

Policy 2

ROLE OF THE BOARD

The Board of Education, School District No. 71 (Comox Valley) is the corporate entity established by provincial legislation and is given authority by the *School Act* and attendant Regulations to provide overall direction and leadership to the district. It is accountable for the provision of appropriate educational programs and services to enrolled students of the district to enable their success, in keeping with the requirements of government legislation.

The board is charged with the responsibility for providing an education system that is organized and operated in the best interests of the students it serves. The *BC School Act* provides that the board is responsible for the improvement of student achievement in the school district. To that end the board shall make continual appraisals of the educational, administrative, and planning processes in light of the board's stated goals and objectives.

Specific Areas of Responsibility

1. Accountability to the Provincial Government

The Board shall:

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

2. Developing and Maintaining a Culture of Student Learning

The Board shall:

- 2.1 Ensure board agendas reflect the board's commitment to improving student success.
- 2.2 Ensure the district's Strategic Plan identifies student learning key results.
- 2.3 Ensure the Framework for Enhancing Student Learning and the Indigenous Education Enhancement Agreement (IEEA) are reviewed at least annually including identification of trends and issues.
- 2.4 Ensure resources for approved initiatives to improve student outcomes are included in the annual operating budget.
- 2.5 Ensure the effectiveness of the superintendent's leadership in improving student outcomes is assessed annually.

3. *Accountability to and Engagement of the Community*

The Board shall:

- 3.1 Assess community values and interests and incorporate them into the school system's foundational statements and engage staff, parents and the wider community in developing and supporting the district vision.
- 3.2 Make decisions that address the needs of all district students.
- 3.3 Establish processes and provide opportunities for community input and engagement.
- 3.4 Report district student learning outcomes at least once annually to the community.
- 3.5 Develop procedures for and hear appeals as required by statute and/or board policy.
- 3.6 Meet regularly with municipal government representatives, local provincial representatives and the Indigenous Education Council, and as required with other entities to achieve desired educational outcomes.
- 3.7 Model a culture of respect and integrity, openness and transparency.
- 3.8 Make decisions that reflect both individual community interests and values, and those of the entire school district.

4. *Strategic Planning*

The Board shall:

- 4.1 Provide overall direction for the district by establishing foundational statements which are developed in consultation with stakeholders.
- 4.2 Annually review district priorities and key results as indicated in the district's Strategic Plan.
- 4.3 Annually ensure evaluation of the effectiveness of the district in achieving established priorities and key results.
- 4.4 Approve district strategic plan and any adjustments thereto.

5. *Policy*

The Board shall:

- 5.1 Identify how the board is to function.

- 5.2 Delegate authority to the superintendent and define commensurate accountabilities.
- 5.3 Formulating policies and bylaws in conformity with this Act for the effective and efficient operation of schools in the school district.
- 5.4 Make the final decision as to the approval of all policy statements.
- 5.5 Develop, assess, review and revise policies as required to ensure intended results are being achieved and that policies are consistent with legislation.
- 5.6 Ensure motions which are intended to have continuing effect are integrated into existing or new policy statements.
- 5.7 Govern the district through board adopted policies and resolutions.
- 5.8 Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of policies developed by the board in achieving the board's goals and desired outcomes.

6. *Board / Superintendent Relations*

The Board shall:

- 6.1 Select and hire the superintendent.
- 6.2 Provide the superintendent with clear board direction.
- 6.3 Delegate in writing, administrative authority and identify responsibility subject to the provisions and restrictions in provincial legislation and regulations.
- 6.4 Annually evaluate the superintendent in accordance with a pre-established performance appraisal mechanism.
- 6.5 Annually review superintendent compensation.
- 6.6 Respect the authority of the superintendent to carry out executive action and support the superintendent's actions which are exercised within the delegated discretionary powers of the position.
- 6.7 Ensure all board members interact with the superintendent in a respectful professional manner.
- 6.8 In consultation with the superintendent, review and adjust the annual Board Work Plan.
- 6.9 Promote a positive working relationship with the superintendent.
- 6.10 Promote the professional growth of the superintendent in continuing to provide quality district leadership.

7. *Political Advocacy/Influence*

The Board shall:

- 7.1. Become or retain membership in the BCSTA.
- 7.2. Make decisions regarding British Columbia School Trustee Association (BCSTA) and British Columbia Public School Employers' Association (BCPSEA) issues.
- 7.3. Advance district positions and priorities including through BCSTA where applicable.
- 7.4. Act as an advocate for public education and the district through the development of an annual plan for advocacy including focus, key messages, relationships and mechanisms.
- 7.5. Arrange meetings with elected provincial / federal / municipal government officials to communicate and garner support for the district's priorities and directions.
- 7.6. Advocate for public education.
- 7.7. Develop an annual advocacy plan and review its effectiveness annually. The plan shall include the advocacy focus, key messages and mechanisms.
- 7.8. Participate in provincial and/or national school board associations as deemed appropriate.

8. *Board Development*

The Board shall:

- 8.1. Annually develop a board development plan aligned with district priorities and board evaluation outcomes.
- 8.2. Annually evaluate the board's effectiveness.
- 8.3. Complete a skills matrix within three (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.

9. *Fiscal Accountability*

The Board shall:

- 9.1. Ensure the fiscal integrity of the district.
- 9.2. Approve budget process and timelines at the outset of the budget process.
- 9.3. In collaboration with the superintendent, identify budget assumptions and draft priorities to be used in the creation of the draft annual operating budget.
- 9.4. Approve the annual budget and allocation of resources to achieve desired results, including strategic priorities.

- 9.5. Annually approve the district's updated Five (5) Year Capital Plan.
- 9.6. Annually appoint the auditor and approve the terms of engagement.
- 9.7. Review annually the audit report and management letter and approve those recommendations to be implemented.
- 9.8. Annually review and approve remuneration for excluded staff.
- 9.9. Approve the acquisition and disposition of district land and buildings.
- 9.10. Approve the annual spending plan for the annual facilities grant.
- 9.11. Approve amended annual budget.
- 9.12. Monitor the fiscal management of the district through receipt of at least quarterly variance analyses and year-end projections and updates on capital spending against the budget.
- 9.13. Approve borrowing for capital expenditures within provincial restrictions.
- 9.14. Approve transfer of funds to/from restricted and non-restricted surplus funds.
- 9.15. Approve transportation assistance rates.
- 9.16. Approve changes to student fee schedules.
- 9.17. Establish an Audit and Finance Committee of the board. Terms of Reference for this committee are outlined in the Policy 8 Appendix 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 (1) member of this committee to include a financial expert.
- 9.18. Establish budget principles and budget priorities, ensure resources are allocated to achieve desired results, and adopt an annual budget.
- 9.19. 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.
- 9.20. Receive a listing of the tenders for contracted work.
- 9.21. Receive a listing of all leases and agreements.
- 9.22. Approve allocations of one (1) time exceptional funding.
- 9.23. Establish trustee honoraria and reimbursement.

Additional Responsibilities

The Board Shall:

1. Approve the naming or re-naming of schools and other district facilities.
2. Approve district calendar in accordance with legislation and collective agreements.
3. Approve Board Authority Authorized Courses.
4. Recognize students, staff and community members.
5. Approve contracts and agreements as required by legislation.
6. Review the student enrolment and staffing report.
7. Hear unresolved student or staff complaints of discrimination or harassment that cannot be heard by the superintendent.
8. Approval and cessation of academies and programs of choice and changes in fees.
9. Ratify Memoranda of Agreement with Bargaining units.
10. Review and approve district expense rates annually.
11. Review board compensation formula.
12. Approve catchment areas for schools and district programs.
13. Approve changes in grade configurations.
14. Approve the reopening of a closed school.

Legal Reference: Sections 65, 74, 74.1, 75, 75.1, 76.1, 76.3, 76.4, 77. 79.2, 82, 82.1, 84, 85, 86, 96, 112, 112.1, 113, 145, 147, 158 *School Act*

Adopted: September 2019

Appendix

Facilitated Board Self-Evaluation Process School District No. 71 (Comox Valley)

Process

The annual externally facilitated board self-evaluation process shall be completed subsequent to the superintendent evaluation process described in the appendixes to Policy 12 and entitled, *Superintendent/CEO Evaluation Process, Criteria and Timelines*. The two (2) evaluation processes are complementary in nature.

Purpose

The purpose of the facilitated board self-evaluation is to answer the following questions:

1. How well have we fulfilled each of our defined roles as a board during the evaluation period?
2. How do we perceive our interpersonal working relationships?
3. How well do we receive input and how well do we communicate with those we represent?
4. How would we rate our board / superintendent relations?
5. How well have we adhered to our governance policies?
6. What have we accomplished this past year to improve student learning? How do we know? What else have we accomplished this past year?
7. What actions shall the board take during the next year to become more effective?
8. Determine what board development has been accessed during the past year and what board development is planned for the coming year.

The answers to these questions provide the data for the development of a positive path forward.

Evaluation Principles

The following principles form the basis for the board self-evaluation process.

1. A learning organization is focused on the improvement of student learning.
2. A commitment to continuous improvement is a sign of organizational health.
3. An effective evaluation process provides for growth and accountability.
4. The annual board evaluation process shall model the board's commitment to principles 1-3.
5. A pre-determined process for evaluation strengthens the governance function, builds credibility for the board and fosters an excellent board / superintendent relationship.

6. An evidence-based approach provides objectivity to supplement the subjectivity involved in evaluation processes.

Context

The board has chosen to retain the nine (9) areas of responsibility articulated in Policy 2 in order to carry out their governance role. These include:

1. Accountability to the Provincial Government
2. Development and Maintaining a Culture of Student Learning
3. Accountability to and Engagement of Community
4. Strategic Planning
5. Policy
6. Board / Superintendent Relations
7. Political Advocacy/Influence
8. Board Development
9. Fiscal Accountability

The annual facilitated board self evaluation process is focused on board performance in relation to these nine (9) areas.

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