

Board Operations 1 – 2

Role of the Board of Education

The Board of Education, School District No. 71 (Comox Valley) is a corporate body elected by citizens of the Comox Valley. The board is responsible for the development of goals and policies to guide the provision of educational services to students residing within the district that satisfies the requirements of government legislation and the values of the constituents. The board has a public responsibility to carry on the work of the board in good faith and with due diligence.

The Legislature of the Province of British Columbia has approved the *School Act* assigning certain powers and duties to locally elected boards of education.

The Board of Education of School District No. 71 (Comox Valley) is comprised of seven members elected for a four (4) year term by the electors of the Comox Valley to govern educational affairs of the school district.

The Province of BC's Statement of Education Policy Order (Mandate for the School System) Mission Statement establishes the primary focus for locally-elected boards of education:

"The purpose of the British Columbia school system is to enable learners to develop their individual potential and to acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to contribute to a healthy society and a prosperous and sustainable economy."

The statutory powers and duties of the board are set forth in the sections of the *School Act* cited below. In general, the board works with staff to perform these important functions:

- formulating and interpreting policies and bylaws
- delegating administrative duties
- making decisions on educational and budget matters
- making continual appraisals of the educational, administrative, and planning processes in light of the board's stated goals and objectives
- administering public funds
- participating with senior staff in assessing community values and interests and incorporating them into the school system's mission and vision for students.
- helping create a climate which engages teachers, administrators, parents and the wider community in developing and supporting the vision.

Legal References:

School Act, Section 73-87, Regulations, Order of Council

The board shall govern and exercise its decision-making authority within duly called and legally conducted board meetings. All meetings will conform to the policy and procedures set out in Board Policy Board: Education – Meetings.

The board shall elect a Chair and a Vice-Chair with duties and responsibilities as described in the administrative procedures associated with this policy.

Guidelines and Procedures

Accountability to Provincial Government

1. Act in accordance with all statutory requirements to implement provincial and educational standards and policies.
2. Perform board functions required by governing legislation and existing board policy.

Policy Development, Implementation and Evaluation

The Board of Education shall:

- determine local policy in conformity with this Act for the effective and efficient operation of schools in the school district;
- approve policy statements that meet the criteria identified by the district;
- govern the district through board adopted policies and resolutions;
- monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of policies developed by the board in achieving the board's goals and the efficiency of the implementation of those policies;
- delegate those specific and general administrative duties that require delegation to one or more employees of the board; and
- hold the superintendent accountable for the implementation and review of board policies.

Accountability to Community

1. Make decisions that reflect both individual community interests and values, and those of the entire school district.
2. Engage community members and stakeholder groups in discussions to better inform the board and the superintendent of schools.

3. Establish processes and provide opportunities for public input.
4. Report district outcomes and accomplishments, and make them accessible to parents and the public.
5. Develop procedures for and hear appeals of decisions and procedures as required by statute and/or board policy.
6. Model a culture of respect, integrity, openness and transparency.

Planning

1. Establish board priorities and strategic directions through a strategic plan.
2. Provide overall direction for the district by establishing a mission, vision, universal guiding principles and operational guiding principles in consultation with stakeholders.
3. Approve system planning processes and timelines.
4. Monitor and evaluate progress towards the achievement of student outcomes, established goals, and other desired results, including reviewing and approving annual education results.

Board / Superintendent Relations

1. Select the superintendent of schools.
2. Provide the superintendent with clear corporate direction.
3. Delegate responsibility and authority subject to the provisions and restrictions in the *School Act*.
4. Respect the authority of the superintendent to carry out executive action and support the superintendent's actions which are exercised in good faith and within the delegated powers of the position.
5. Hold the superintendent accountable for management of the district.
6. Evaluate the superintendent in accordance with the board adopted evaluation process, criteria and timelines.
7. Develop, in consultation with the superintendent, an integrated annual work plan.
8. Promote a positive working relationship with the superintendent.

9. Promote the professional growth of the superintendent in continuing to provide quality district leadership.
10. Ensure ongoing capacity building and succession planning for key positions.
11. Develop processes for regular assessment of the work of the board and superintendent.

Advocacy and Outreach

1. Advocate for public education.
2. Plan for advocacy including focus, key messages and mechanisms, to be reviewed annually.
3. Participate in provincial and/or national school board associations as deemed appropriate.

Board Development

1. Complete a skills matrix within 3 months of election that identifies the skills the board requires to provide effective governance, as well as an assessment of the collective skills that trustees possess. For identified gaps in required skills and demonstrated skills, the board shall develop a strategy to gain those skills.
2. Develop, fund, implement and update on an annual basis, a formal board continuing education plan that is specific to the needs of the trustees. The plan will consider the training requirements of newly elected trustees and returning trustees.
3. Ensure those new to the board are provided appropriate orientation opportunities at the local and provincial levels.

Fiscal

1. Establish an Audit and Finance Committee of the Board. *Terms of Reference* for this committee will include oversight of audit and financial reporting, including review and approval of quarterly and annual financial statements, transfer of surplus between funds, financial risk management and internal controls. At least one member of this committee to include a financial expert.
2. Establish budget principles and budget priorities, ensure resources are allocated to achieve desired results, and adopt an annual budget.
3. Receive monthly financial reports from February to June each year, including year to date results and financial projections for the balance of the year.

4. Receive quarterly results and projections as at September 30 and December 31 of each year to allow the board to monitor the districts financial position throughout the year.
5. Adopt a Capital Plan as required by government.
6. Receive quarterly reports on actual results which will include updates on capital spending against the budget.
7. For significant capital projects receive regular status reports that set out progress on spending against budget, achievement of key milestones and risks related to delivering the project on time, on budget and against project specifications.
8. Appoint the auditor.
9. Receive a listing of the tenders for contracted work.
10. Receive a listing of all leases and agreements.
11. Approve allocations of one time exceptional funding.
12. Establish Trustee honoraria and reimbursement.

Human Resources

1. Ratify Memoranda of Agreement with bargaining units.
2. Participate in the selection and appointment of the secretary treasurer and the assistant superintendent.
3. Approve, under recommendation of the superintendent of schools; employment / recruitment incentives on a case by case basis.
4. Authorize, under recommendation of the superintendent of schools, the appointment of employees, in addition to teachers, considered necessary by the board to secure the efficient operation of the public schools of the school district, fix wages or remuneration and, by lawful process, dismiss a person so appointed.

In addition, the Board of Education may:

1. Make bylaws, not inconsistent with this Act or the regulations, for example regulating and controlling the use of property owned or administered by the board, relative to the organization

of meetings of the board and to any matter over which power or authority is by this *Act* expressing vested exclusively in the board, and a copy of each bylaw shall be filed with the Ministry.

2. Provide, with respect to a school in its district, under rules of the board approved by the council of the municipality in which the school is situated, a system of school patrols by which pupils may assist in the control of motor vehicle traffic on highways or elsewhere so far as the traffic may affect pupils going to or from the school.
3. Become a member of the British Columbia School Trustees Association (BCSTA), and any branch of it, and pay all fees, levies, and dues properly chargeable to the board by reason of that membership and shall assume, as its obligation, the annual payment of those fees, levies and dues.