad hoc committees deal only with matters that have been referred to it by the Board. Ad hoc committees are responsible for action and policy recommendations to the Board on all matters referred to them.

7.6 Public Participation at Board Meetings

The Board invites public participation at public Board meetings. The agenda for Board meetings will include the opportunity for the public to ask questions. Questions (not statements) from the public will be accepted on any topic. Every effort will be made to get an answer in a timely manner. Questions will be taken one at a time, until the allotted question period time is reached.

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

See Section V of the Board of Trustees Operational By-law for more details.

7.7 Meetings

i. Re-organizational Meeting

It is the role of the Board to commence the first meeting of the Board in accordance with [The Public Schools Act](#). The first meeting of the Board shall take place in September. In a Trustee election year, the first meeting of the Board shall take place within 14 days after Trustee general elections.

ii. Regular Meetings

The agenda reflects the business the Board must monitor, attend to and pursue in its governance role. A proposed agenda is presented at the beginning of each regular Board meeting, which shall take place on the first and third Tuesday of each month, except July, August and December. The parliamentary authority used for Sunrise School Division meetings is Roberts Rules of Order. Regular meetings should not normally be convened without the Superintendent and Secretary-Treasurer present.

iii. **Special Meetings**

Special Board meetings may be convened at any time by the Chair with the consent of a quorum of the Trustees, as per provincial legislation. Special meetings are not usually convened without the Superintendent and Secretary-Treasurer present.

iv. **In-camera Meetings**

In-camera meetings are held in accordance with the [PSA](#) of Manitoba. However, at times, it is appropriate for the Board to meet behind closed doors when the Board must deal with sensitive matters such as negotiations, personnel matters, litigation, student files, land acquisitions/disposal, large financial transactions, security and disciplinary matters. All discussion is, and shall be, confidential.

v. **Emergency Meetings**

The school board may hold a meeting at any time and any place to deal with an emergency situation if all the trustees consent thereto and are present thereat. [PSA30\(1\)](#)

vi. **Delegations to the Board Meeting**

Delegations from the public are welcome to present to the Board at a public Board Meeting. The requesting delegation shall submit their request in writing as per guidelines provided by the Secretary-Treasurer and outlined in the Board by-laws. Any associated documentation and background information will be considered by the Board. The Board will not offer their decision to the delegation at the time of the presentation.

7.8 Commitment to Respect the Decisions of the Board

According to provincially-legislated authority, the Board is a corporate body established to provide governance and leadership for the Sunrise School Division. As members of a democratically-elected body, 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 Sunrise School Division. This *Commitment to Respect the Decisions of the Board* does not demand unanimous decisions, but does require that all Trustees shall respect the decisions of the Board. According to this *Commitment to Respect the Decisions of the Board*, Trustees:

- i. Respect Board decisions. Trustees are expected to contribute and to influence the decisions of the Board. Board decisions are only those 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.

- ii. Never attempt to exercise individual authority over the organization or the Superintendent. While the Board expects individual Trustees to be given common courtesy, it does not require the Superintendent or any other staff member to heed any individual Trustee's opinions or instructions. Individual Trustees have no authority over staff and staff operations.
- iii. As members of a governance board, will focus on what needs to be accomplished for effective governance while at the Board table.
- iv. State the applicable policy when issues are raised by community members, staff or Trustees. Board discussion shall center on whether the concerns justify changes to the policy or whether monitoring of the policy is necessary, not on the details of the issue.
- v. Recognize that the Chairperson is the official spokesperson of the Board, unless that responsibility has been delegated by the Board.

7.9 Community Connections

The Board will establish formal connections with the community, with government, and with other relevant agencies and organizations to support the achievement of Board goals for the school division. The Board will share information, proactively identify issues of importance, work collaboratively and build relationships.

7.10 Liaison with School Board Associations

The Sunrise School Division Board will remain a member of the Manitoba School Boards Association and pay such fees as are levied by that association unless otherwise decided by a majority vote.

Reference:

[Introduction](#)

[Policy 1 – Vision, Values and Mission](#)

[Policy 2 – Board Governance Model & Process](#)

[Policy 8 – Board Member Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest](#)

[Policy 15 – Community Engagement](#)

Legal Reference: [The Public Schools Act](#)

Date Adopted: February 2017

Date Amended: June 6, 2023