
HORIZON SCHOOL DIVISION**POLICY HANDBOOK**

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POLICY

THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF HORIZON SCHOOL DIVISION BELIEVES THAT ITS ABILITY TO DISCHARGE ITS OBLIGATIONS IN AN EFFECTIVE MANNER IS DEPENDENT UPON A WELL ORGANIZED BOARD STRUCTURE AND EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE BOARD MEETINGS.

GUIDELINES

1. All meetings of the Board shall be carried out in harmony with the procedures outlined below.
2. Regular Board Meeting
 - 2.1 Times and dates shall be determined at the organizational meeting of the Board each fall, and posted on the jurisdiction website
 - 2.2 Regular Board Meetings shall be open to the public
3. In Camera Board Meeting
 - 3.1 The Board may decide to hold a portion of a regular meeting “in camera” , by resolution, and exclude any person from that meeting.
 - 3.2 The Board believes that “in camera” meetings should be limited to discussions of issues of a sensitive or confidential nature in accordance with the following.
 - 3.2.1 The Board will go in camera to protect the organization, its operations, economic interests, and delivery of its mandate from harm that could result from the release of certain information.
 - 3.2.2 The board will go in camera to protect individuals or third parties when the release of certain information would be an unreasonable invasion of their personal privacy.
 - 3.3 The Board will not meet privately to discuss issues in a manner that materially advances the issues towards a board’s final decision – because this deprives the public of the opportunity to observe the material part of the board’s decision-making process.

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4. Organizational Meeting

- 4.1 The Organizational meeting shall be held annually:
 - 4.1.1 in conjunction with the regular meeting in October on years where no general election is held
 - 4.1.2 in any year in which a general election takes place, must be held within 4 weeks following the date the statement of the results of that election is announced or posted,
- 4.2 Agenda items at this meeting shall include but not necessarily be limited to:
 - 4.2.1 Election of Board Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson; one shall be from a rural ward within the jurisdiction and one shall be from Ward 3, Taber,
 - 4.2.2 Setting of regular Board meeting dates/time,
 - 4.2.3 Banking arrangement,
 - 4.2.4 Board compensation,
 - 4.2.5 Appointment of Committees.

5. Special Meetings (meetings other than the regularly scheduled meetings) may be called by the chairperson, a majority of trustees, or the Minister at any time, subject to the following conditions:

- 5.1 The secretary of the board must give notice of the organizational meeting to each trustee as if it were a special meeting.
- 5.2 Written notice stating agenda, date, time, and location, shall be sent by recorded mail 7 days before the meeting, or emailed or personally delivered at least 2 days prior to the meeting; or
- 5.3 Without notice if every trustee waives right to notice of meeting;
- 5.4 Unless every trustee is present, no business other than the notified business may be transacted.

6. Electronic Participation

- 6.1 A trustee may participate in a meeting of the board by electronic means or other communication facilities if the electronic means or other communication facilities enable the trustees participating in the meeting and members of the public attending the meeting to hear each other.
- 6.2 Trustees participating in a meeting of the board by electronic means or other communication facilities are deemed to be present at the meeting.

REGULATIONS

- 1. Every meeting of the Board shall have an agenda prepared by the Superintendent of Schools in consultation with the Board Chairperson.

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- 1.1. Any trustee desiring to place an item on the agenda shall contact the Superintendent at least five days before Board meeting.
- 1.2. The Agenda is to be in the hands of each trustee at least two days before the scheduled meeting.
- 1.3. The Agenda is to be approved at the meeting; late items may be added the day of the meeting by a 2/3 majority vote.
- 1.4. Individuals or groups wishing to make formal representation to the Board:
 - 1.4.1. shall make their request at least 2 weeks prior to the Board meeting
 - 1.4.2. shall advise the Board Chair and/or the Superintendent of the nature of the matter to be presented to the Board; and
 - 1.4.3. may be granted by the Chair and/or the Superintendent an appointment time on the meeting agenda in which to make representation.
 - 1.4.4. Public presentations to the Board shall be in accordance with the following:
 - 1.4.4.1. the delegation may make its presentation in writing and/or orally;
 - 1.4.4.2. the presentation shall be supported by a background/briefing document and a recommendation for action;
 - 1.4.4.3. the delegation shall, during its meeting with the Board, observe the rules of parliamentary decorum;
 - 1.4.4.4. the delegation shall be entitled to complete its presentation, within a maximum of 15 minutes, without questions or comments from the Board;
 - 1.4.4.4.1. Should there be multiple requests to present on the same topic during the same Board meeting, the time available to each presenter will be determined by dividing the time available equally among the presenters at any particular meeting
 - 1.4.4.5. upon completion of the presentation, the Chair shall allow trustee questions of the delegation;
 - 1.4.4.6. upon completion of the question period, the Chair shall inform the delegation that Board resolution of the matter may be deferred to a future meeting of the Board.

