

2.6 – Board Meeting Procedures

2.6 Board Meeting Procedures

Purpose

The Board of Education of School District No. 68 (Nanaimo-Ladysmith) (the “Board”) is committed to the highest standard of governance. This policy is intended to provide a framework by which the Board conducts its business in a fair, orderly, transparent and safe fashion.

Objective

This policy shall provide the framework for meetings of the Board pursuant to section 67(5) of the *School Act* and shall also apply to meetings of the Board’s Standing Committees.

This policy, aligned with policy 2.5 shall also encourage the participation of the public, partners and Rights holders in the business of the Board. The Board acknowledges that the meeting structure of the Board is based on colonial structures but are committed to reducing barriers for our Rights Holders and underrepresented members of the community to meaningfully participate in and influence Board decisions.

Definitions

Emergent – An unforeseen Agenda item that must be addressed outside of the normal Agenda setting process timelines that may impact the Board’s operations compliance requirements, risk management or reputation.

Parliamentarian – The District’s expert with respect to Robert’s Rules of Order, District policy and/or School Act pertaining to meeting procedures.

Quorum – A simple majority of trustees (currently 5).

Robert’s Rule of Order – A book on parliamentary procedure that governs Board proceedings.

Standing Committees – The Business Committee and Education Committee as set out in Policy 2.5.

Work Plan – The Board’s guidance document issued each September setting out the timing of items to come to the Board for discussion and/or debate as set out in Policy 2.5.

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Process

1. General

- 1.1 To provide for the fair, open, orderly and efficient conduct of the Board's business, Board meetings and Standing Committee meetings shall be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order (Newly Revised). In the event of a discrepancy between Robert's Rules and this policy, this policy shall prevail.
- 1.2 Pursuant to section 67(6) of the *School Act* trustees may attend meetings via a Board supported electronic meeting platform if available. A meeting may be held solely by electronic means utilizing a Board authorized electronic meeting platform.
- 1.3 Unless otherwise specified, all procedures in this Policy shall apply equally to Regular and Special Board Meetings and Standing Committee Meetings.
- 1.4 The Syeyutsus Framework is the foundation of how the school district will conduct its work on the lands in the territories we serve. Each trustee chairing a meeting will open the meeting with Indigenous protocol by sharing a meaningful land acknowledgement giving thought and consideration to whose territory the meeting is being held on. Land acknowledgement statements will consider the stewardship of the Indigenous people in the territory and their relationship to the land and waters of the area.

2. Meeting Types

2.1 Inaugural and Annual Meetings

- 2.1.1 The Secretary-Treasurer and/or designate shall call the Inaugural Annual Meeting to order and shall preside over such meeting until a Chair is elected.
- 2.1.2 Each Trustee shall take the Oath of Office immediately following the Call to Order of the Inaugural Annual Meeting immediately following a general election.
- 2.1.3 The Oath of Office shall be administered by a Judge of the Court of Appeal, Supreme Court, Provincial Court, a Justice of the Peace or, in their absence, the Secretary-Treasurer.
- 2.1.4 At the Inaugural Annual Meeting following an election, the Secretary-Treasurer shall read the election returns to the Board and report whether or not the Trustees elected have completed the Oath of Office required by the School Act.
- 2.1.5 At the Inaugural Annual Meeting and subsequent Annual Meetings the Secretary-Treasurer and/or designate shall then call for nominations for the office of Chair of the Board for the ensuing year. If more than one nomination is made, a vote shall be taken by ballot. After nominations are closed Trustees shall be asked in the order they were nominated if they wish to stand. And, if on the first ballot no nominee receives the vote of the majority of the full Board, the nominee receiving the fewest votes shall be eliminated from the election and fresh ballots taken as between the remaining nominees, until one receives the vote of the majority of the full Board, when he/she shall be declared elected.

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- 2.1.6 If by reason of equality of votes, it is not possible to decide which is to be eliminated, a special ballot shall be taken to determine the matter.
- 2.1.7 The Chair will assume the chair and then call for nominations for the office of Vice-Chair of the Board for the ensuing year. The same election procedure used for Chair will be used for the election of the Vice-Chair.
- 2.1.8 The order of Annual Meetings will include: election of Board Chair, election of the Vice-Chair; to be followed by the election of the Business Committee Chair and Vice-Chair, election of the Education Committee Chair and Vice-Chair, and election of the Board Representative and Alternate Representative to the Provincial Council of the BCSTA.

2.2 Regular Meetings

- 2.2.1 Regular Meetings of the Board shall be held at 6:00 pm on the fourth Wednesday of every month unless public notice of a different date and time has been made at least 48 hours in advance. When the Regular Meeting day is a statutory or civic holiday, the meeting shall be held on the evening following.
- 2.2.2 During the summer months of July and August one regular meeting of the Board of Education shall be held on the Wednesday prior to the Labour Day statutory holiday at 6:00 pm. No regular meeting will be held in July.
- 2.2.3 All Regular Meetings of the Board shall adjourn normally not later than 9:00 pm. The meeting may be extended beyond this hour only by specific resolution to do so with adjournment no later than 10:00 pm unless time sensitive item(s) remain on the agenda.
- 2.2.4 Any unfinished business shall be carried forward to a Special Meeting at a date and time to be arranged by the Board, at the time of adjournment, or to the next Regular Meeting.

2.3 Closed Meetings

- 2.3.1 A Closed Session of each Regular Meeting shall be held starting at 4:00 p.m. before the Regular Meeting of the Board unless there is insufficient business to warrant such a meeting or unless a change in starting time has been communicated at least 48 hours in advance to trustees. Should the business be incomplete at 6:00 p.m., the Closed Session shall be recessed and reconvened following the Regular Meeting.
- 2.3.2 In the event that an item on the Regular Meeting agenda requires unanticipated information or debate in a Closed Session, the Chair may recess the Regular Meeting and move to a Closed Session for the appropriate amount of time or end discussion during the Regular session and move the item to a future Closed Session if the item is not emergent. Such a determination by the Chair is subject to challenge pursuant to Board procedures.
- 2.3.3 The items that may be discussed in a Closed Session include issues dealing with individuals, land, labour relations, litigation or negotiations. Additional items may be addressed in a closed session pursuant to section 69(2) of the *School Act*.
- 2.3.4 In accordance with Section 72(3) of the School Act, the Board shall prepare a record containing a general statement as to the nature of the matters discussed and the general nature of the decisions reached at a meeting from which persons other than Trustees or Officers of the Board, or both, were excluded.

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2.4 Special Meetings

- 2.4.1 All Special Meetings shall be held either prior to, or following, a Regular Meeting of the Board, or at a time, date and place set by the Chair.
- 2.4.2 Special Meetings shall deal only with agenda items announced at the time the Meeting is called, except that emergent items may be added to the agenda with the unanimous consent of all of the Trustees who are present at the Meeting.
- 2.4.3 A Special Meeting may be in public or in a closed session depending on the issue being addressed.

2.5 Standing Committee Meetings

- 2.5.1 Meetings of the Education Committee shall normally be held at 6:00 p.m. the first Wednesday of every month excluding July and August.
- 2.5.2 Meetings of the Business Committee shall normally be held at 6:00 p.m. the second Wednesday of every month excluding July and August.
- 2.5.3 In the months in which winter and spring break occur the Standing Committees may meet on the same evening with Education Committee preceding Business Committee.

3. Meeting Agendas, Minutes and Correspondence

3.1 Meeting Agendas

Items may be placed on the agenda in one of the following ways:

- i. A trustee may add an item to the agenda by notifying the Chair of the Board or Standing Committee no later than 13 days prior to the day of the Meeting.
- ii. By the inclusion of the item on the Board's Work Plan.
- iii. By notice of motion by a trustee at the previous applicable Standing Committee or Regular Meeting of the Board.
- iv. As a request from a Standing Committee of the Board; or
- v. By the Agenda Setting Committee.

Role of the Agenda Setting Committee

The Board Chair/Standing Committee Chair, Vice Chair/Standing Committee Vice Chair, Superintendent and Secretary-Treasurer shall constitute the Agenda Setting Committee and shall establish items on the agenda for each meeting. Items requested for inclusion on an agenda pursuant to 3.1.i may be deferred to the appropriate future meeting if already included on the Board's Work Plan unless they are emergent in nature.

The agenda shall generally follow the order outlined below:

1. Call to Order
2. Transfer of Items to Open meeting Agenda*

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3. Additions to the Agenda
 4. Deletion of Items from the Agenda
 5. Change in Order
 6. Approval of the Agenda
 7. Approval of the Minutes
 8. Section 72(3) Report*
 9. Announcements and Reminders*
 10. Presentations
 11. Correspondence
 12. Standing Committee Reports*
 13. Superintendent's Report*
 14. Unfinished Business
 15. New Business
 16. For Information
 17. Question Period (See Section 4.2)
 18. Adjournment
- *Regular Meetings only*

3.1.1 Additions to the Agenda

Additions to the Agenda may only be accepted by the majority consent of the Board or Standing Committee, and only if the item is deemed emergent. If the item is not urgent, the topic will be placed on the Agenda of the next Regular/Special Standing Committee Meeting or aligned with the Work Plan.

3.1.2 Changes to the Agenda

The Chair, at the beginning of the Meeting, shall ask for additions to and/or deletions from the agenda prior to agenda approval. Changes to the agenda may be made by a majority of those Trustees present. The Board will follow the order of business set by the agenda unless the order is altered or new items are added by agreement of the Board. A change to the prescribed order of business may be proposed by any Trustee and shall require the consent of a simple majority, without debate. Only urgent items shall be added to the agenda once the agenda has been set. During the course of the Board or Standing Committee Meeting, the majority of Trustees present may request that the Chair place items before the Board for discussion. The Board may take action on such items.

3.1.3 Agenda Package

Where practicable, the agenda will be supported by copies of letters, reports, contracts and other materials as are pertinent to the business which will come before the Board or Standing Committee and will be of value to the Board or Standing Committee in the performance of its duties. Lengthy reports drafted by staff will not be copied and distributed but shall be posted to the District Website or made available electronically by request.

The agenda package, containing the agenda and supporting information, will be distributed to each Trustee, at least four (4) days in advance of Regular or Standing Committee Meetings.

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The list of agenda items shall be posted on the District website and any member of the public may inspect the agenda and request a copy.

3.2 Minutes

- 3.2.1 Minutes shall commence with a notation of Trustees or Standing Committee Members and officials present. Only motions and pertinent facts shall be recorded in the minutes.
- 3.2.2 The minutes of Regular and Closed Meetings shall be submitted to the next ensuing Regular or Closed Meeting and, if adopted, shall be signed by the Chair and Secretary-Treasurer.
- 3.2.3 The minutes of Standing Committee Meetings shall be submitted to the next ensuing Standing Committee Meeting for approval.
- 3.2.4 The minutes of all Regular Meetings of the Board and Standing Committee Meetings shall be posted to the District website.
- 3.2.5 The minutes of all Closed Meetings of the Board shall be distributed as appropriate.
- 3.2.6 A Record of Closed Meetings as required by Section 72(3) of the School Act shall be made available upon request after the minutes of the Closed Meetings are approved.

3.3 Correspondence

- 3.3.1 All correspondence for the attention of the Board or Chair shall be directed to the Secretary-Treasurer of the Board.
- 3.3.2 All correspondence shall be date stamped upon arrival.
- 3.3.3 All correspondence for the attention of the Board or the Chair shall be provided to the Board.
- 3.3.4 Copies of correspondence, other than the distribution of the Board agendas, shall be distributed to persons outside the District only after the Board has received and/or responded to it.
- 3.3.5 Correspondence received at the Board meeting shall be actioned by one of the following actions:
 - To be received and filed;
 - To Board Chair for response;
 - To staff for response;
 - To a Standing Committee meeting.
- 3.3.6 Substantial, or lengthy, reports, or submissions will not be copied and distributed but shall be posted to the District Website or made available electronically by request.

