



**Date:** September 24, 2025 **Agenda Item:** 7.5

**To:** Board of Trustees

**From:** Shawna Warren, Superintendent

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

**Subject:** **Policy 3: Role of the Trustee**

---

**Recommended Motion:**

THAT the Board of Trustees approve the recommended revisions to Board *Policy 3: Role of the Trustee* as presented at the September 24, 2025, Public Board meeting.

**Background:**

Board Policy 3: Role of the Trustee defines the ethical, fiduciary and representational responsibilities of individual Trustees. It emphasizes service in the public interest, integrity, accountability and respect, while affirming that the Board acts as a corporate body and Trustees hold no independent authority outside duly constituted Board decisions. Trustees are expected to uphold confidentiality, avoid conflicts of interest and place the Board's interests above personal interests.

The policy outlines expectations for attendance, participation and ongoing professional learning. Trustees must be knowledgeable in the Education Act and Board policies, support corporate decisions, respect the Superintendent's administrative authority and adhere to established communication protocols. Recent revisions strengthen provisions on attendance, complaint handling and public statements, clarify the Board Chair's spokesperson role and reinforce alignment with Administrative Procedure 221.

A new orientation component ensures newly elected and returning Trustees are well-briefed on governance structures, legislative requirements and Board practices. With Trustee Elections in October 2025, approving this policy now provides the incoming Board with clear expectations and a strong framework for ethical, effective governance.

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

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

<b>COMPETENCY:</b>	(1) Building Effective Relationships
<b>INDICATORS:</b>	e. establishing constructive relationships with students, staff, school councils, parents/guardians, employee organizations, the education ministry and other stakeholder organizations; and

**COMPETENCY:  
INDICATORS:**

f. facilitating the meaningful participation of members of the school community and local community in decision-making.

(2) Modeling Commitment to Professional Learning

c. actively seeking out feedback and information from a variety of sources to enhance leadership practice.

**COMPETENCY:  
INDICATORS:**

(6) School Authority Operations and Resources

a. providing direction on fiscal and resource management in accordance with all statutory, regulatory and school authority requirements.

**COMPETENCY:  
INDICATORS:**

(7) Supporting Effective Governance

f. supporting the board in the fulfilment of its governance functions in the fiduciary, strategic and generative realms; and  
l. facilitating ongoing public communication about the board's operations and the achievement of its goals and priorities.

**Governance Implications:**

**Governance Implications:**

[Education Act](#)

Board responsibilities

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

(h) establish and maintain governance and organizational structures that promote student well-being and success, and monitor and evaluate their effectiveness,

Trustee responsibilities

34 A trustee of a board, as a partner in education, has the responsibility to

(a) fulfil the responsibilities of the board as set out in section 33,

(b) be present and participate in meetings of the board and committees of the board,

(c) comply with the board's code of conduct, and

(d) engage parents, students and the community in matters related to education.

[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 3: Role of the Trustee - Tracked Changes

## Policy 3: Role of the Trustee

### POLICY

The Board of Trustees is committed to Public Education and its Trustee members shall conduct themselves ethically and responsibly in carrying out the duties that they have been elected to fulfill. It is expected that all interactions related to the operations of the Board is characterized by mutual respect, which acknowledges the dignity and worth of all individuals.

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.

Trustees have a fiduciary duty to protect the interests of the Division, place the interests of the corporate board above their own, maintain confidentiality and avoid conflicts of interests.

### GUIDELINES

The role of each individual Trustee is to:

1. Become familiar with Division policies and procedures, meeting agendas and reports in order to participate in Board business.

4.2. Represent his or her constituents and consider the interests of all Division stakeholders when making decisions.

2.3. Be familiar with the Education Act and Division policies and procedures.

3.4. Be familiar with and adhere to the Trustee Code of Conduct.

4.5. Stay informed on significant developments in Public Education.

6. Participate in seminars, conferences and conventions so they can enhance the quality of leadership and service they offer the Division.

5.7. Following a Trustee development activity, share materials and ideas gained in written format with fellow Trustees.

8. Participate in, and contribute to, the decisions of the Board in order to provide the best solutions possible for the education of students within the Division.

6.9. Support the corporate decisions of the Board and 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.

7.10. Respect and support the authority of the Superintendent to direct the work of administration and staff.

~~8-11.~~ Observe the Board's rules of order for conduct at Board meetings.

~~9-12.~~ Promote positive relationships between the Board and all Division stakeholders.