2. Petitions

- 2.1 A petition must be signed by at least the lessor of
 - 2.1.1 500 electors and
 - 2.1.2 the number of electors that is equal to 25% of the number of funded students to the board
- 2.2 The following must be excluded in determining the number of petitioners on a petition:
 - 2.2.1 a person whose signature appears on a page of the petition that does not contain an accurate statement of the purpose of the petition identical to the statement contained on all the other pages of the petition;
 - 2.2.2 a person whose signature is not witnessed;
 - 2.2.3 a person whose address is not set out or is incorrectly set out;

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- 2.2.4 a person who is not an elector.
- 2.3 There must be attached to every petition a statement signed by an elector stating that
 - 2.3.1 the elector represents the petitioners, and
 - 2.3.2 the elector is the person to whom a board may direct any inquiries with respect to the petition.
- 2.4 If a petition is found to be insufficient, the board must proceed as if the petition had not been presented to the board.
- 2.5 If a petition is determined sufficient by the secretary of the board, the board must, within 30 days of the date of the written notification declaring the results of the determination of sufficiency and establish a committee to review the petition.
 - 2.5.1 The committee must review the purpose of the petition and provide recommendations to the board in response to the purpose of the petition.
 - 2.5.2 The secretary of the board must provide the elector with written notification of the outcome of the review within 90 days of the date of the written notification declaring the results of the determination.
 - 2.5.3 This section does not apply to a petition received by a board under section 190 of the Education Act.
- 3. The Chairperson shall conduct the meeting.
 - 3.1 In the absence of the Chairperson, the Vice- Chairperson shall assume the chair.
 - 3.2 Should neither be present and a quorum is in attendance, the Board shall appoint a temporary chairperson.
- 4. The Chairperson shall conduct the meetings in an orderly and businesslike manner, providing opportunity for all trustees to discuss all issues presented and to assure that all items move efficiently to closure.
- 5. Trustees desiring to speak shall address themselves to the Chairperson who may at his/her discretion limit the number of times a trustee shall speak to the same resolution.
- 6. All business shall be conducted through motions, discussions and vote process with Robert's Rules of Order being the authority for procedure should questions arise, unless otherwise agreed to by the board.
 - 6.1 All resolutions must be submitted to a board by the chair of the board or a trustee, and no seconder is required.
 - 6.2 The chair of the board and every trustee present at a meeting of the board must vote for or against every question unless
 - 6.2.1 in a specific case, the chair or a trustee is excused by resolution of the board from voting, or
 - 6.2.2 the chair of the board or a trustee has a pecuniary interest in the matter and abstains from voting as required under the Education Act.

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- 6.3 The secretary of the board must, whenever a recorded vote is requested by a trustee, record in the minutes the name of each trustee present and whether the trustee voted for or against the matter.
 - 6.3.1 Notwithstanding subsection 5.3, the secretary of the board must, immediately after a vote is taken and on the request of a trustee, record in the minutes the name of that trustee and whether that trustee voted for or against the matter or abstained.
- 6.4 Each question must be decided by a majority of the votes of the trustees present;
 - 6.4.1 in case of an equality of votes, the question must be decided in the negative;
 - 6.4.2 a vote on a question must be taken by open vote;
 - 6.4.2.1 notwithstanding clause (c), with respect to the election of a chair of the board or a vice-chair of the board, if one or more trustees request that the vote be by secret ballot, the vote must be by secret ballot.
- 7 Once a motion is put to the question, each trustee shall vote on the question unless excused by virtue of pecuniary interest.
- 8 No act or proceeding of a board is binding unless it is adopted at a meeting at which a quorum of the board is present.
 - 8.1 The quorum of a board is a majority of the number of trustees that are to be elected under the Education Act.
 - 8.2 Notwithstanding 7.1, the Minister may order that when the number of trustees has fallen below the quorum the remaining trustees are deemed to be a quorum until elections are held to fill the number of vacancies required to achieve a quorum.
 - 8.3 Notwithstanding 7.1, when the number of trustees at a meeting is less than a quorum because one or more trustees have declared a conflict of interest with respect to a matter before the board at the meeting, the Minister may order that the remaining trustees are deemed to be a quorum for the purpose of deciding that matter.
- 9 The Board is empowered to move to an in-camera session with a majority vote of the Board. Without restricting the right of the Board to meet in camera on any issue, in camera meetings shall normally be limited to matters related to:
 - 9.1 Receiving of legal advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege;
 - 9.2 Security of the property of the school board;
 - 9.3 Acquisition or disposal of land;
 - 9.4 Considering personal information about an identifiable individual;
 - 9.5 Labour relations or employee negotiations;

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- 9.6 A law enforcement matter
 - 9.7 Litigation or pending litigation, including matters before administrative tribunals;
 - 9.8 Education or training of the members, so long as no decision-making is advanced;
 - 9.9 Employee discipline;
 - 9.10 Personnel administration;
 - 9.11 Disclosure of intimate, personal or financial information in respect of an employee or prospective employee of the board or a pupil or his or her parent or guardian;
 - 9.12 The consideration of a request for access for information under the FOIP Act, if the school board is itself designated as the head of the local public body for the purposes of the FOIP Act;
 - 9.13 Studying a matter to build trustee understanding of an issue that may be coming before the board (note: there cannot be “decision-making” type of discussions at this session);
 - 9.14 Engaging in strategic planning activities;
 - 9.15 Reviewing the functioning of the board and board development activities,
 - 9.16 Providing commentary to the superintendent and/or senior administration; and
 - 9.17 Any other matter permitted or required by law or other matters typically considered in the public interest to be discussed in private.
- 10 Minutes shall be kept of all meetings (excluding in-camera sessions) and shall include members present, resolutions, voting (names recorded if requested by Trustees), Trustees excused from voting by pecuniary interest, names of trustees who absent themselves for extended periods of time, and any other information deemed significant by the Board.
- 11 Board Chairperson shall be empowered to make any other decisions required in regards to Board meeting conduct, procedure or protocol not covered by policy.