4. **Public and Partner Participation**

4.1 Presentations/Delegations to a meeting

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While Meetings of the Board and Standing Committees are primarily business meetings, the Board and Standing Committees welcome public participation at meetings. To facilitate public participation a limited amount of time will be made available on the agenda of Regular and Standing Committee Meetings to allow individuals or delegations to make presentations. The number of presentations and/or delegations will be limited to two (2) to any one meeting of the Board or Standing Committee.

Access to the Board or Standing Committee – Presentations/Delegations

- 4.1.1 Individuals or groups making a presentation to the Board or Standing Committee must arrange in advance of the Meeting to be included on the agenda. Individuals or groups wishing to make a presentation to a Meeting of the Board or Standing Committee must submit a request in writing to the Office of the Secretary-Treasurer no later than ten (10) days prior to the date of the meeting.
- 4.1.2 The identity of an individual presenter, the identity of the spokesperson for a group presentation and the topic of the presentation must be included with all written requests to make a presentation to the Board or a Standing Committee.
- 4.1.3 Individuals or groups making a presentation to the Board or Standing Committee are requested to do so in writing and must provide a brief outline of the presentation at the time of making the request. The Board will not normally receive more than one (1) presentation/delegation from a particular individual or group on the same matter in a six (6) month period.
- 4.1.4 The Chair has the discretion to defer the placement of such a presentation on the agenda in the event that it is determined there will be insufficient time to complete the Board's business during the meeting. In extraordinary circumstances, the Chair may refuse a presentation that is anticipated to harm staff or students.
- 4.1.5 The Office of the Secretary-Treasurer will confirm either by telephone or in writing that the individual or delegation has been included on the agenda of a particular Regular Meeting of the Board or Standing Committee.
- 4.1.6 A presentation to the Board or Standing Committee by an individual or a delegation will be limited to ten (10) minutes duration, with a brief session of questions of clarification or questions by Trustees or Standing Committee members at the conclusion of the presentation.
- 4.1.7 Delegation Presentations
 - 4.1.7.1 To ensure the best possible reception of a presentation, delegations are requested to:
 - Appoint a spokesperson
 - Arrive in adequate time for the meeting
 - Maintain a quiet, orderly manner
 - Avoid repeating verbatim the brief, especially if it is already before the Board or Standing Committee in writing
 - Permit the spokesperson to respond to questions from Trustees or Standing Committee members.

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4.1.7.2 Once the presentation is completed and Trustees or Standing Committee members have had an opportunity for questions, it is in order for the delegation to remain or leave the Meeting.

4.1.8 Following a presentation to a Standing Committee only it is the prerogative of the Standing Committee to decide the course of action to be taken on items presented however, decisions on presentations to the Standing Committee will not normally be made at the Meeting at which a presentation is heard, as the Standing Committee may require additional information or time for study and discussion. As an item under “New Business” the Standing Committee may either:

- Refer the item to a future Standing Committee Meeting with a report;
- Refer the item to staff for investigation and a report;
- Make a recommendation to a Regular or Special Meeting of the Board; or,
- Consider the matter as an emergent item and deliberate the matter.

4.1.9 Individuals or spokesperson of delegations will be informed by the Office of the Secretary-Treasurer of any decisions/action taken by the Standing committee on their presentation to the Standing Committee.

4.2 Rules Governing the Question Period

4.2.1 A Question Period of no more than fifteen (15) minutes duration shall be set on the agenda of each Regular Meeting and Standing Committee meeting. The Board or Standing Committee may, by determination of the agenda setting committee or a majority vote, extend or add an additional Question Period beyond the allotted duration.

4.2.2 The Question Period is intended to enable the public to obtain clarifying information regarding a current agenda item from the Chair.

