



POLICY #6

BOARD OPERATIONS

The Board of Trustees is committed to representing the best interests of the entire community that comprises Brandon School Division through effective governance.

6.1 Board Organization

It is the Board of Trustees as a body that speaks for the Division and Board practice recognizes that it is the Board of Trustees, not Board members, who have authority. There are roles and responsibilities for individual Board members derived from the roles and responsibilities of the Board of Trustees as a whole group.

6.2 Election of the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of the Board

Each year on a day selected in accordance with *The Public Schools Act*, the Board of Trustees of the Brandon School Division shall hold an inaugural meeting to elect a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson.

6.3 Role of the Chairperson

The Chairperson is elected by the Trustees to lead the processes of the Board of Trustees. 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.

6.4 Role of the Vice-Chairperson

The Vice-Chairperson assumes the role of the Chairperson in the event of the Chairperson's absence.

6.5 Committees of the Board

Committees of the Board of Trustees shall be decided upon at the inaugural meeting with the recommended Committee list being submitted for approval at the first regular meeting of the Board following the inaugural meeting.

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/CEO or designate. Standing Committees, Advisory Committees and Special 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.



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6.6 Standing Committees

The Board assigns committee responsibilities in the following areas:

- **Finance and Facilities Committee**
- **Education and Community Relations Committee**
- **Policy and Personnel Committee**

6.7 Advisory Committees

The Board assigns Trustees to represent the Board to the following advisory committees:

- **Aboriginal Education Advisory Committee**
- **Parent/Guardian/Division Advisory Committee**

6.8 Special Committees

Special Committees of the Board may be established for specific functions as required, and shall be discharged upon completion of their functions.

6.9 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. 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. With unanimous agreement by the Board, the Board may hear an unannounced delegation.

6.10 Meetings

i. 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.



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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 second and fourth Monday of each month, except July and August. Rules of procedure for conducting meetings shall be outlined in Board Bylaws as per Sec 33(1) of the PSA. Regular meetings should not normally be convened without the Superintendent/CEO 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/CEO and Secretary-Treasurer present.

iv. In-camera Meetings

The Board believes that the public trust is preserved through the conduct of Board meetings which are open to the public. The Board recognizes, however, that occasions may arise from time to time where it is in the best public interest to discuss sensitive matters in closed meetings. In-camera meetings are held in accordance with the PSA of Manitoba.

v. 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.

vi. Electronic Meetings

A Trustee who wishes to participate in a meeting using electronic means shall make a request to the Chair of the Board or the Secretary-Treasurer. Trustees will be allowed to participate electronically a maximum of three (3) times per calendar year for Regular Board meetings. This policy is in accordance with Section 39.7.1 of *The Public Schools Act* and Regulation 201/2004.



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6.11 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 Brandon 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 Brandon School Division.

The *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. Accordingly, Trustees will:

- i. Support 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 and be prepared to explain the decision of the Board to the public.
- ii. Never attempt to exercise individual authority over the organization or the Superintendent/CEO. While the Board expects individual Trustees to be given common courtesy, it does not require the Superintendent/CEO 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, Trustees 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.



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6.12 Community Connections

The Board will establish formal connections with the community, government, business and 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, provide for the exchange of ideas, work collaboratively and build positive relationships.

6.13 Liaison with School Board Associations

The Brandon 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 – Values, Vision and Mission
Policy 2 – Board Governance Model & Process
Policy 7 – Board Member Code of Conduct
Policy 14 – Community Engagement
Legal Reference: *The Public Schools Act*

Date of Approval:
September 11, 2017

Date of Amendment: