



BOARD POLICY HANDBOOK

Medicine Hat Catholic Separate
Regional Division No. 20

This Board Policy Handbook has been developed to highlight and support the very important governance function of the Board. In addition to clearly defining the role of the Board, the role of the Superintendent and the delegation of authority from the Board to the Superintendent, it includes the following as policies:

1. Foundational statements which provide guidance and direction for all activities within the Division;
2. Directions for how the Board itself is to function and how individual trustees are to conduct themselves; how Board committees and representatives are to function;
3. Statements to how appeals and hearings will be conducted;
4. Non-delegable matters such as school closures and policy-making; and
5. Specific matters which the Board has chosen not to delegate to the Superintendent.

This Board Policy Handbook is intended to be supplemented by an Administrative Procedures Manual; the primary written document by which the Superintendent directs staff. The Manual must be entirely consistent with this Handbook.

The development of two separate and distinct documents is meant to reinforce the distinction in this Division between the Board's responsibility to govern and the Superintendent's executive or administrative duties.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Policy 1 – Division Foundational Statements	1
Policy 2 – Role of the Board	4
Policy 3 – Role of the Trustee	7
Policy 4 – Trustee Code of Ethics	10
Policy 5 – Role of the Board Chair	12
Policy 6 – Role of the Vice-Chair	14
Policy 7 – Board Operations	15
Policy 8 – Committees of the Board	27
Policy 9 – Board Representatives	30
Policy 10 – Policy Making	32
Policy 11 – Board Delegation of Authority	35
Policy 12 – Role of the Superintendent	37
Policy 13 – Appeals and Hearings Regarding Student Matters	39
Policy 14 – Hearings on Teacher Matters	44
Policy 15 – School Building Closure	47
Policy 16 – Recruitment and Selection of Personnel	48
Policy 17 – School Councils	50
Policy 18 – Public Communications	54

Policy 1

DIVISION FOUNDATIONAL STATEMENTS

Our Mission

In partnership with family, Church, and community, we provide Catholic Education of the highest quality to our students.

Our Vision

A Gospel-centered community committed to:

- Learning excellence
- Christian service
- Living Christ

Our Motto

Showing the Face of Christ to all.

Our Values

We believe that Catholic education is a ministry that is at the heart of the Church. In our ministry, we value and celebrate:

- Teaching and living our Catholic faith.
- Our Catholic traditions.
- Our ability to offer a full range of educational programs for all students.
- The uniqueness of each child (That each child is special).

Our Principles of Practice

In our ministry we are called, always and everywhere, to:

- Model Christ
- Prayer
- Service
- Strive for Excellence
- Build Community

Translating Ideas into Actions

We are called to model Christ

Christ's Life and Teaching Serve as our Foundation

- We provide an education based on the teachings of Christ:
 - ◆ What would Jesus do? How did He act when faced with challenge or adversity?
 - ◆ We look for the lesson in every situation.
 - ◆ Empty yourself of your "self".
 - ◆ We make time for prayer.
- We provide a Christian environment.
 - ◆ We nurture each student in a positive, caring, and safe learning environment.
 - ◆ We work out of love not fear.
 - ◆ We are constant in our love and actions.
 - ◆ We ensure the equality of opportunity for each child and a respect for individual differences.

We are called to be Prayerful

Prayer Brings us into a Better Relationship with God and Others

- It is a way of life in our Catholic faith.
 - ◆ Our Catholic faith permeates our buildings in actions and symbols.
 - ◆ We celebrate the traditions of Church.

We are called to Service

Service is an Extension of Modeling Christ

- We need to celebrate our ability to serve.
 - ◆ We find joy in service. It is in giving that we receive.
- Teachers are faith leaders, modeling Christian values.
 - ◆ We practice Christian Leadership.
 - ◆ Actions speak louder than words.
- We encourage our students to practice Christian service.
 - ◆ We need to increase the level of awareness of the service we do already.
 - ◆ We can perform different kinds of service.

We are called to Strive for Excellence

Excellence is the Essence of Who We Are

- It fits with our vision and mission.
- It is about reaching individual potential—being the best we can be.
 - ◆ Our schools promote spiritual, physical, academic, emotional and social development, which allows students to achieve their individual potential.
- Facilitating opportunities for growth and promoting best teaching practices.
- Opportunity to live what we believe.

We are called to Build Community

We Build on our Individual and Collective Strengths

- Building community is an extension of our Mission and our faith.
- Building community sets the stage for everything else we do.
 - ◆ Our students are supported by parents, parish and community
 - ◆ Our schools work together for the benefit of the Division.
 - ◆ Our schools welcome all.
- We need relationships and networks to face the challenges we have.
 - ◆ Working together we can do more.
 - ◆ Community shows us we need each other and that we can seek out support.
 - ◆ We can build on the strengths of others.

Legal Reference: Section 39, 45, 47, 60, 78, School Act
Ministerial Order 004/98

Policy 2

ROLE OF THE BOARD

As the elected corporate body in Medicine Hat Catholic Separate Regional Division No. 20, the Board is responsible for the development of policies and goals to set direction and guide the provision of education services to student's resident within the Division.

Alberta legislation defines what Boards must and may do. In addition, legislation allows Boards to delegate almost all of these duties. The Board has defined its governance role as outlined below. Further, the Board must fulfill its key role of ensuring education in the Division is rooted in "Showing the Face of Christ to All".

Specific Areas of Responsibility

1. Accountability to Provincial Government
 - 1.1 Act in accordance with all statutory requirements to implement provincial and education standards and policies.
 - 1.2 Perform Board functions required by governing legislation.
 - 1.3 Subsequent to the date of a general election and before December 31 of the same year, may pass a resolution to opt in or out of the Alberta School Foundation Fund (ASFF) and advise the Minister and local municipalities forthwith.
2. Accountability to the Division's Communities
 - 2.1 Make evidence based decisions which reflect the Gospel values and represent the interests of all students served.
 - 2.2 Establish processes and provide opportunities for community input.
 - 2.3 Develop procedures for and hear appeals as required by statutes and/or Board policy.
 - 2.4 Proactively work to build community support for this Catholic education system.
 - 2.5 Report at least annually the success and challenges of the Division's priorities, goals and desired outcomes
 - 2.6 Annually approve a communications strategy.
3. Faith Leadership
 - 3.1 Make decisions which reflect Catholic values and beliefs.
 - 3.2 Be visible within the Catholic faith community.
 - 3.3 Participate in Division Faith Development Opportunities.
 - 3.4 Ensure that a strong Faith Development component is provided for all students and staff.

3.5 Participate in ACSTA.

4. Three-Year Education and Strategic Planning

- 4.1 Provide overall direction for the Division by establishing mission, vision, strategic priorities and key results.
- 4.2 Annually approve Three Year Education Plan process and timelines.
- 4.3 Identify Board priorities at the outset of the Annual Three Year Education Planning process.
- 4.4 Annually approve the Three Year Education Plan and AERR for submission to Alberta Education by the respective due dates.
- 4.5 Approve the Annual Education Results Report (AERR) for distribution to the public.
- 4.6 Annually approve budget (driven by the Three Year Education Plan).
- 4.7 Annually evaluate the effectiveness of the Division in achieving student outcomes and other established goals and desired results.
- 4.8 Annually identify long-term strategic priorities.

5. Policy Development

- 5.1 Identify areas that require Board policy and identify the preferred future to result from policy implementation.
- 5.2 Evaluate policy impact to determine if the preferred future has been achieved.
- 5.3 Delegate authority to the Superintendent and define commensurate responsibilities.

6. Board / Superintendent Relations

- 6.1 Select the Superintendent of Schools who is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Chief Education Officer of the Board.
- 6.2 Provide the Superintendent with clear corporate direction.
- 6.3 Delegate, through written Board policy, administrative authority to the Superintendent and identify responsibility subject to provisions and restrictions in the School Act.
- 6.4 Evaluate annually the Superintendent in regard to the Superintendent's job description and additional Board direction.
- 6.5 Review annually the Superintendent's compensation package.
- 6.6 Respect the authority of the Superintendent to carry out executive action and support the Superintendent actions which are exercised within the delegated discretionary powers of the position.
- 6.7 Interact with the Superintendent in an open, honest, respectful and professional manner.

7. Political Advocacy

- 7.1 Develop a yearly plan for advocacy that includes focus, key messages and mechanisms.

8. Board Development

- 8.1 Review annually the Board's effectiveness.

- 8.2 Develop a yearly plan for Board development including increased knowledge of the Board's role, processes and issues to further the implementation of the Three-Year Plan.

9. Fiscal

- 9.1 Approve budget assumptions at the outset of the budget process.
- 9.2 Determine the basis for annual resource allocations.
- 9.3 Approve annually the Division's budget for submission to Alberta Education by the due date.
- 9.4 Ensure resources are allocated to achieve the goals, priorities and desired outcomes in the Division's Three-Year Education Plan.
- 9.5 Approve annually the Three-Year Capital Plan and Facilities Master Plan for submission by the due date.
- 9.6 Receive Audit Report and Management Letter and ensure quality indicators in CEO Evaluation are met.
- 9.7 Receive fiscal accountability reports to ensure the fiscal management of the Division.
- 9.8 Set the mandate and ratify Memoranda of Agreement with bargaining units.
- 9.9 Appoint an Auditor and an architectural firm for the Division.
- 9.10 Appoint annually signing authorities for the Division.
- 9.11 Approve tenders over \$200,000.
- 9.12 Annually approve instructional/general fees for all students.
- 9.13 Approve joint use agreements and those partnership agreements that require a financial obligation of the Board.

Selected Responsibilities

1. Setting the initial parameters and approving the annual school-year calendar;
2. Naming of educational facilities;
3. Approving the acquisition and/or disposition of land and buildings;
4. Approving school attendance boundaries;
5. Approving transportation contracts;
6. Approving locally-developed, acquired and authorized junior and senior high school complementary courses;
7. Approving alternative programs;
8. Liaising with Parish Councils within the Division;
9. Hearing of an appeal of a discrimination or harassment complaint.
10. Board Annual Work Plan.

Reference: Section 22, 39, 56, 60, 61, 62, 63, School Act

First Reading: MARCH 11, 2008
 Second Reading: MARCH 11, 2008
 Third Reading: APRIL 08, 2008

Policy 3

ROLE OF THE TRUSTEE

The role of the trustee is to contribute to the Board as it carries out its mandate in order to achieve its mission and goals. The oath of office taken by each trustee when s/he assumes office binds that person to work diligently and faithfully in the cause of public education.

Alberta's Catholic Schools exist to offer Catholic parents a distinct system of education for their children. The trustees of a Catholic school board are empowered by the community to fulfill both the educational requirements set forth by the government and the vision of the faith community.

This presents Catholic school trustees with a unique, dual challenge. They must ensure that students are provided an education, which includes literacy skills, the ability to interpret and communicate information, analyze quickly and creatively, and solve problems effectively. At the same time, a Catholic school board must ensure that Catholic values and principles are reflected at all times in its policies and practices.

As leaders in the faith community, Catholic trustees require an understanding, a willingness to grow and a commitment to bearing daily witness to the faith. To meet this challenge, Catholic trustees are entrusted with certain denominational school rights, powers and privileges enshrined in the Canadian Constitution. They exercise these rights with the religious guidance of parish and diocesan authorities.

The Board of Trustees is a corporation. The decisions of the Board in a properly constituted meeting are those of the corporation. A trustee 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 trustee are those of the Board, which is then responsible for them.

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, trustees 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 trusteeship.

1. The Division will offer an orientation program for all newly elected trustees that provide information on:
 - 1.1 Role of the trustee 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 trustees to attend Alberta School Boards Association and Alberta Catholic School Trustees Association sponsored orientation seminars.
 3. The Board Chair and Superintendent are responsible for developing and implementing the Division's orientation program for newly elected trustees. The Superintendent shall provide each trustee 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 trustees are encouraged to help newly elected trustees become informed about the history, functions, policies, procedures and issues.

Specific Responsibilities of Individual Trustees

1. Become familiar with Division policies and procedures, meeting agendas, and reports in order to participate in Board business.
2. Refer queries, or issues and problems not covered by Board policy, to the Board for corporate discussion and decision.
3. Refer administrative matters to the Superintendent. The trustee, upon receiving a complaint from a parent or community member about operations, will refer the parent or community member back to the school or department and will inform the Superintendent of this action.
4. Keep the Superintendent and the Board informed in a timely manner of all matters coming to his/her attention that might affect the Division.
5. Assist the Superintendent with counsel and advice, providing the benefit of the trustee'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 education within the Division.
7. Model the values and requirements of a practicing Catholic and participate in parish and church activities.
8. Ensure that Catholic values and principles are reflected at all times in the Board's policies and practices.

9. 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. A trustee acting individually has only the authority and status of any other citizen of the Division.
10. When delegated responsibility, exercise such authority within the defined limits in a responsible and effective way.
11. Participate, subject to Board approval, in Board/trustee development sessions so that the quality of leadership and service in the Division can be enhanced.
12. Stay current with respect to provincial, national and international educational issues and trends.
13. Share the materials and ideas gained with fellow trustees at the Board meeting immediately following a trustee development activity.
14. Strive to develop a positive and respectful learning and working culture both within the Board and the Division.
15. Attend Division or school community functions when possible.
16. Become familiar with, and adhere to, the Trustee Code of Ethics.
17. Report any violation of the Trustee Code of Ethics to the Board during an in-camera session.

Legal Reference: Section 60, 61, 68, 76, School Act
Section 6, Commissioner of Oaths Act

Policy 4

TRUSTEE CODE OF ETHICS

Each trustee, representing all Catholic school supporters of the community and responsible to this electorate through the democratic process, recognizes:

- That trustees are accountable to the Magisterium of the Church, and that, according to the Code of Canon Law, a Catholic school is an instrument of the Church.
- That, legally, the authority of the Board is derived from the province which ultimately controls the organization and operation of the Division and which determines the degree of discretionary power left with the Board and the people of this community for the exercise of local autonomy.
- That fellow citizens have entrusted them, through the electoral process, with the educational development of the children and youth of the community.
- That trustees are the children's advocates and their first and greatest concern is the best interest of each and every one of these children without distinction as to who they are or what their background may be.
- That trustees are educational leaders who realize that the future welfare of the Church, the community, the province, and Canada depends in the largest measure upon the quality of education provided in schools to fit the needs of every learner.
- That trustees must never neglect their personal obligation to the community and their legal obligation to the province, nor surrender these responsibilities to any other person, group, or organization but that, beyond these, trustees have a moral and civic obligation to the nation which can remain strong and free only so long as schools in Canada are kept free and strong.

In carrying out the role of trustee, the Board expects members to adhere to the following Code of Ethics:

1. Devote time, thought and study to the duties of a trustee so that they may render effective and creditable service.
2. Exercise the powers and duties of their office honestly and in good faith. Trustees shall exercise the degree of care, diligence and skill that a reasonably prudent person would exercise in comparable circumstances.
3. Work with their fellow trustees in a spirit of harmony and cooperation in spite of differences of opinion that arise during vigorous debate of points of issue.
4. Consider information received from all sources and base personal decisions upon all available facts in every case; unswayed by partisan bias of any kind, and thereafter, abide by and uphold the final majority decision of the Board.

5. Be loyal to the interests of the Division as a whole in the context of Catholic Education. This loyalty supersedes loyalty to:
 - 5.1 Any advocacy or special interest groups; and
 - 5.2 The personal interest of any trustee.
6. Maintain the confidentiality of privileged information, including statements made during in-camera sessions of the Board.
7. Work together with fellow trustees to communicate to the electorate.
8. Provide leadership to the Catholic community through setting goals and policies for educational programs and by regularly evaluating these in the light of the wishes and expectations of the community.
9. Remember at all times that individual trustees have no legal authority outside the meeting of the Board, and therefore relationships with school staff, the community, and all media of communication is to be conducted on the basis of this fact.
10. Refrain from using the trustee position to benefit either oneself or any other individual or agency apart from the total interest of the Division.
11. Recognize that a key responsibility of the Board is to establish the policies by which the system is to be administered, and that the administration of the educational program and conduct of school business shall be left to the Superintendent and Division staff.
12. Encourage active cooperation by stakeholders with respect to establishing policies.
13. Support the provincial and national school board associations for the future of trusteeship in this province and the nation.
14. Provide effective trustee service to the Catholic community in a spirit of teamwork and devotion to education as the greatest instrument for the preservation and perpetuation of our representative democracy.
15. Represent the Board responsibly in all Board-related matters with proper decorum and respect for others.
16. Represent the perceived concerns or needs of the community to the Board or Superintendent as appropriate and accurately communicate the Board's decisions to those we serve.
17. Declare any conflict of interest between personal life and the position on the Board and abstain from voting when appropriate.

Legal Reference: Section 60, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, School Act

Policy 5

ROLE OF THE BOARD CHAIR

The Board believes that its ability to discharge its obligation is enhanced when leadership and guidance is forthcoming from its membership.

The Board, at the Organizational Meeting and thereafter at any time as determined by the Board, shall elect one of its members to serve as Board Chair, to hold office at the pleasure of the Board. The Board entrusts to its Chair primary responsibility for providing leadership and guidance.

The Board delegates to the Chair the following powers and duties:

1. Preside over all Board meetings and ensure that such meetings are conducted in accordance with the School Act and the policies and procedures as established by the Board.
2. The Board Chair is responsible for preparing an agenda for Board meetings in consultation with the Superintendent.
3. Perform the following duties during Board meetings:
 - 3.1 Maintain the order and proper conduct and decorum of the meeting so that motions may be formally debated;
 - 3.2 Ensure that all issues before the Board are well-stated and clearly expressed;
 - 3.3 Display firmness, courtesy, tact, impartiality, and willingness to give everyone an opportunity to speak on the subject under consideration;
 - 3.4 Ensure that debate is relevant. The Chair, in keeping with his/her responsibility to ensure that debate must be relevant to the question, shall, when s/he is of the opinion that the discussion is not relevant to the question, remind members that they must speak to the question;
 - 3.5 Decide questions of order and procedure, subject to an appeal to the rest of the Board. The Chair may speak to points of order in preference to other members, and shall decide questions of order, subject to an appeal to the Board by any two members duly moved;
 - 3.6 Submit motions or other proposals to the final decision of the meeting by a formal show of hands;
 - 3.7 Ensure that each trustee present votes on all issues before the Board;
 - 3.8 Extend hospitality to trustees, officials of the Board, the press, and members of the public.
4. Keep informed of significant developments within the Division.

5. Keep the Superintendent and the Board informed in a timely manner of all matters coming to his/her attention that might affect the Division.
6. Be in regular contact with the Superintendent to maintain a working knowledge of current issues and events.
7. Convey directly to the Superintendent such concerns as are related to him/her by trustees, parents, students or employees which may affect the administration of the Division.
8. Provide counsel to the Superintendent, when requested to do so.
9. Bring to the Board all matters requiring a corporate decision of the Board.
10. Act as the chief spokesperson for the Board except for those instances where the Board has delegated this role to another individual or group.
11. Act as ex-officio member, with voting privileges, to all committees appointed by the Board.
12. Act as a signing officer for the Division.
13. Represent the Board, or arrange alternative representation, at official meetings or other public functions.
 - 13.1 Present Spiritual Leadership scholarships.
14. Ensure that the Board engages in regular assessments of its effectiveness as a Board.
15. Make Trustee appointments to internal committees and name representatives to external committees or organizations.
16. Address inappropriate behavior on the part of a trustee.

Legal Reference: Section 60, 61, 62, 64, 65, 67, School Act
Section 6, Local Authorities Election Act

First Reading: MARCH 11, 2008
Second Reading: MARCH 11, 2008
Third Reading: APRIL 08, 2008

ROLE OF THE VICE-CHAIR

The Vice-Chair shall be elected by the Board at its Organizational Meeting, and thereafter at any time determined by the Board, to hold office during the pleasure of the Board.

Specific Responsibilities

1. The Vice-Chair shall act on behalf of the Board Chair, in the latter's absence and shall have all the duties and responsibilities of the Board Chair.
2. The Vice-Chair shall assist the Board Chair in ensuring that the Board operates in accordance with its own policies and procedures and in providing leadership and guidance to the Board.
3. The Vice-Chair may be assigned other duties and responsibilities held by the Board Chair.
4. The Vice-Chair shall be an alternate signing authority for the Division.

Legal Reference: Section 60, 61, 65, School Act

Policy 7

BOARD OPERATIONS

The Board believes that its ability to discharge its obligations in an efficient and effective manner is dependent upon the development and implementation of a sound organization design. In order to discharge its responsibilities to the electorate of the Division, the Board shall hold meetings as often as is necessary. A quorum, which is a simple majority of the number of trustees, must be present for every duly constituted meeting. The Board has adopted policies so that the business of the Board can be conducted in an orderly and efficient manner.

The Board believes that its fundamental obligation is to preserve, if not enhance, the public trust in education, generally, and in the affairs of its operations in particular. Consistent with its objective to encourage the Catholic community to contribute to the educational process, Board meetings will be open. Towards this end, the Board believes its affairs are to be conducted in public to the greatest extent possible.

The Board believes there are times when public interest is best served by private discussion of specific issues in "in-camera" sessions. The Board believes it is necessary to protect individual privacy and the Board's own position in negotiating either collective agreements or contracts and therefore expects to go in-camera for issues dealing with individual students, individual employees, land, labour, litigation or negotiation.

The Board welcomes opportunities to become familiar with the views of parents or electors through presentations at Board meetings.

1. Wards

Within the stipulations of Ministerial Orders 086/94 and 170/94 establishing the Medicine Hat Catholic Separate Regional Division No. 20, and subsequent Ministerial Orders 009/2004 and 084/2004, the Board has decided to provide for the nomination and election of trustees within the Division by wards, and electoral subdivisions where appropriate.

- 1.1 Ward 1 shall comprise all those lands within the former Medicine Hat Roman Catholic Separate School District No. 21 and as amended from time to time:
 - 1.1.1 Four (4) trustees shall be elected at large from within the Ward.
- 1.2 Ward 2 shall comprise all those lands within the former Bow Island Roman Catholic Separate School District No. 82:
 - 1.2.1 One (1) trustee shall be elected at large from within the Ward.
- 1.3 The provisions of the Local Authorities Election Act respecting the election of trustees shall apply to every election in each ward and electoral subdivision in the same manner as if it were a subdivision in a school division.

- 1.4 If a vacancy occurs in the membership of the Board during the three years following an election, a by-election may be held, unless this vacancy occurs in the last six months before the next election.

2. Organizational Meeting

An organizational meeting of the Board shall be held annually, and no later than four weeks following election day when there has been a general election. The Superintendent or designate will give notice of the organizational meeting to each trustee as if it were a special meeting.

Each trustee will take the oath of office immediately following the call to order of the organizational meeting after a general election. Special provisions will be made for a trustee taking office following a by-election.

As per the School Act the Secretary-Treasurer shall act as Chair of the meeting for the purpose of the election of the Board Chair. Upon election, the Board Chair shall preside over the remainder of the organizational meeting. The Board Chair shall be elected for a period of one year.

The organizational meeting shall, in addition include, but not be restricted to, the following:

- 2.1 Elect a vice-chair;
- 2.2 Create such standing or ad hoc committees of the Board as are deemed appropriate, and appoint members;
- 2.3 Appoint Board representatives to the various Boards or committees of organizations or agencies where the Board has regular representation, as appropriate;
- 2.4 Establish a schedule (date, time and place) for regular meetings, and any additional required meetings;
- 2.5 Review Board member conflict of interest stipulations and determine any disclosure of information requirements; and
- 2.6 Other organizational items as required.

Trustees will volunteer for committee and representative assignments.

3. Regular Meetings

3.1 Regular Board meetings will be held once every month as a general rule. There will be no meeting in July or August. The schedule of meetings will be set at the Board's annual organizational meeting or the first regularly scheduled meeting.

3.1.1 Notwithstanding the schedule noted above, the Board may, by resolution, alter the schedule in such manner as it deems appropriate.

3.2 All trustees shall notify the Board Chair or the Superintendent if they are unable to attend a Board meeting.

3.3 All trustees who are absent from three consecutive regular meetings shall:

3.3.1 Obtain authorization by resolution of the Board to do so; or

3.3.2 Provide to the Chair evidence of illness in the form of a medical certificate respecting the period of absence.

Failure to attend may result in disqualification.

- 3.4 If both the Chair or Vice-Chair through illness or other cause are unable to perform the duties of the office or are absent, the Board shall appoint from among its members an acting Chair, who on being so appointed has all the powers and shall perform all the duties of the Chair during the Chair's and Vice-Chair's inability to act or absence.
- 3.5 Regular meetings of the Board will not normally be held without the Superintendent and/or designate(s) in attendance.

4. Special Meetings

- 4.1 Occasionally, unanticipated or emergent issues require immediate Board attention and/or action.
- 4.2 Special meetings of the Board will only be called when the Chair, the majority of Trustees or the Minister, is of the opinion that an issue must be dealt with before the next regular Board meeting.
- 4.3 A written notice of the special meeting including date, time, place and nature of business shall be issued to all trustees by registered mail (at least seven days prior to the date of the meeting) or in person (at least two days prior to the date of the meeting) unless every trustee agrees to waive in writing the requirements for notice.
- 4.4 The nature of the business to be transacted must be clearly specified in the notice of the meeting. Unless all trustees are present at the special meeting, no other business may be transacted. Items can be added to the agenda only by the unanimous consent of the entire Board.
- 4.5 Special meetings of the Board will not normally be held without the Superintendent and/or designate(s) in attendance.

5. In-Camera (Private) Sessions

The School Act uses the term "private" for non-public meetings. Robert's Rules of Order uses the term "executive session" for the same distinction. The term "in-camera" is commonly used and is synonymous with the other two terms.

The Board may, by resolution, schedule an in-camera meeting at a time or place agreeable to the Board or recess a meeting in progress for the purpose of meeting in-camera. Such resolutions shall be recorded in the minutes of the Board and shall specify those individuals eligible to attend in addition to trustees and the Superintendent. The reason for the In-Camera session shall be stated prior to its approval and shall be limited to discussion pertaining to the following stated reasons:

- 5.1 Individual students and ECS children;
- 5.2 Individual employees and personnel matters;
- 5.3 Collective bargaining issues;
- 5.4 Litigation issues;

- 5.5 Acquisition/disposal of property; and
- 5.6 Other topics that a majority of the trustees present feel should be held in private, in the public interest

Such sessions shall be closed to the public and press. The Board shall only discuss the matter which gave rise to the closed meeting. Board members and other persons attending the session shall maintain confidentiality and not disclose the substance of discussions at such sessions.

The Board shall, during the in-camera session, adopt only such resolution as is required to re-convene the Board in an open, public meeting.

6. Agenda for Regular Meetings

The Board Chair in consultation with the Superintendent is responsible for preparing an agenda for Board meetings.

6.1 The order of business at a regular meeting shall be as follows:

6.1.1 Opening

- ◆ Call to Order
- ◆ Opening Prayer
- ◆ Approval of Minutes
- ◆ Business Arising
- ◆ Consideration of the Action Agenda
 - Modifications, Additions, Deletions
 - Approval
- ◆ Consideration of Non-Action Agenda
 - Approval

6.1.2 Action Items

- ◆ New Business
- ◆ Committee Reports

6.1.3 Non Action Items

- ◆ Information
- ◆ Correspondence

6.1.4 Adjournment

6.2 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 and will be of value to the Board in the performance of its duties.

- 6.3 Items may be placed on the agenda in one of the following ways:
 - 6.3.1 By notifying the Superintendent or Board Chair at least five (5) working days prior to and not including the Board meeting day.
 - 6.3.2 By notice of motion at the previous meeting of the Board.
 - 6.3.3 As a request from a committee of the Board.
 - 6.3.4 Issues that require Board action may arise after the agenda has been prepared. The Board 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 present.
- 6.4 The agenda package, containing the agenda and supporting information, will be delivered to each trustee at least four (4) calendar days prior to the date of the meeting. Subsequently, emergent information may be sent electronically.
- 6.5 The list of agenda items shall be posted on the Division website and be available in the Division Office. Any elector may inspect the agenda and request a paper copy.
- 6.6 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.
- 6.7 During the course of the Board meeting, the majority of trustees present may amend the agenda and place items before the Board for discussion. The Board may take action on such items.

7. Minutes for Regular or Special Meetings

The Board shall maintain and preserve by means of minutes a record of its proceedings and resolutions.

7.1 The minutes shall record:

- 7.1.1 Date, time and place of meeting;
- 7.1.2 Type of meeting;
- 7.1.3 Name of presiding officer;
- 7.1.4 Names of those trustees and administration in attendance;
- 7.1.5 Approval of preceding minutes;
- 7.1.6 A brief summary of the circumstances which gave rise to the matter being debated by the Board;
- 7.1.7 All resolutions, including the Board's disposition of the same, placed before the Board, must be entered in full;
- 7.1.8 Names of persons making the motion;
- 7.1.9 Points of order and appeals;
- 7.1.10 Appointments;
- 7.1.11 Summarized reports of committees;

- 7.1.12 Recording of the vote on a motion (when requested pursuant to the School Act); and
- 7.1.13 Trustee declaration pursuant to the School Act.
- 7.2 The minutes shall:
 - 7.2.1 Be prepared as directed by the Superintendent;
 - 7.2.2 Be reviewed by the Superintendent prior to submission to the Board;
 - 7.2.3 Be delivered to all trustees prior to the next regular meeting of the Board;
 - 7.2.4 Be considered an unofficial record of proceedings until such time as adopted by a resolution of the Board;
 - 7.2.5 Upon adoption by the Board, be deemed to be the official and sole record of the Board's business; and
 - 7.2.6 Be distributed to stakeholders.
- 7.3 The Superintendent shall ensure, upon acceptance by the Board, that appropriate initials are appended to each page of the minutes, and that appropriate signatures and the corporate seal of the Division are affixed to the concluding page of the minutes.
- 7.4 The Superintendent shall establish a codification system for resolutions determined by the Board which will:
 - 7.4.1 Provide for identification as to the meeting at which it was considered;
 - 7.4.2 Establish and maintain a file of all Board minutes.
- 7.5 Upon adoption by the Board, the minutes shall be open to public scrutiny through posting on the Division website or availability at the Board Office.

8. Motions

Motions do not require a seconder, except in rare instances as described below.

8.1 Notice of Motion

The notice of motion serves the purpose of officially putting an item on the agenda of the next or future regular meeting and gives notice to all trustees of the item to be discussed. A notice of motion is not debatable and may not be voted on.

A trustee may present a notice of motion for consideration at the next regular meeting of the Board or may specify another meeting date. A trustee may also provide the Superintendent with a written notice of motion and ask that it be placed on the agenda of the next regular meeting and read at the meeting. The trustee will need not be present during the reading of the motion, however if the trustee is not present, a seconder is required at the meeting at which the notice is given, otherwise the item will be dropped.

8.2 Discussion on Motions

The custom of addressing comments to the Board Chair is to be followed by all persons in attendance.

A Board motion or a recommendation from administration must be placed before the Board prior to any discussion taking place on an issue. Once a motion is before the Board and until it is passed or defeated, all speakers shall confine their remarks to the motion or to the information pertinent to the motion.

8.3 Speaking to the Motion

The mover of a motion first and every trustee shall have an opportunity to speak to the motion before any trustee is allowed to speak a second time.

The mover of the motion is permitted to close debate on the motion.

As a general guide, a trustee is not to speak longer than five minutes on any motion. The Board Chair has the responsibility to limit the discussion by a trustee when such a discussion is repetitive or digresses from the topic at hand, or where discussion takes place prior to the acceptance of a motion.

No one shall interrupt a speaker, unless it is to ask for important clarification of the speaker's remarks, and any such interruption shall not be permitted without permission of the Board Chair.

Should a trustee arrive at the meeting after a motion has been made and prior to taking a vote, the trustee may request further discussion prior to the vote. The Board Chair shall rule on further discussion.

8.4 Reading of the Motion

A trustee may require the motion under discussion to be read at any time during the debate, except when a trustee is speaking.

8.5 Recorded Vote

Whenever a recorded vote is requested by a trustee before the vote is taken, the minutes shall record the names of the trustees who voted for or against the matter. Immediately after a vote is taken and on the request of a trustee, the minutes shall record the name of that trustee and whether that trustee voted for or against the matter or abstained.

8.6 Required Votes

The Board Chair, and all trustees present, unless excused by resolution of the Board or by the provisions of the School Act, shall vote on each question. Each question shall be decided by a majority of the votes of those trustees present. A simple majority of a quorum of the Board will decide in favour of the question. In the case of an equality of votes, the question is defeated. A vote on a question shall be taken by open vote, expressed by show of hands, except the vote to elect the Board Chair or Vice-Chair, which is by secret ballot, unless there is unanimous agreement among the trustees to use a show of hands.

8.7 Debate

In all debate, any matter of procedure in dispute shall be settled, if possible, by reference to Robert's Rules of Order. If this reference is inadequate, procedure

may be determined by motion supported by the majority of trustees in attendance.

9. Delegations to Board Meetings

The Board welcomes public participation at Board meetings as a desirable demonstration of the public's interest in education.

The Board welcomes the opportunity to hear presentations on educational matters from individuals or groups.

- 9.1 Normally, the Board will hear a presentation from groups or individuals at a regular Board meeting. The Board will assess the information presented and decide on appropriate action when required.
- 9.2 Petitions not supported by the appearance of the petitioners before the Board will be dealt with as regular correspondence.
- 9.3 Anyone desiring to make a presentation to the Board shall approach the Superintendent or the Board Chair with the request, giving reasons for it.
- 9.4 A written request for an item to be placed on the agenda for a regular meeting must be received by the Board Chair or the Superintendent at least five (5) working days prior to and not including the date of the meeting. The request shall contain sufficient information to enable the trustees to become acquainted with the subject beforehand. The delegation shall first discuss the request with the Superintendent. If an appearance before the Board is then desired, a copy of the request shall be sent to each trustee with the agenda for the meeting at which the delegation is to appear. It is preferable that the request includes possible solutions.
- 9.5 Any presentation by a group or individuals shall be added to the Board agenda at a time determined by the Board Chair.
- 9.6 A spokesperson(s) for the delegation must be identified.
- 9.7 The Board Chair shall make time available to the members of the delegation to speak to the agenda item under discussion by the Board. Delegations are encouraged to keep their presentations brief, with a maximum of fifteen (15) minutes. The Board Chair has the right to restrict the length of time for any delegation at any meeting.
- 9.8 Matters deemed to be of a sensitive and/or confidential nature shall be heard at an in-camera session of the Board. Personnel issues will not be discussed in an open forum.
- 9.9 Upon completion of the presentation the Board Chair shall allow for trustee questions of the delegation.
- 9.10 In discussing matters with the delegation, the Board Chair shall act as spokesperson for the Board. It must be remembered that delegations come to express problems and give information thereon. For this reason, individual trustees may only seek clarification of items presented by the delegation. At no time during the presentation shall any trustee commit the Board to any specific course of action.

- 9.11 Delegations will be given a copy of this section of Policy 7 prior to their presentation.
- 9.12 The Board will normally make a decision on the matter at a meeting following the meeting at which the presentation is made. Upon completion of the presentation, the Board Chair shall inform the delegation when a decision, if required, will be made. Such decision will be communicated in writing to the spokesperson.
- 9.13 The Superintendent or designate shall see that there is adequate seating for the public at regular Board meetings. If the attendance is expected to be beyond the capacity of the Boardroom, the Superintendent or designate shall provide for the meeting in another location.

10. Recording Devices

The Board expects that anyone wanting to use a recording device at a public Board meeting shall obtain prior approval of the Chair.

11. Trustee Compensation

The Board recognizes that the duties of a trustee require time and commitment. In order to compensate trustees for time spent on Board business and time away from regular work and family, the Board provides each trustee with an honorarium. Rather than the Board compensating trustees for meeting attendance, in-town travel expenses and sundry out of pocket expenses, the Board provides each trustee with an honorarium. Recognizing that the Board Chair must devote more time to preparing agendas and acting as spokesperson for the Board, the Board Chair receives a larger honorarium than the other four trustees. Reimbursement of out of town travel expenses and conference attendance for trustees is the same as for Division personnel as outlined below.

The Board believes that an honorarium is a fair method of compensation for trustees.

11.1 Honorarium

11.1.1 The total trustees' honoraria shall be a sum equal to the average teacher's salary calculated by dividing the total salary paid to all certificated teachers covered by the collective agreement, of the Medicine Hat Catholic Board of Education by the total number of full time equivalent certificated teachers.

11.1.2 The Board Chair shall receive 22% of the average teacher's salary.

11.1.3 The remaining 78% of the average teacher's salary shall be divided equally among the remaining four trustees.

11.1.4 The Superintendent or designate shall calculate the average teacher salary on September 30 of each year and from that calculation, determine the amount of each trustee's honorarium for the ensuing school year.

11.1.5 At the first regular Board meeting following October 31 of each year, the Superintendent or designate shall advise the Board of the honorarium payable to each trustee for that school year.

11.2 Allowances and Expenses

11.2.1 Trustees shall be reimbursed expenses (unless reimbursed by another agency) incurred in carrying out business of the Board, public relations, or attending a convention or conference and requiring absence from his or her place of residence. Reimbursement will be made upon submission of an expense form.

11.2.2 Mileage shall be paid at the Government of Alberta rate per kilometer for each automobile required. Air travel may be used where economy of time or money warrants.

11.2.3 Trustees will be paid a per diem allowance of \$100.00 for each day or part day the trustee is absent from his/her place of residence.

11.2.4 When hotel accommodations are required, the cost of a single accommodation will be reimbursed upon submission of a receipt. Meal allowance will be at a rate not to exceed \$40.00 per day (breakfast - \$7.00; lunch - \$10.00 and dinner - \$23.00).

11.2.5 Miscellaneous expenses such as registration fees, delegate's attendance at banquets, taxi fares, etc, will be reimbursed upon submission of receipts.

11.2.6 Advances may be granted upon written application.

12. Trustee Conflict of Interest

The trustee is directly responsible to the electorate of the Division and to the Board. Upon election to office, the trustee must complete a disclosure of personal interest statement and accept a position of public trust. The trustee is expected to act in a manner which will enhance the trust accorded the trustee, and through the trustee, the trust accorded to the Board.

The Board believes that its ability to discharge its obligations is dependent upon the trust and confidence of the electorate in its Board and its trustee members. Therefore, the Board believes in the requirement to declare conflict of interest.

12.1 The trustee is expected to be conversant with sections 80-91 of the School Act.

12.2 The trustee is responsible for declaring him/herself to be in possible conflict of interest.

12.2.1 The trustee shall make such declaration in open meeting prior to Board or committee discussion of the subject matter which may place the trustee in conflict of interest.

12.2.2 Following the declaration of conflict of interest by a trustee, all debate and action shall cease until the trustee has left the room.

12.3 It shall be the responsibility of the trustee in conflict to absent him/herself from the meeting in accordance with the requirements of the School Act and ensure that his/her declaration and absence is properly recorded within the minutes.

- 12.4 The recording secretary will record in the minutes:
 - 12.4.1 The trustee's declaration;
 - 12.4.2 The trustee's abstention from the debate and the vote; and
 - 12.4.3 That the trustee left the room in which the meeting was held.

13. Board Memberships

The Board believes it is important to trustees to remain current with provincial issues concerning education. The Board believes that in order to stay well informed membership in provincial associations is essential.

The Board supports membership in the Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA) and the Alberta Catholic School Trustees' Association (ACSTA).

- 13.1 The Board will endeavour to send at least one representative to the General Meetings of the ASBA and the ACSTA.
- 13.2 The Board approves the attendance, at the Board's expense, of trustees at ASBA and ACSTA conferences, conventions, seminars and workshops at the Zone or provincial levels.
- 13.3 The annual budget will provide for membership dues to the ASBA and the ACSTA.

14. Board Self-Evaluation

The Board believes that evaluation is essential to the continual improvement and success of a school division.

The Board shall plan for and carry through an evaluation of its functioning as a Board.

- 14.1 The annual Board self-evaluation process will complement the Superintendent evaluation process described in the document entitled *Superintendent Evaluation Process, Criteria and Timelines*.
- 14.2 The purpose of the Board self-evaluation is to answer the following questions:
 - 14.2.1 How well have we fulfilled each of our defined roles in relation to our mission, goals and objectives as a Board this past year?
 - 14.2.2 How do we perceive our interpersonal working relationships?
 - 14.2.3 How well do we receive input and how well do we communicate?
 - 14.2.4 How well have we adhered to our annual work plan?
 - 14.2.5 How would we rate our Board-Superintendent relations?
 - 14.2.6 How well have we adhered to our governance policies?
 - 14.2.7 What have we accomplished this past year? How do we know?
- 14.3 The principles upon which the Board self-evaluation is based are as follows:
 - 14.3.1 A learning organization or a professional learning community is focused on the improvement of practice.

- 14.3.2 A pre-determined process for evaluation strengthens the governance functions and builds credibility for the Board.
- 14.3.3 An evidence-based approach provides objectivity.
- 14.4 The components of the Board self-evaluation are:
 - 14.4.1 Review of Board Role Performance
 - 14.4.2 Monitoring Interpersonal Working Relationships
 - 14.4.3 Monitoring Board Representation/Communication
 - 14.4.4 Review of Annual Work Plan Completion
 - 14.4.5 Monitoring Board-Superintendent Relations
 - 14.4.6 Review of Board Motions
 - 14.4.7 Review of Board Governance Policies
 - 14.4.8 Creating a Positive Path Forward

Reference: Section 60, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 80, 81, 82, 83, 145, 261, 262, School Act
Local Authorities Elections Act

First Reading: MARCH 11, 2008
Second Reading: MARCH 11, 2008
Third Reading: APRIL 08, 2008

Policy 8

COMMITTEES OF THE BOARD

The Board may establish committees to assist with its work.

The Board shall:

1. At its annual organizational meeting, establish such standing committees as it deems necessary. Such standing committees shall remain in place until the subsequent organizational meeting unless dissolved by Board motion.
2. At any duly constituted meeting, establish such standing or ad hoc committees as it deems necessary.

The Board will determine the terms of reference of each committee, including purpose, powers and duties, membership and meeting requirements.

The Board Chair and Superintendent shall be ex-officio members of all Board committees.

All committees of the Board, unless otherwise directed, shall prepare and submit a report to the Board. It is expected that reports will be included in the agenda package.

Standing Committees

Standing committees are established to assist the Board with work of an on-going or recurring nature.

1. Board Committee of the Whole

The Board Committee of the Whole is established as a standing committee of the Board, with responsibility for work as detailed below:

- 1.1 Purpose
 - ♦ To allow the Board to explore matters to much greater depth than can be accomplished in a scheduled regular meeting of the Board.
- 1.2 Powers and Duties
 - ♦ To make recommendations to the Board for formal debate. May include but is not limited to:
 - Communications / Public Relations
 - Finance
 - Facilities
 - Human Resources
 - Policy Development and Revision
- 1.3 Membership
 - ♦ All trustees
 - ♦ Superintendent and/or designate(s)
- 1.4 Meetings

All meetings are held prior to the regularly scheduled Board meeting and/or as determined by the Board Chair, in consultation with the Superintendent.

2. The Negotiations Committee – Alberta Teachers’ Association is established as a standing committee of the Board, with responsibility for work as detailed below:

- 2.1 Purpose
 - ♦ To negotiate a collective agreement with the ATA representatives

- 2.2 Powers and Duties
 - ♦ Establish Board proposals within the mandates set by the Board
 - ♦ Discuss, consult and negotiate with ATA representatives
 - ♦ Recommend action to the Board on negotiations issues
 - 2.3 Membership
 - ♦ One or more trustees as determined by the Board
 - ♦ Superintendent and/or designate(s)
 - 2.4 Meetings
 - ♦ As required to negotiate agreements
3. The Negotiations Committee – Canadian Union of Public Employees is established as a standing committee of the Board, with responsibility for work as detailed below:
- 3.1 Purpose
 - ♦ To negotiate a collective agreement with the CUPE representatives
 - 3.2 Powers and Duties
 - ♦ Establish Board proposals within the mandates set by the Board
 - ♦ Discuss, consult and negotiate with CUPE representatives
 - ♦ Recommend action to the Board on negotiations issues
 - 3.3 Membership
 - ♦ One or more trustees as determined by the Board
 - ♦ Superintendent and/or designate(s)
 - 3.4 Meetings
 - ♦ As required to negotiate agreements
4. The Teacher Board Advisory Committee is established as a standing committee of the Board, with responsibility for work as detailed below:
- 4.1 Purpose
 - ♦ The Committee exists as the primary vehicle for communicating the views of teachers on matters of school affairs with the Board
 - 4.2 Powers and Duties
 - ♦ Discuss items brought forward by either teachers or the Board, excluding those matters addressed through negotiations
 - ♦ Communicate to the Board the views of teachers on matters discussed
 - 4.3 Membership as per the Frame of Reference and Collective Agreement
 - ♦ One trustee
 - ♦ Superintendent and/or designate(s)
 - ♦ President of the Local ATA 39, One High School Representative, One Middle School Representative, Two Elementary Representatives chosen by the local
 - 4.4 Meetings
 - ♦ Called throughout the year as established by the Committee
5. The Support Staff Board Advisory Committee is established as a standing committee of the Board, with responsibility for work as detailed below:
- 5.1 Purpose
 - ♦ The Committee exists as the primary vehicle for communicating the views of support staff on matters of school affairs with the Board
 - 5.2 Powers and Duties
 - ♦ Discuss items brought forward by either support staff or the Board.
 - ♦ Communicate to the Board the views of support staff on matters discussed
 - 5.3 Membership as per the Frame of Reference
 - ♦ One trustee
 - ♦ Superintendent and/or designate(s)
 - ♦ Committee Representatives
 - 5.4 Meetings
 - ♦ Called throughout the year as established by the Committee
6. The Audit Committee is established as a standing committee of the Board, with the responsibility for work as detailed below:
- 6.1 **Purpose**
 - ♦ To provide direction in budget formation and implementation

- ♦ To recommend Auditors to the Board
 - ♦ To review terms of Audit engagement
 - ♦ To review Audited Financial Statements and Management Letter
- 6.2 **Powers and Duties**
- ♦ Audit
 - ♦ Review the external auditor's audit plan, including audit scope and approach.
 - ♦ Review the external auditor's audit report and findings with the external auditor and management.
 - ♦ Review the performance of the external auditors and make recommendations to the Board regarding their performance.
- 6.2.1 **Financial Statements**
- ♦ Review the preliminary financial statements of the Division and make recommendations to the Board on their approval.
 - ♦ Review significant accounting and reporting issues as they relate to the financial statements.
- 6.2.2 **Internal Control**
- ♦ Consider the effectiveness of the Division's internal controls, including information technology, security and controls.
 - ♦ Understand the scope of the external auditor's review of internal controls over financial reporting and obtain reports on any significant findings and recommendations, together with management's responses.
- 6.2.3 **Compliance**
- ♦ Review the findings of any examinations by regulatory agencies, and any audit observations.
 - ♦ Obtain regular updates from management and division legal counsel regarding compliance matters.
- 6.2.4 **Budget**
- ♦ Assess the needs and wishes of the system and our school communities, set priorities, and determine what can be achieved with the available resources to best meet educational needs of students throughout the division.
 - ♦ Provide direction on budget development, including review of budget assumptions.
- 6.3 **Membership**
- ♦ The Audit committee will consist of the following members and shall be for a one year term:
 - ♦ Two trustees and one of the trustees shall be the Vice-Chair.
 - ♦ Two members of the general public, who are independent to the Division, have no relationship to the audit firm and who are financially literate.
 - ♦ The Secretary-Treasurer and Superintendent
- 6.4 **Meetings**
- ♦ The Audit Committee will meet at least once a year, with authority to convene additional meetings, as circumstances require. All Audit Committee members are expected to attend each meeting.
 - ♦ Outside the scope of the annual audit, the Audit Committee may invite an external auditor, as approved by the Board, who then will have full access to all financial information.
- 6.5 **Compensation**
- ♦ The Audit Committee members shall be compensated as follows:
 - ♦ Elected School Trustees As per Board Policy
 - ♦ Public Members \$250 for each full day / \$125 for each half day
7. Ad Hoc Committees - Ad Hoc committees may be established at any meeting of the Board for the purpose of studying, investigating or acting on specific matters; they Cease to exist as soon as they have completed the specified task. Terms of reference are outlined at the time of establishment.
8. Resource Personnel - The Superintendent may appoint resource personnel to work with committees and shall determine the roles, responsibilities and reporting requirements of the resource personnel.

Legal Reference: Section 60, 61, 62, 63, 68, School Act
FIRST READING: MARCH 11, 2008
SECOND READING: MARCH 11, 2008
THIRD READING JUNE 10, 2008

Policy 9

BOARD REPRESENTATIVES

The Board will give consideration to naming representatives to various external committees, agencies and organizations. Such representation is established at the discretion of the Board to facilitate the exchange of information on matters of mutual concern and/or to discuss possible agreements between the Division and other organizations.

The Board will determine the terms of reference for each representative. The Superintendent may appoint resource personnel to work with representative and shall determine the roles, responsibilities and reporting requirements of resource personnel.

The following committees/organizations will have a Board representative as identified at the annual organization meeting:

1. ASBA Zone 6

1.1 Purpose

- ◆ Represent the Board at meetings of ASBA Zone 6

1.2 Powers and Duties

- ◆ Attend ASBA Zone 6 meetings
- ◆ Represent the Board's positions and interests at the Zone level
- ◆ Communicate to the Board the work of ASBA Zone 6

1.3 Membership

- ◆ One trustee

1.4 Meetings

- ◆ As called by ASBA Zone 6

2. ACSTA

2.1 Purpose

- ◆ Represent the Board as Director at ACSTA Board of Directors meetings for the advocacy of Catholic Education

2.2 Powers and Duties

- ◆ Attend ACSTA Board of Directors meetings
- ◆ Represent the Board's positions and interests at the Director's meetings
- ◆ Communicate to the Board the work of ACSTA

2.3 Membership

- ◆ One trustee

2.4 Meetings

- ◆ As called by ACSTA

3. Medicine Hat Catholic Schools' Education Foundation

3.1 Purpose

- ◆ Represent the Board at meetings of the Foundation

3.2 Powers and Duties

- ◆ Attend meetings of the Foundation as required
- ◆ Provide input to the Foundation from the Board's perspective
- ◆ Communicate to the Board the work of the Foundation

3.3 Membership

- ◆ One trustee

3.4 Meetings

- ◆ As called by the Foundation

4. Parent Association

4.1 Purpose

- ◆ Represent the Board at meetings of the Association

4.2 Powers and Duties

- ◆ Attend Parent Association meetings
- ◆ Provide input to the Association from the Board's perspective
- ◆ Communicate to the Board the work of the Parent Association

4.3 Membership

- ◆ One trustee

4.4 Meetings

- ◆ At the call of the Parent Association

5. Spiritual Leadership Scholarship Selection Committee

5.1 Purpose

- ◆ Represent the Board at meetings of the Committee

5.2 Powers and Duties

- ◆ Select scholarship recipients on an annual basis

5.3 Membership

- ◆ One trustee

5.4 Meetings

- ◆ As called by the Committee

Legal Reference: Sections 60, 61, 68 School Act

Policy 10

POLICY MAKING

The Board is responsible for providing the Division's students with a complete offering of learning opportunities delivered within the context of Catholic teachings and traditions. In order to meet its responsibility, the Board shall establish and maintain written policies and requires the Superintendent to keep current written administrative procedures that express its philosophical beliefs in support of Catholic education and provide effective guidelines for action.

The Board shall be guided in its approach to policy development by ensuring adherence to the requirements necessary to provide a Catholic education in compliance with provincial legislation.

Board policies are statements which set forth the purpose and prescribe in general terms the organization and program of a school system. They create a framework within which the Superintendent and his staff can discharge their assigned duties with positive direction. A policy provides a standard, in terms of goals and objectives, against which to measure the performance of the school system. In stating the community's basic goals and direction for the school system, policies are to foster stability and continuity.

Policies must be consistent with each other and give long-range direction to decision-making. They are to be of such nature as to ensure to a considerable extent that there will be clarity and consistency in Board decisions and in operational procedures.

Board policies shall provide an appropriate balance between the responsibility of the Board to develop and communicate the broad guidelines and direction for the Division and to assign authority to the Superintendent for the administrative operations of the Division.

The Board shall adhere to the following stages in its approach to policy development:

1. Planning

The Board, in cooperation with the Superintendent as a result of its own monitoring activities or on the suggestion of others, shall assess the need for a policy and identify the critical attributes of such a policy.

2. Development

The Board may develop the policy itself or delegate the authority for its development to the Superintendent or a Board committee.

3. Implementation

The Board is responsible for the implementation of policies governing its own processes. The Board and Superintendent share responsibility for the

implementation of policies relating to the Board-Superintendent relationship. The Superintendent is responsible for the implementation of all other policies.

4. Evaluation

The Board, in cooperation with the Superintendent, shall evaluate each policy in a timely manner in order to determine if it is achieving its intended purpose.

Specifically

1. Any trustee, employee, taxpayer, parent, student or School Council of the Division may make suggestions regarding the possible development of a policy or the need for policy revisions on any matter, by presenting a proposal for a policy or revisions in writing to the Superintendent or Board Chair. The proposal shall contain a brief statement of purpose or rationale.
2. Policy development or revision may also be initiated by the results of a public consultation, survey, needs assessment, or policy evaluation.
3. The Board Committee of the Whole is designated to review current policies, carefully consider policy alternatives, and initiate new policies prior to presenting policy and policy changes to the Board.
4. When developing policy, input is welcomed from those affected by the policy. Input may also be requested from government, community leaders, other Boards or agencies, and contractors. Placing the focus of decision-making and policy making on the Board does not imply the exclusion of meaningful opinion and input from staff members, parents and members of the community.
5. Policy adoption or revision requires first, second, and third readings at regular meetings of the Board and is to be publicized as widely as possible during the following procedure:

First Reading

The policy and rationale are presented, with a recommendation from administration, and the Policy Development and Revision Committee. The policy is then referred to all stakeholder groups for input.

Second Reading

A draft of the policy is presented to the Board, along with the Policy Development and Revision Committee's response to suggestions made between first and second Board readings of the policy. During the second reading direction is given regarding final wording of the policy.

Third Reading

The final draft of the policy is presented for approval.

6. Policy, when formally adopted by the Board, shall be recorded in the minutes of the Board meeting. Only those policies so adopted and recorded shall be regarded as official Board policy.

7. New or revised policies will become effective on the date of Board approval unless otherwise indicated in the Board motion.
8. Any policy of the Board may be rescinded at any regular Board meeting following a Notice of Motion being given at least two regular Board meetings previous to the meeting where the motion to rescind will be voted upon. The Motion to rescind shall be decided by a two-thirds majority (four out of five trustees) vote of the Board.
9. In the absence of existing policy, the Board may make decisions, by resolution, on matters affecting the Division.
10. The Board may direct the Superintendent to rewrite an administrative procedure as a draft Board policy and will provide the rationale for same.
11. The Superintendent must develop administrative procedures as specified in Board Policy 11 – Board Delegation of Authority – and may develop such other procedures as deemed necessary for the effective operation of the Division; these must be in accordance with Board policies.
12. The Board may also delete a policy and subsequently delegate to the Superintendent authority over this area. The Superintendent may choose to then develop an administrative procedure relative to this matter.
13. The Superintendent must inform the Board as an information item on the Non-Action Agenda of any changes to administrative procedures.
14. All Board policies shall be posted on the Division's website and distributed electronically to all Division staff.
15. The Board shall review each policy annually.
16. The Superintendent is responsible for alerting the Board when proposed motions may conflict with existing policies.

Reference: Section 60, 61, 113 School Act

First Reading:	MARCH 11, 2008
Second Reading:	MARCH 11, 2008
Third Reading:	APRIL 08, 2008

Policy 11

BOARD DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY

The School Act allows for the Board to delegate certain of its responsibilities and powers to others.

The Board authorizes the Superintendent to do any act or thing or to exercise any power that the Board may do, or is required to do, or may exercise, except those matters which, in accordance with section 61(2) of the School Act, cannot be delegated. This delegation of authority to the Superintendent specifically:

- ◆ Includes any authority or responsibility set out in the School Act and regulations as well as authority or responsibility set out in other legislation or regulations;
- ◆ Includes the ability to enact Administrative Procedures, practices or regulations required to carry out this authority; and also
- ◆ Includes the ability to sub-delegate this authority and responsibility as required.

Notwithstanding the above, the Board reserves to itself the authority to make decisions on specific matters requiring Board approval. This reserved authority of the Board is set out in Board policies, as amended from time to time.

Further, the Board requires that any new provincial, regional or local initiatives must be initially brought to the Board for discussion and determination of decision-making authority.

Specifically

1. The Superintendent is directed to develop an administrative procedure to fulfill Board obligations created by any federal legislation or provincial legislation other than the School Act.
2. The Superintendent is delegated the authority to develop Administrative Procedures that are consistent with provincial policies and procedures for the following program areas:
 - 2.1 Special Education
 - 2.2 Guidance and Counseling
 - 2.3 Services for Students and Children
 - 2.4 School-Based Decision Making
 - 2.5 Student Evaluation
 - 2.6 Teacher Growth, Supervision and Evaluation
 - 2.7 Home Education

- 2.8 Early Childhood Services
 - 2.9 Outreach Programs
 - 2.10 Knowledge and Employability Courses
 - 2.11 Locally Developed / Acquired and Authorized Junior and Senior High School Complementary Courses.
 - 2.12 Off – Campus Education
 - 2.13 English as a Second Language
 - 2.14 French as a Second Language and French Language Immersion
 - 2.15 Second Languages
 - 2.16 Transportation Fees
3. The Superintendent is authorized to suspend a teacher from the performance of the teacher's duties without prior notice if the Superintendent is of the opinion that the welfare of the students is threatened by the presence of the teacher. The suspension shall be conducted in accordance with the requirements of the School Act.
 4. The Board authorizes a line of credit not to exceed the accounts receivable from the preceding year at any one time to meet current expenditures in the fiscal year.

Legal Reference: Section 60, 61, 105, 113, 183 School Act

Policy 12

ROLE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

The Superintendent is the Chief Executive Officer of the Board and the Chief Education Officer of the Division. The Superintendent reports directly to the corporate Board and is accountable to the Board for the conduct and operation of the Division. All Board authority delegated to staff is delegated through the Superintendent.

The Superintendent is designated as the FOIP head under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

Specific Areas of Responsibility

1. Fiscal Management
 - 1.1 Ensures the fiscal management of the Division by the Treasurer is in accordance with the terms or conditions of any funding received by the Board under the School Act or any other Act.
2. Educational Leadership
 - 2.1 Provides leadership in all matters relating to education in the Division.
 - 2.2 Ensures students in the Division have the opportunity to meet the standards of education set by the Minister.
 - 2.3 Implements education policies established by the Minister.
3. Personnel Management

Has overall authority and responsibility for all personnel-related issues, except: the development of mandates for collective bargaining and those personnel matters precluded by Board policy.
4. Policy / Procedures

Provides leadership in the development of Board policies and administrative procedures.
5. Superintendent / Board Relations
 - 5.1 Establishes and maintains positive professional working relations with the Board.
6. Strategic Plan

Leads the strategic planning process including the development of Division goals, budget, facilities and transportation plans and implements plans as approved.

7. Organizational Management

- 7.1 Demonstrates effective organizational skills resulting in Division compliance with all legal, Ministerial and Board mandates and timelines.
- 7.2 Reports to the Minister with respect to matters identified in and required by the School Act.

8. Faith Leadership

- 8.1 Models involvement in a faith community and ensure students and staffs are provided opportunities for spiritual development within the school jurisdiction.
- 8.2 Be visible within the Catholic faith community.

9. Student Welfare

- 9.1 Ensures that each student is provided with a safe and caring environment that fosters and maintains respectful and responsible behaviors.
- 9.2 Ensures the safety and welfare of students while participating in school programs or while being transported to or from school programs on transportation provided by the Division.
- 9.3 Ensures the facilities adequately accommodate Division students.
- 9.4 Acts as, or designates, the attendance officer for the Division.

Legal Reference: Section 14, 45, 60, 61, 113, 114, 115, School Act

First Reading: MARCH 11, 2008
Second Reading: MARCH 11, 2008
Third Reading: APRIL 08, 2008

Policy 13

APPEALS AND HEARINGS REGARDING STUDENT MATTERS

Under section 124 of the School Act, the only matters on which the Minister of Education will consider appeals are:

1. Special education placement;
2. Language of instruction;
3. Home education programs;
4. Student expulsion;
5. Amount and payment of fees or costs;
6. Access to, or the accuracy or completeness of student records;
7. Amount of fees payable by a Board to another Board; or
8. Board responsibility for a specific student.

The Board will hear appeals on administrative decisions on all matters other than expulsion of students, which are submitted in accordance with section 123 of the School Act and that significantly affect the education of a student.

A. All Matters Other Than Expulsion of a Student

1. Prior to a decision being appealed to the Board, it must be appealed to the Superintendent.
2. Parents of students, and students 16 years of age or over, have the right to appeal to the Board a decision of the Superintendent. The Superintendent must advise parents and students of this right of appeal.
3. The appeal to the Board must be made within five days from the date that the individual was informed of the Superintendent's decision. The appeal must be filed in writing and must contain the name of the party filing the appeal, the date, the matter at hand, and the reason for the appeal.
4. Parents, or students as above, when appealing a decision to the Board, have the right to be assisted by a resource person(s) of their choosing. The responsibility for engaging and paying for such assistance rests with the parents or students. The name of the resource person(s) must be provided to the Board five (5) days in advance of the hearing.

5. The hearing of the appeal must be scheduled so as to ensure that the person making the appeal and the Superintendent, or designate, whose decision is being appealed, has sufficient notice and time to prepare for the presentation. Notification must be given at least four (4) calendar days in advance of the hearing unless unanimous agreement is reached to waive the notification period.
6. The appeal will be heard in-camera, with specified individuals in attendance.
7. The appeal hearing will be conducted in accordance with the following guidelines:
 - 7.1 The Board Chair will outline the purpose of the hearing, which is to provide:
 - 7.1.1 An opportunity for the parties to make representation in support of their respective positions to the Board. This information may include expert medical, psychological and educational data and may be presented by witnesses. The information presented may include both written and verbal communications;
 - 7.1.2 The Board with the means to receive information and to review the facts of the dispute;
 - 7.1.3 A process through which the Board can reach a fair and impartial decision.
 - 7.2 Notes of the proceedings will be recorded for the purpose of the Board's records.
 - 7.3 The Superintendent and/or staff will explain the decision and give reasons for the decision.
 - 7.4 The appellant will present the appeal and the reasons for the appeal and will have an opportunity to respond to information provided by the Superintendent and/or staff.
 - 7.5 The Superintendent and/or staff will have an opportunity to respond to information presented by the appellant.
 - 7.6 Board members will have the opportunity to ask questions or clarification from both parties.
 - 7.7 No cross-examination of the parties shall be allowed, unless the Chair deems it advisable under the circumstances.
 - 7.8 The Board will meet without the respective parties to the appeal in attendance to arrive at a decision regarding the appeal. The recording secretary will remain in attendance. The Board may have legal counsel in attendance.
 - 7.9 If the Board requires additional information or clarification in order to make its decision, both parties to the appeal will be requested to return to the hearing for the required additional information.
 - 7.10 The Board decision and the reasons for that decision will be communicated to the appellant by telephone and confirmed in writing following the hearing. Included in the communication to the appellant shall be information that the appellant has the right to seek a review by the Minister if

the appellant is dissatisfied with the decision of the Board, if the matter under appeal is a matter described in Section 124 of the School Act.

B. Expulsion of a Student

The Board will hear representations with respect to a recommendation for a student expulsion in accordance with sections 24 and 25 of the School Act.

If a student is not to be reinstated within five school days of the date of suspension, the principal shall immediately report in writing all the circumstances of the suspension and provide a recommendation to the Board through the Office of the Superintendent.

The Board will convene in an in-camera session upon the call of the Superintendent, but in no event shall the meeting occur later than ten school days from the first day of suspension.

Parents of students, or students 16 years of age or over, have the right to be assisted by a resource person(s) of their choosing. The responsibility for engaging and paying for such assistance rests with the parents or students.

The Board may have legal counsel in attendance.

Notes of the proceedings will be recorded for the purpose of the Board's records.

The expulsion hearing will be conducted in accordance with the following guidelines:

1. The Chair will outline the purpose of the hearing, which is to:
 - 1.1 Provide an opportunity to hear representations relative to the recommendation from the principal;
 - 1.2 Provide an opportunity for the student and/or the student's parents to make representations;
 - 1.3 Reinstatement or expulsion of the student.
2. The Chair will outline the procedure to be followed, which will be as follows:
 - 2.1 The principal will present the report documenting the details of the case and the recommendation to expel the student;
 - 2.2 The student and the student's parents will be given an opportunity to respond to the information presented and to add any additional relevant information;
 - 2.3 The members of the Board will have the opportunity to ask questions of clarification from both the principal and the student and the student's parents;
 - 2.4 The Board will meet, without either the administration or the student and the student's parents present, to discuss the case and the recommendation. The recording secretary may remain in attendance. Legal counsel may also remain in attendance.

- 2.5 Should the Board require additional information, both parties will be requested to return in order to provide the requested information;
 - 2.6 The Board will then make a decision to either reinstate or expel the student; and
 - 2.7 The Board's decision shall be communicated in writing to the student and the student's parents within 5 days of the hearing, with copies being provided to the principal and the Superintendent. (The Superintendent's office will attempt to inform the parent(s) and the student of the decision by telephone or personal communication as soon as possible after a decision has been reached.)
3. If the Board's decision is to expel the student, the following information must be included in the letter to the student and the student's parents:
 - 3.1 The length of the expulsion which must be greater than 10 school days;
 - 3.2 The educational program to be provided to the student and the name of the individual to be contacted in order to make the necessary arrangements; and
 - 3.3 The right of the student and the student's parents to request a review of the decision by the Minister of Education.
 4. Expulsion is at the discretion of the Board. The Board, in making its decision, shall take into account the circumstances under which the student committed the offence. The following offences may be considered by the Board as justification for expulsion:
 - 4.1 Open opposition to the authority of the staff;
 - 4.2 Conduct deemed to be injurious to the general tone and well being of the student population being served by the school and the staff employed by the Division;
 - 4.3 Willful disobedience over a prolonged period or in a single instance where the disobedience endangers the students, teacher, building or general climate of orderly behavior;
 - 4.4 Habitual neglect to do work that is assigned to the student and which is within his/her competence to complete;
 - 4.5 Profane or indecent language in the presence of other students or before staff;
 - 4.6 Threats of physical violence or acts of violence against a staff member or a serious unprovoked attack on other students;
 - 4.7 Any act of indecency in a school building, on the school grounds, or on a school bus;
 - 4.8 Failure to observe and to obey any reasonable rule, regulation or procedure established by a staff member for maintaining a climate of behavior conducive to learning;
 - 4.9 Willful or malicious damage to school or Division property or equipment;

- 4.10 Prohibited use of drugs, alcohol, or tobacco; or
- 4.11 Use of explicit materials.

It is expected that all students will comply with section 12 of the School Act, Board policy and school policy.

Legal Reference: Section 10, 12, 24, 25, 48, 60, 61, 123, 124, 125 School Act

Policy 14

HEARINGS ON TEACHER MATTERS

The Superintendent may transfer a teacher in accordance with section 104 of the School Act. The teacher may make a written request to the Board to have a hearing before the Board for the purpose of objecting to the transfer.

The Superintendent may make a recommendation to the Board to terminate a contract of employment with a teacher or to terminate a designation of a teacher. In terminating a contract of employment or a designation, the Board shall act reasonably.

The Board or the Superintendent may suspend a teacher from the performance of the teacher's duties in accordance with section 105 of the School Act. The teacher may appeal such suspension to a Board of Reference. The Board of Trustees may make an investigation of the circumstances and may reinstate the teacher pursuant to sections 105(8) – 105(11) of the School Act, or it may terminate the contract of employment in accordance with section 107 of the School Act.

Specifically

1. Transfers

- 1.1 A teacher who has been given a notice of transfer by the Superintendent must make a written request to the Board to have a hearing before the Board for the purpose of objecting to the transfer within seven days of receipt of the transfer notice.
- 1.2 The teacher shall submit a request for a hearing before the Board to the Secretary-Treasurer with a copy being provided to the Superintendent.
- 1.3 The Board may set a date and time for the hearing requested not earlier than 14 days after the teacher receives the notice of transfer, unless the teacher agrees in writing to an earlier date.
- 1.4 The Secretary-Treasurer shall advise the teacher in writing of the date, time and location of the hearing. Notification of the hearing shall be given at least four (4) calendar days in advance of the hearing unless unanimous agreement is reached to waive the notification period.

2. Termination of Contract or Designation

- 2.1 When the Superintendent has decided to make a recommendation to the Board to terminate a teacher's contract, or terminate a designation, the Superintendent shall forward that recommendation;
 - 2.1.1 To the teacher, not less than 14 days before the scheduled date of the meeting at which the recommendation shall be considered; and
 - 2.1.2 To the trustees, through the recording secretary, in accordance with the practice for regular Board meetings.

- 2.1.3 All supporting documentation and the names of any witnesses to be called shall be forwarded by the Superintendent to the teacher not less than 14 days before the date of the hearing.
 - 2.2 One adjournment of the meeting of no more than 14 days shall be granted by the Board Chair, provided that:
 - 2.2.1 A request is submitted in writing to the recording secretary by the teacher no less than seven days before the originally scheduled date of the meeting; or
 - 2.2.2 The request, although not submitted in accordance with clause 2.2.1 is supported with reasons that the Board Chair considers valid, including the reason the request was not submitted within the required period.
 - 2.2.3 The Board Chair may seek submissions from the Superintendent, as a party to the appeal, about whether to grant an adjournment. Where reasonable, the Board Chair may grant further adjournments.
3. Suspension
 - 3.1 Should the Board determine that it is necessary to suspend the services of a teacher for reasons noted in Section 105 (1) of the School Act, the Board shall provide the teacher with written notice of the suspension specifying the reasons for the action.
 - 3.2 A teacher wishing to appeal the suspension to the Board must submit a request in writing to the Secretary-Treasurer with a copy being provided to the Superintendent, within one week of receipt of the notice of suspension.
 - 3.3 The Board shall meet to hear the appeal within three weeks of having received the written request from the teacher.
 - 3.4 The Secretary-Treasurer shall advise the teacher in writing of the date, time and location of the Board meeting at which the appeal will be heard. Notification of the hearing shall be given at least four (4) calendar days in advance of the hearing unless unanimous agreement is reached to waive the notification period.
4. Provision of Information
 - 4.1 Any written materials the teacher or the Superintendent wishes trustees to consider must be submitted to the recording secretary not less than four days prior to the scheduled date of the meeting. The recording secretary will provide copies to the trustees, the Superintendent, and the teacher.
 - 4.2 The teacher or the Superintendent may be accompanied by counsel or other representative, and may bring witnesses if, not less than five days prior to the scheduled date of the meeting, the following is provided by the teacher or the Superintendent in writing:
 - 4.2.1 The names of counsel, other representatives, and any witnesses; and
 - 4.2.2 An explanation satisfactory to the Board Chair as to why the witnesses' evidence may not be adequately presented in writing.