4.2.3 The Question Period is not to be used as a political forum, or for furthering presentations by delegations, or to deal with matters that should properly be dealt with through other channels.

4.2.4 Questions or inquiries which deal with or reflect upon the personal or professional attributes of Trustees or District Staff will not be recognized.

4.2.5 Persons directing questions to the Board at a Regular Meeting or to a Standing Committee member during a Standing Committee meeting shall do so in writing on the form provided. If the meeting is being held electronically, persons wishing to ask questions shall type their question in the Q&A Compose box and the question will be read by the Chair. Those persons directing questions shall identify themselves by giving their name and address. Each individual shall be limited to one question and one follow up question on the response to that question.

4.2.6 The Chair shall rule on any question which is placed, as to whether the answer will be either verbal or written.

4.2.7 No one shall ask the same question at any one Meeting when the Chair rules that the question has been answered.

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- 4.2.8 The Chair shall rule on when a question has been given sufficient time and ask that the next question be placed.
- 4.2.9 Should a question be asked on topics where the Board or Standing Committee will not have, and cannot be expected to have, information necessary to respond appropriately, a reply will be given at the next regular meeting of the Board or Standing Committee, or a written response will be provided as soon as possible.
- 4.2.10 The Chair may direct any question to District staff to respond.

5. Board Specific Procedures

5.1 Quorum

- 5.1.1 At the appointed time for commencement of a Meeting the Chair shall ascertain that a quorum is present before proceeding to the business of the Meeting. If a quorum has not been made within fifteen (15) minutes after the appointed time, the Meeting shall stand adjourned until the next regular Meeting date or until another meeting date to be fixed by the Chair.
- 5.1.2 After a Meeting has commenced, if notice is drawn to a lack of quorum, the Chair shall ascertain whether there is a lack of quorum and, if so found, adjourn the Meeting to a certain time or to the next regular meeting date, at his or her discretion.

5.2 Conflict of Interest

- 5.2.1 A Trustee, in accordance with Section 58 (1) (b) of the School Act, must abstain from voting in the event that he or she has a conflict of interest by reason of having a pecuniary interest in a matter.
- 5.2.2 A Trustee is responsible for declaring themselves to be in a conflict of interest. The trustee shall make such a declaration in an open meeting prior to the Board's discussion or debate on the issue subject to the declaration and the minutes shall reflect the declaration. In an open meeting the trustee may remain in the meeting and not participate. In a Closed Session the Trustee must remove themselves from the meeting for the duration the item subject to the declaration is being addressed.
- 5.2.3 A trustee who has declared a conflict and does not participate in debate but is present shall be counted for the purposes of quorum.

5.3 Voting

- 5.3.1 Failure of a Trustee to vote on a motion will be taken to indicate a vote in the affirmative. Pursuant to Robert's Rules of Order, a formal abstention shall be counted as a vote in the negative.
- 5.3.2 In the event of an equality of votes for and against a motion, the question shall be deemed to be resolved in the negative and the motion is defeated.
- 5.3.3 The Chair shall declare the result of all votes, and the names of those Trustees who abstained or voted contrary to the decision.

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5.3.4 The names of those who abstained or voted contrary to the decision shall be recorded in the minutes.

5.4 Improper Conduct

5.4.1 The Chair, in accordance with Section 70(1) of the School Act, may expel and exclude from the Meeting a person, other than a Trustee, whom the Chair considers has been guilty of improper conduct.

5.4.2 In accordance with Section 70 (2) of the School Act, a majority of the Trustees present at a Meeting of the Board may expel a Trustee from the Meeting for improper conduct

5.5 Parliamentarian Advice

5.5.1 The Chair or a trustee through the Chair may request a pause in the meeting to seek advice and direction from the Board's Parliamentarian with respect to meeting procedures.

Legal References:	School Act Section 67(5)
Monitoring Method:	<i>Board of Education / Superintendent</i>
Monitoring Frequency:	<i>Triennial</i>
Adopted:	2022.09.28