

## **ROLE OF THE BOARD MEMBER**

The role of the Board member is to contribute to the Board as it carries out its mandate in order to achieve its mission and goals. The Board believes that its ability to fulfill its obligations is enhanced when leadership and guidance are forthcoming from within its membership.

The Board is a corporation. The decisions of the Board in a properly constituted meeting are those of the corporation. A Board member 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 Board member are those of the Board, which is then responsible for them. A Board member acting individually has only the authority and status of any other citizen of the Division.

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, Board members must be adequately briefed concerning existing Board policy and practice, statutory requirements, initiatives and long-range plans.

The Board believes an orientation program is necessary for effective Board membership.

1. The Division will offer an orientation program for all newly elected Board members that provides information on:
  - 1.1 Role of the Board member and the Board;
  - 1.2 Organizational structures and procedures of the Division;
  - 1.3 Board policy, agendas and minutes;
  - 1.4 Existing Division initiatives, annual reports, budgets, financial statements and long-range plans;
  - 1.5 Division programs and services;
  - 1.6 Board's function as an appeal body; and
  - 1.7 Statutory and regulatory requirements, including responsibilities with regard to conflict of interest.
2. The Division will provide financial support for Board members to attend Saskatchewan School Boards Association sponsored orientation seminars.
3. The Board Chair and Director are responsible for developing and implementing the Division's orientation program for newly elected Board members. The Director shall provide each Board member with access to the Board Policy Handbook and the Administrative Procedures Manual at the organizational meeting following a general election or at the first regular meeting of the Board following a by-election.

4. Incumbent Board members are encouraged to help newly elected Board members become informed about the history, functions, policies, procedures and issues.

### **Specific Responsibilities of Individual Board Members**

The Board member shall:

1. Become familiar with and adhere to Division policies, meeting agendas, and reports in order to participate in Board business.
2. Refer governance queries, issues and problems not covered by Board policy to the Board for corporate discussion and decision.
3. Refer administrative matters to the Director. The Board member, upon receiving a complaint from a parent or community member about school operations, will refer the parent or community member back to the school and will inform the Director of this action.
4. Keep the Board and the Director informed in a timely manner of all matters coming to his/her attention that might affect the Division.
5. Provide the Director with counsel and advice, giving the benefit of the Board member's judgment, experience and familiarity with the community.
6. Attend meetings of the Board; participate in, and contribute to, the decisions of the Board in order to provide the best solutions possible for the education of children within the Division.
7. Inform the Board Chair in a timely manner if unable to attend a board meeting. The absent board member is responsible for becoming informed of the proceedings.
8. Support the 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.
9. When delegated responsibility, will exercise such authority within the defined limits in a responsible and effective way.
10. Participate in Board/Board member development sessions so that the quality of leadership and service in the Division can be enhanced.
11. Share the materials and ideas gained from a Board member development activity with fellow Board members at the next available opportunity.
12. Stay current with respect to provincial, national, and international educational issues and trends.
13. Strive to develop a positive learning and working culture both within the Board and the Division.
14. Attend significant Division or school functions when possible.

15. Become familiar with, and adhere to, the Board Member Code of Ethics.
16. Report any violation of the Board Member Code of Ethics to the Board during an in-camera session.

Legal Reference: Section 85, 87 Education Act

**Updated: January 13, 2015, January 19, 2017, December 19, 2019**  
**Reviewed: November 17, 2020**