



**Date:** September 24, 2025 **Agenda Item:** 7.4

**To:** Board of Trustees

**From:** Shawna Warren, Superintendent

**Originator(s):** Committee of the Whole  
Shawna Warren, Superintendent

**Subject:** **Policy 2: Role of the Board**

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**Recommended Motion:**

THAT the Board of Trustees approve the recommended revisions to Board *Policy 2: Role of the Board* as presented at the September 24, 2025, Public Board meeting.

**Background:**

Board Policy 2: Role of the Board defines the responsibilities of the Board of Trustees under the Education Act, establishing the governance framework for vision, direction, oversight and accountability in Sturgeon Public Schools. The policy outlines the Board's core duties, including ensuring access to appropriate programming, managing resources responsibly, engaging stakeholders and supporting the Superintendent in leading day-to-day operations. It also affirms the Board's commitment to safe, caring, respectful and inclusive learning environments in line with legislation and Division values.

Grounded in section 33 of the Education Act, Policy 2 clarifies the Board's role in programming, fiscal stewardship, community engagement, advocacy and strategic planning while distinguishing governance from administration. The most recent review has further strengthened the policy by expanding Trustee responsibilities to include reviewing Board representation at external events and strategic partnerships, providing orientation following municipal elections, supporting ongoing professional development to enhance governance capacity and annually reviewing memberships in local, provincial and national organizations. The Board has also formalized a policy review cycle, ensuring all policies are examined at least once per term.

With Trustee Elections approaching in October 2025, finalizing this policy ensures the incoming Board has a clear, robust framework to guide governance and maintain continuity, leaving the Division well-positioned for continued success.

**Status & Relationship to Superintendent Leadership Quality Standard (SLQS):**

This report aligns with the [SLOS](#) in the following way:

**COMPETENCY:** (1) Building Effective Relationships

**INDICATORS:** d. modeling ethical leadership practices, based on integrity and objectivity;

- e. establishing constructive relationships with students, staff, school councils, parents/guardians, employee organizations, the education ministry and other stakeholder organizations; and
- f. facilitating the meaningful participation of members of the school community and local community in decision-making.

**COMPETENCY:**

**INDICATORS:**

(7) Supporting Effective Governance

- a. establishing and sustaining a productive working relationship with the board, based on mutual trust, respect and integrity;
- f. supporting the board in the fulfilment of its governance functions in the fiduciary, strategic and generative realms;
- g. implementing board policies and supporting the regular review and evaluation of their impact;
- j. building the capacity of the board and staff to predict, communicate and respond to emergent circumstances, including emergency readiness and crisis management, and to political, social, economic, legal and cultural contexts and trends;
- k. supporting the board in its engagement with the school community to develop a vision of a preferred future for student success; and
- l. facilitating ongoing public communication about the board's operations and the achievement of its goals and priorities; and
- m. promoting constructive relations between the board and staff, as well as provincial authorities, post-secondary institutions and education stakeholder organizations.

**Governance Implications:**

**Education Act**

Board responsibilities

33(1) A board, as a partner in education, has the responsibility to

- (a) deliver appropriate education programming to meet the needs of all students enrolled in a school operated by the board and to enable their success,
- (b) be accountable and provide assurances to students, parents, the community and the Minister for student achievement of learning outcomes,
- (c) provide, where appropriate, for the engagement of parents, students, staff and the community, including municipalities and the local business community, in board matters, including the board's plans and the achievement of goals and targets within those plans,
- (d) ensure that each student enrolled in a school operated by the board and each staff member employed by the board is provided with a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging,

- (e) provide a continuum of supports and services to students that is consistent with the principles of inclusive education,
- (f) collaborate with municipalities, other boards and community-based service agencies in order to effectively address the needs of all students and manage the use of public resources,
- (g) collaborate with post-secondary institutions and the community to enable smooth transitions for students from secondary to post-secondary education,
- (h) establish and maintain governance and organizational structures that promote student well-being and success, and monitor and evaluate their effectiveness,
- (i) ensure effective stewardship of the board's resources,
- (j) recruit the superintendent and entrust the day-to-day management of the school division to the staff through the superintendent,
- (k) develop and implement a code of conduct that applies to trustees of the board, including definitions of breaches and sanctions, in accordance with principles set out by the Minister by order,
- (l) comply with all applicable Acts and regulations,
- (m) establish appropriate dispute resolution processes, and
- (n) carry out any other matters that the Minister prescribes.

### Board Procedures Regulation

#### Policies and procedures

##### 4 The board must

- (a) establish policies and procedures governing the conduct of meetings of the board and the administration and business of the board, and
- (b) monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the established policies and procedures on a regular basis.

### Policy 9: Policy Development

The Board believes that the primary means by which it provides governance to Sturgeon Public Schools is through written policies. These policies provide direction for the action of the Board, Superintendent, staff, students, electors and other agencies.