~~10-13.~~ Trustees shall not attempt to exercise individual authority over the organization and/or schools; the Superintendent; or any member of the staff. In particular:

- a. Individual Trustees will not assume personal responsibility for resolving operational problems or complaints. Upon receiving a concern, complaint or information regarding a sensitive or confidential matter from a parent, staff member, community member or other stakeholder, about school operations, must forthwith refer this individual to the~~Any such complaints will be referred forthwith to the~~ Superintendent for investigation and resolution.
  - i. If the individual attempts subsequent communication with the Trustee, the Trustee will respond that the concern has been forwarded to the Superintendent and will not engage in further conversation with the individual. AP 221 Focused and Effective Communication and the associated Appendices address specific complaint procedures.
- b. Trustees shall not encourage direct communication with employees and members of the public who attempt to bypass school or Central Office Administration but shall encourage employees and members of the public to utilize reporting lines at the school level or within Central Office Administration to bring concerns to the Board.
- c. Trustees shall comply with their fiduciary duty to inform Administration of concerns brought to their attention.

~~11-14.~~ Trustees shall recognize that:

- a. The Board Chair is the official spokesperson for the Board of Trustees, and therefore, the only person authorized to speak to the public, media or other entities and communicate corporate decisions or positions on behalf of the Board, -except for those instances where the Board has delegated this role to another individual or group.
- b. Without limiting the right of Trustees to express their own personal views, when interacting with the public, media or other entities, Trustees shall accurately represent and accept the corporate decision of the Board, once a decision has been made.

~~12-15.~~ Trustees shall be prepared for Board deliberations by attending in person or by electronic means:

- a. All regularly scheduled or special meetings of the Board of Trustees and any committee meetings to which they are assigned, on a regular and punctual basis.
  - i. The presence or absence of every Trustee shall be recorded in the minutes. If a Trustee wishes to be absent during a meeting, they will declare this wish and ensure that the recording secretary has noted it. Failure to do so will result in inaccuracies in the recording of minutes.

- ii. As outlined in the Education Act, a person is disqualified from remaining as a Trustee of a board if that person is absent, without being authorized by a resolution of the board to do so, for three consecutive regular meetings of the board, unless his/her absence is due to illness and he/she provides evidence of that illness in the form of a medical certificate respecting the period of absence.
- iii. Repeated partial or late attendance shall be cause for disciplinary action, as determined by the Board.
- iv. Unless an absence has been previously approved by the Board, failure to attend regular and special meetings as well as scheduled committee meetings will result in the deduction from trustee remuneration.
- v. Two days per year are allowed without deduction for illness on the part of the Trustee, and two days of compassionate leave are also permitted. If, however, a Trustee is absent from any regular or special meeting of the Board or scheduled committee meetings due to illness, beyond the two sick days permitted, he/she must produce a doctor's certificate and no deduction from trustee remuneration will be made.

13.16. With regards to Standing Committees of the Board, the administrators assigned to support these committees will include in the meeting notes the date and time of the next scheduled committee meeting, the estimated length of the next scheduled meeting and the names of those Trustees who will be in attendance.

14.17. Trustees should attend Trustee Orientation and Renewal sessions, Board Retreats, School Council meetings, Student Discipline Hearings, Teacher Transfer Hearings and meetings with external organizations (such as Municipal Councils and Chamber of Commerce). Trustees are also expected to attend the annual general meetings of the Public School Boards' Association of Alberta (PSBAA) and/or the Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA) and other conferences as approved by the Board.

## 18. Board Orientation

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.

- a. The Board believes an orientation program is necessary for effective Trusteeship. All Trustees are expected to attend all aspects of the orientation program.
- b. The Division will offer an orientation program for all Trustees that provide information on:
  - i. Role of the Trustee and the Board;

- ii. Organizational structures and procedures of the Division;
- iii. Board policy, agendas and minutes;
- iv. Existing Division initiatives, annual reports, budgets, financial statements and long-range plans;
- v. Division programs and services;
- vi. Board's function as an appeal body; and
- vii. Statutory and regulatory requirements, including responsibilities with regard to conflict of interest.

c. The Board Chair and Superintendent are responsible for ensuring a Division orientation program for Trustees.

a.d. Board Policies, Administrative Procedures and the Trustee Handbook are available on the Division website for Trustees.

## **References:**

Policy 4: Trustee Code of Conduct

Policy 8: Board Committees

Education Act: Sections 33, 34, 51, 52, 53, 64, 67, 75, 85-897, 90-96

Board Procedures Regulation 82/2019

~~Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act~~

*Access to Information Act (ATIA)*

*Access to Information Act Regulation 133/2025*

## **History**

2022 Mar 23 Initial Approval

2025 Sep 24 Amended