



Date: September 24, 2025 **Agenda Item:** 7.7

To: Board of Trustees

From: Shawna Warren, Superintendent

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

Subject: **Policy 5: Role of the Chair**

Recommended Motion:

THAT the Board of Trustees approve the newly developed Board *Policy 5: Role of the Chair* as presented at the September 23, 2025, Public Board meeting.

Background:

Board Policy 5: Role of the Chair establishes a dedicated policy outlining the responsibilities, authority and expectations of the Board Chair. This new policy ensures clarity and alignment with the Education Act, the Board Procedures Regulation and best practices in governance.

The policy defines the Chair's primary responsibility as leading the Board to function effectively as a cohesive corporate body. Duties include presiding over meetings, setting agendas with the Vice Chair and Superintendent, maintaining decorum, ensuring clear debate and serving as the official spokesperson, unless otherwise delegated. The Chair has no authority to direct the Superintendent but serves as a key liaison, supporting strong communication and governance.

Additional responsibilities include signing authority for official documents and financial transactions, approving expense claims and ensuring compliance with the Superintendent's contract. Adoption of Policy 5 addresses a gap in the governance framework and provides the incoming Board with a clear, codified role description that strengthens accountability and leadership continuity.

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

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

COMPETENCY: (1) Building Effective Relationships

INDICATORS: d. modeling ethical leadership practices, based on integrity and objectivity; and
e. establishing constructive relationships with students, staff, school councils, parents/guardians, employee organizations, the education ministry and other stakeholder organizations.

COMPETENCY: (6) School Authority Operations and Resources

INDICATORS: a. providing direction on fiscal and resource management in accordance with all statutory, regulatory and school authority requirements; and
d. providing for the support, ongoing supervision and evaluation of all staff members in relation to their respective professional responsibilities.

COMPETENCY: (7) Supporting Effective Governance
INDICATORS: 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;
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; and

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,

Board Procedures Regulation

Organizational meeting

(3) At the organizational meeting, and afterwards at any time as determined by the board, the board must elect one of its members as chair and another as vice-chair to hold office during the pleasure of the board

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 5: Role of the Chair

Policy 5: Role of the Chair

POLICY

The Board, at the Organizational Meeting, or at any time as determined by the Board, shall select one of its members to act as Board Chair, to hold the office at the pleasure of the Board.

The primary responsibility of the Board Chair is to provide leadership and guidance to assist members of the Board to operate effectively as a group, in order to achieve the goals established for the Division in a competent manner.

BOARD CHAIR RESPONSIBILITIES

The Board Chair shall have the authority on behalf of the Board to:

1. Ensure that the Board operates in accordance with its own policies
2. Call and preside over all Regular and Special meetings of the Board and ensure that such meetings are conducted in accordance with the Education Act and the policies as established by the Board.
3. Before each Board meeting, confer with the Vice Chair and the Superintendent on the items to be included on the agenda, the order of the items and become familiar with the items.
4. Perform the following duties during Board meetings:
 - a. Maintain the order and proper conduct and decorum of the meeting so that motions may be formally debated.
 - b. Ensure that all issues before the Board are well-stated and clearly expressed.
 - c. Display firmness, courtesy, tact, impartiality and willingness to give everyone an opportunity to speak on the subject under consideration.
 - d. If it is necessary to do so, the Chair may ask a Trustee to leave the meeting because of their disruptive behaviour, but this action must be supported by the majority of the Trustees present, who may vote on the question by show of hands or by secret ballot. A vote will be taken only when the Chair's ruling is challenged by one of the remaining Trustees. The length of a suspension shall not exceed the current meeting, and, at the discretion of the Chair, it may be limited to part of the meeting.
 - e. Ensure that debate is relevant. The Board 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.
 - f. Decide questions of order and procedure, subject to an appeal to the rest of the Board. The Board 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. The Chair shall conduct all meetings of the Board according to the following rules of order firstly, ensuring compliance with the

Education Act and Board Procedures Regulation; secondly, compliance with the Board's own policies and lastly where the Education Act, Board Procedures Regulation or the Board's own policies do not address the matter, "Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised 11th Edition" shall govern the conduct of meetings, where applicable.

- g. Ensure that deliberations at meetings are timely, fair, orderly and thorough, but also efficient, limited to time and kept to the point.
 - h. Submit motions or other proposals to the final decision of the meeting by a formal show of hands.
 - i. Ensure that each Trustee present in the meeting votes on all issues before the Board. When appropriate, advise Trustees of the possibility of a conflict of interest.
 - j. Extend such hospitality to Trustees, the Superintendent, the senior leadership team, SPS staff, stakeholders, the media and members of the public as is appropriate.
- 5. Be in regular contact with the Superintendent to maintain a working knowledge of current issues and events and provide counsel to the Superintendent. The Chair's authority shall not extend to implementing or making decisions that belong to the Board as a whole. Further, the Chair has no individual authority to supervise or direct the Superintendent.
- 6. Keep Trustees informed about issues and information relevant to the role of the Board.
- 7. Bring to the Board all matters requiring a corporate decision by the Board.
- 8. Act as the chief spokesperson for the Board except for those instances where the Board has delegated this role to another individual or group.
- 9. Represent the Board, or arrange alternative representation, at official meetings inside and outside of the Division.
- 10. Ensure that the Board engages in an annual assessment of its effectiveness as a Board.
- 11. Address inappropriate behaviour by Trustees when it impairs Board effectiveness and encourage cooperation, respect and unity among Board members.
- 12. Be responsible to ensure that the Board of Trustees is fully aware of the contents of the Superintendent's contract and for ensuring that the Board meets all the requirements of the contract.
- 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.
- 14. Act as a signing authority for Board minutes.
- 15. Act as a signing authority for the Division as follows:
 - a. As required by the Government of Alberta.

- b. As required by financial institutions.
- 16. Review and approve the Superintendent's vacation and review and approve expenditure claims on a monthly basis.
- 17. Review and approve Trustee expenditure claims. The Vice Chair will approve Chair Expenses.

References:

Policy 2: Role of the Board

Education Act: 3, 33-34, 52, 53, 64, 67, 75, 117.1, 200, 222

Local Authorities Election Act

History

2025 Sep 24 Initial Approval