Administration is prepared to respond to questions at the September 24, 2025, Public Board meeting.

### **Attachment(s) and/or link(s):**

1. Policy 2: Role of the Board - Tracked Changes

## **Policy 2: Role of the Board**

### **POLICY**

As elected representatives of the community, the Board of Trustees is held accountable through the Education Act. The Board provides overall direction and leadership to the Division. The Board is a corporate entity and exercises its authority through a democratic process and always models a culture of respect and integrity.

The Government of Alberta has legislated that the Board, as a partner in education, has the following responsibilities:

### **Education Planning and Programming**

The Board shall deliver appropriate education programming to meet the needs of all students enrolled in a school operated by the Board and to enable their success [Education Act s. 33(1)(a)]. Specifically, the Board:

1. Review and approve the vision for the Division.
2. Annually review and approve education goals including the Annual Education Plan.
3. Set governance standards for reviewing and approving educational programming.

### **Assurance and Accountability**

The Board shall be accountable and provide assurances to students, parents, the community and the Minister for student achievement of learning outcomes [Education Act s. 33(1)(b)]. Specifically, the Board:

4. Develops and implements a reporting and accountability system on any matter the Minister prescribes;
5. Disseminates any information, in the reports and accounts produced, under the reporting and accountability system to students, parents, electors and/or the Minister in the manner the Minister prescribes; and
6. Reviews Division performance, on an ongoing basis, and approves the Annual Education Results Report.

### **Stakeholder Engagement and Communication**

The Board shall provide, where appropriate, for the engagement of parents, students, staff and the community, including municipalities and the local business community, in Board matters,

including the Board's plans and the achievement of goals and targets within those plans [Education Act s. 33(1)(c)]. Specifically, the Board:

7. Establish processes to engage the community and stakeholders in a dialogue about Division programs, advocacy initiatives and future planning.
8. Make informed decisions that consider community values and represent the interests of the entire Division.
9. Promote the schools' programs which reflect the needs and desires of the community.
10. Report Division outcomes to the community annually.

### **School Council**

The Board of Trustees believes that school councils provide valuable advisory assistance to the school principal and to the Board [Education Act s.55, the School Councils Regulation, and the Alberta School Councils Resource Guide]. Specifically, the Board:

11. Meet at least annually with the Council of School Councils or School Council Chairs.
12. The Board of Trustees will pay for the annual membership of each school council in the Alberta School Council Association (ASCA) and support the reimbursement of registration fees for the equivalent of one registration fee per school for the Alberta School Councils' Association Conference, as an ongoing sponsorship.
  - School Councils may use the Alberta School Council Engagement (ASCE) Grant to support registration at the ASCA Conference.

### **Safe, Caring, Respectful and Healthy Environments**

The Board shall ensure that each student enrolled in a school operated by the Board and each staff member employed by the Board is provided with a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging [Education Act s. 33(1)(d)]. Specifically, the Board:

13. Maintain a policy respecting the Board's obligation to provide a welcoming, caring, respectful, healthy and safe learning environment that includes a code of conduct.
14. Model a culture of respect and integrity.
15. Develop culturally appropriate protocols to guide the Division.
16. Establish plans for collaborative work between the Division and First Nations.

## Supports and Services

The Board shall provide a continuum of supports and services to students that is consistent with the principles of inclusive education [Education Act s. 33(1)(e)]. Specifically, the Board:

17. Supports the removal of barriers with learning partners and within learning environments; and
18. Develops ongoing relationships with government, school and system leaders, families and community partners to strengthen and renew their understanding, skills and abilities to create flexible and responsive learning environments

## Collaboration

The Board shall collaborate with municipalities, other boards and community-based service agencies in order to effectively address the needs of all students and manage the use of public resources and collaborate with post-secondary institutions and the community to enable smooth transitions for students from secondary to post-secondary education [Education Act s. 33(1)(f)(g)]. Specifically, the Board:

19. Promotes positive community engagement within the Division;
20. Represents the community's needs, hopes and desires for education;
21. Supports the schools' programs, needs and desires to the community;
22. Acts as an advocate for public education and the Division;
23. Identifies issues for advocacy on an ongoing basis;
24. Develops an annual plan for advocacy including focus, key messages, relationships and mechanisms; (Appendix A)
25. Review and determine Board representation at external events and in strategic partnerships; and
- ~~26~~5. Promotes regular meetings and maintains timely, frank and constructive communication with elected officials, service providers, business leaders, thought leaders and all stakeholders to garner support for public education.

## Governance and Organization

The Board shall establish and maintain governance and organizational structures that promote student well-being and success, and monitor and evaluate their effectiveness [Education Act s. 33(1)(h)]. Specifically, the Board:

27. Provide orientation for Trustees following municipal elections;

28. Support ongoing professional development for Trustees to strengthen their governance capacity;

29. Annually review Board membership in local, provincial and national organizations;

30. Develop, approve and monitor the implementation of policies to guide the Division and the Board;

31. Provide direction in those areas over which the Board wishes to retain authority;

32. Monitor the development, revision and implementation of policy;

33. Establish a policy review cycle ensuring all Board policies are reviewed at least once per term;

34. Develop a plan to foster governance excellence in fiduciary, strategic and generative engagement modes;

35. Annually evaluate Board effectiveness in meeting performance indicators and determine a positive path forward; and

36. Develop an Annual Work Plan with timelines.

### **Board/Superintendent Relations**

The Board shall recruit the Superintendent and entrust the day-to-day management of the school division to the staff through the Superintendent [Education Act s. 33(1)(j)]. Specifically, the Board:

37. Select the Superintendent and support succession planning as required;

38. Provide the Superintendent with clear corporate direction;

39. Delegate, in writing, administrative authority and identify responsibility subject to provisions and restrictions in the Education Act;

40. Respect the authority of the Superintendent to carry out executive action and support the Superintendent's actions which are exercised within the delegated discretionary powers of the position;

41. Demonstrate mutual respect, integrity and support, which is then conveyed to the staff and the community;
42. Annually evaluate the Superintendent, in accordance with a pre-established performance appraisal; and
43. Annually review compensation of the Superintendent.

### **Resource Stewardship**

The Board shall ensure effective stewardship of the Board's resources [Education Act s. 33(1)(i)]. Specifically, the Board:

44. Within the context of the strategic plan, approve budget assumptions and establish priorities at the outset of the budget process.
45. Review and approve annual budget and allocation of resources.
46. Approve substantive budget adjustments when necessary.
47. Approve borrowing for capital expenditures within provincial restrictions.
48. Review and approve annually the Three-Year Capital Plan.
49. Receive, review and approve the annual Audited Financial Statements.
50. Acquire and dispose of land and buildings.
51. Approve student fees annually.
52. Set the mandate for provincial bargaining.
53. Ratify Memoranda of Agreement with bargaining units.
54. Approve transfer of funds to/from operating and capital reserves.
55. Approve annually signing authorities for the Division. Approve investment parameters in alignment with the Education Act Regulation.
56. Approve the Superintendent's contract.

### **Delegation**



The Board may delegate any of its powers and responsibilities subject to the provisions and restrictions as outlined in the Education Act.

## **Conduct**

The Board shall develop and implement a code of conduct that applies to trustees of the Board, including definitions of breaches and sanctions, in accordance with principles set out by the Minister by order [Education Act s. 33(1)(k)]. Specifically:

57. Each Trustee shall act ethically and responsibly as outlined in Policies 3 and 4. The Board collectively shall operate with the same high standards, acting always in the best interests of all students and their learning.

58. The Board shall support and hold accountable its individual Trustees and the Superintendent.

59. The Board shall establish with the Superintendent the parameters for their respective roles and not interfere with the performance of the tasks that have been agreed upon as administrative responsibilities.

60. The Board shall establish a Division Code of Conduct, by policy, to apply to all students (Policy 21).

## **Liability**

The Board shall comply with all applicable Acts and regulations [Education Act s. 33(1)(l)]. Specifically, the Board:

61. Acts in accordance with all statutory requirements; and

62. Maintains a Board Policy for whistle-blower protection (Policy 14).

## **Dispute Resolution**

The Board shall establish appropriate dispute resolution processes [Education Act s. 33(1)(m)]. Specifically, the Board:

63. Hears appeals as required by statute; and

64. Maintains a policy for Appeals Regarding Student Matters (Policy 13).

## **Ministerial Direction**

The Board shall carry out any other matters that the Minister prescribes [Education Act s. 33(1)(n)]. Specifically, the Board:

65. Performs Board functions required by governing legislation and Ministerial directives; and

66. Reviews and approves student attendance areas (Policy 12).

## **References:**

### **Policies:**

- 3: Role of the Trustee
- 4: Trustee Code of Conduct
- 10: Board Delegation of Authority
- 11: Superintendent of Schools
- 12: Attendance Areas
- 13: Appeals Regarding Student Matters
- 14: Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblower Protection)
- 21: Student Conduct and Discipline

Appendix A - Advocacy Plan

Administrative Procedure: 211 - School Councils

Education Act: 33, 51, 52, 53, 54, 60, 67, 139, 222

School Councils Regulation 94/2019

School Fees Regulation 95/2019

Superintendent of Schools Regulation 98/2019

Board Procedures Regulation 82/2019

Alberta School Council Resource Guide

## **History**

2019 Jan 30 Initial Approval

2021 Oct 27 Reviewed

2022 Feb 23 Reviewed

2022 Mar 23 Amended

2023 Sep 27 Amended

2024 Apr 24 Amended

2025 Sep 24 Amended