5. Procedure at Hearings

- 5.1 Notes of the proceedings will be recorded for the purposes of the Board's records.
- 5.2 The Superintendent and the teacher shall be given an opportunity to make introductory and closing statements.
- 5.3 If the Superintendent considers it necessary to have witnesses appear on behalf of the recommendation, they shall be called to appear prior to the teacher making any representations.
- 5.4 Trustees shall ask questions of a witness only after the party calling the witness has completed its presentation.
- 5.5 The presentation of the teacher's case shall commence after the Superintendent has presented his/her evidence.
- 5.6 After the teacher's closing statement, the Superintendent shall have an opportunity to respond to information presented by the teacher.
- 5.7 Board members will have the opportunity to ask questions or clarification from both parties.
- 5.8 No cross-examination of witnesses shall be allowed, unless the Board Chair deems it advisable.
- 5.9 The Board will meet without the respective parties to the appeal in attendance to arrive at a decision regarding the appeal. The recording secretary will remain in attendance. The Board may have legal counsel in attendance.
- 5.10 If the Board requires additional information or clarification in order to make its decision, both parties to the appeal will be requested to return to the hearing for the required additional information.
- 5.11 The Board decision will be communicated to the teacher by telephone and confirmed in writing following the hearing.

Legal Reference: Section 104, 105, 107, 109, School Act

Policy 15

SCHOOL BUILDING CLOSURE

The Board has the authority to permanently close a school or a portion of a school. Because of the serious consequences of such a decision, the Board is committed to a consultation process with the school community which is set out in government regulations. This policy is meant to address the permanent closure of a school, not the emergency closure of a school.

The Board believes in the maintenance of our Catholic Community Schools and will only consider the closure of a school as a final alternative. The Board is committed to broad and extensive consultation with our school community whenever a school is being considered for closure.

Specifically,

1. A school closure may be considered by the Board if one or more of the following criteria are present:
 - 1.1 A majority of parents of the affected school petition for the closing;
 - 1.2 The enrolment falls below 60 for at least two consecutive years;
 - 1.3 The per student cost has become prohibitive in relation to other schools in the Division;
 - 1.4 The efficient operation of the Division requires that students be moved from one school to another.

Legal Reference: Section 58, 60, 61, School Act
Alberta Regulation 257/2003

Policy 16

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF PERSONNEL

The Board believes that the recruitment and selection of Division personnel is a shared responsibility between the Board and the Superintendent.

The Board further believes strong central leadership and administration at the Division level is essential to the effective and efficient operation of the school system.

Specifically

1. The Board, in the case of the Superintendent, or the Superintendent or designate, in all other instances, will assume the sole responsibility for initiating the advertising process and will make every reasonable effort to ensure that all current Division employees are made aware of staff vacancies.
2. The Board has the sole authority to recruit and select an individual for the position of Superintendent.
3. The following process will be followed for all Coordinators, Directors and Consultants:
 - 3.1 The Superintendent shall be responsible for the creation of a short list of candidates for these positions.
 - 3.2 The Board, the Superintendent and designate(s) shall constitute the interview team.
 - 3.3 The decision will normally be made by consensus of the interview team. The Superintendent will have the final choice.
 - 3.4 These positions shall have a role description and each person occupying one of the positions shall have a written contract of employment. The Board retains authority to determine contracts and contract renewals after receiving a recommendation from the Superintendent.
4. The Superintendent is delegated full authority to recruit and select staff for all central office positions not including the senior administration level detailed above.
5. The following process will be followed for the new appointments (not including transfers) to the positions of principal and vice-principal:
 - 5.1 The Superintendent shall form an interview team which will include at least one trustee, and may include others as deemed necessary.
 - 5.2 The School Council will be invited to submit a profile of the ideal candidate for the school.
 - 5.3 The decision will normally be made by consensus of the interview team. The Superintendent will have the final choice.

- 5.4 The Superintendent is delegated the authority to make all decisions regarding the term and/or continuing appointments of school-based administrators utilizing Board approved contract templates.
6. The Board agrees to reimburse out-of-town candidates who attend interviews for the following administrative positions: principal, Director of Religious Education, Associate Superintendent of Student Services, Secretary-Treasurer, Deputy Superintendent, and Superintendent. Reimbursement will include normal travel expenses (either the cost of an economy air fare, or Government of Alberta rate per kilometer), plus any necessary food and lodging costs.
 7. The Superintendent is delegated full authority to recruit and select staff for all other school-based positions.
 8. In the event of an unexpected or short-term vacancy, the Superintendent may appoint an “acting principal” or “acting vice-principal” without going through a formal selection process.
 9. The Superintendent or designate may initiate a procedure of transfers of principals and vice-principals between schools without going through an advertising and competition process.
 10. All offers of employment shall be conditional on the successful applicant providing a criminal record check and a child welfare information services (CWIS) check that is acceptable to the Superintendent. Additionally, the Superintendent may require documentation certifying that the candidate is medically fit for the position.

Legal Reference: Section 60, 61, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117 School Act
Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

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Third Reading: APRIL 08, 2008

Policy 17

SCHOOL COUNCILS

Alberta Education recognizes the right of parents to be involved in their children's education and for parents, community members and school staff to be involved in key decisions about the education of students. It is not the intent of this policy to restate the School Act, Department of Education Regulations or policy, but to provide guidelines for School Councils in addition to those documents.

The Board believes that a School Council is a means to facilitate collaboration among all education partners in the local school. The Board supports the establishment of a School Council at each school in the Division in accordance with the requirements of the School Act and provincial regulations. School Councils are advisory in nature and will have a role in advising and consulting with the principal on any matter relating to the school.

Specifically,

1. The mission statement of the Division identifies a distinctive vision and purpose of schooling that is built upon the values of the Catholic faith. The Board views that School Councils are important partners in ensuring these values are fostered in the daily routines and extra-curricular programs. School Councils assist by encouraging families to take active interest in the programs offered by their school.
2. All parents of students in school shall be eligible for membership in the School Council.
3. School Councils are advocates for the Catholic school community and are encouraged to maintain a liaison with the Board. The Board recognizes the Medicine Hat Catholic Schools Parent Association as an additional means to provide information to School Councils and to receive advice from School Councils.
4. The Board shall provide any School Council the right to address the Board on any issue at the request of the School Council Chair. The School Council may make a presentation at any regularly scheduled meeting of the Board, provided adequate notice is given (at least five (5) working days prior to and not including the date of the meeting).
5. Pursuant to their role, School Councils do not deliberate specific or individual personnel or student issues.
6. Each School Council shall submit to the Board by October 15 of each year, for the preceding school year, copies of:
 - 6.1 Financial statements of any money handled by the School Council;

- 6.2 A report outlining the activities of the School Council; and
- 6.3 Minutes of each meeting.
7. The Board encourages School Councils to contribute, through the principal, to newsletters and the annual report by submitting articles outlining:
- Significant accomplishments at the school;
 - Major events or projects at the school; and
 - Results of studies undertaken.
8. The Board encourages School Councils to develop school policies which address school issues and which may further elaborate on any Board policy. To make policies meaningful, before any school policy is implemented, the School Council shall:
- Ensure that the school community has been given the opportunity to have input into the policy prior to implementation (e.g. first, second and third reading similar to Board policy development);
 - Ensure that the policy has been voted upon and passed by a majority of School Council members and that the minutes have recorded the motion and the vote;
 - That when passed, the school community is adequately informed through school newsletters, School Council newsletters, or other accepted means of communication at the school level (e.g. web page) of the policy and implications for students and parents.
- Any policies developed by School Councils will be sent to the Board for information.
9. The Board may request the Minister to dissolve a School Council if the Minister is of the opinion that the School Council is not carrying out its responsibilities. The Board may request the Minister to dissolve a School Council if one of the following negative conditions prevail:
- Fraudulent, criminal or unethical behavior;
 - Internal dissension affecting morale;
 - Adversarial relationships with staff;
 - Refusal to follow the policies of the Board or to carry out its responsibilities in accordance with the School Act and Alberta Education Regulations;
 - Disruption of the educational climate; or
 - Unresolved disputes between the School Council and the principal.
10. The Board requires the principal to take all reasonable steps to establish an advisory committee for the school if the School Council is dissolved, suspended or if establishment is unsuccessful, in accordance with Alberta Education Regulations.
- 10.1 Membership of the advisory committee shall include:
- 10.1.1 The Superintendent

- 10.1.2 A parent
 - 10.1.3 A teacher in the school
 - 10.2 The principal, in consultation with the advisory committee, shall establish:
 - 10.2.1 Meeting dates and locations;
 - 10.2.2 Meeting procedures; and
 - 10.2.3 Officers
 - 10.3 The advisory committee shall assume duties and functions delegated by the Board to School Councils for the remainder of the school year.
11. The Board will provide meeting space in the Board Office for the Medicine Hat Catholic Schools Parent Association whenever requested to do so.
12. Conflict Resolution and Appeal Procedures
- 12.1 Most disputes can be resolved through open and frank discussion and a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities. The first step in any dispute is for the participants to identify the specific areas of concern and then to attempt to resolve them.
 - 12.2 The communication and conflict resolution channel shall be:
School Council > Principal > Superintendent > Board.
 - 12.3 When the need to hear an appeal arises, the Board shall establish a hearing date, time, and place which allows the parties to the appeal sufficient notice to prepare for the appeal.
 - 12.4 The appeal shall be heard by the Board. The Superintendent and/or designate(s) may be present to assist the Board, except in cases when it is their decision that is being appealed. In that circumstance, they shall attend to make representation to support their position.
 - 12.5 The School Council Chair and the principal will be given an opportunity to review their positions regarding the dispute and the issues surrounding the dispute. The party making application for appeal shall proceed first and be given a full and ample opportunity to raise concerns before the Board. The other party shall then be given ample opportunity to explain the party's position to the Board. The other party shall then be given ample opportunity to explain the party's position to the Board regarding the disputed matter.
 - 12.6 In the event that the Superintendent has been asked by the parties to the appeal to give a decision with respect to the disputed matter, the Superintendent shall be entitled to make representations regarding his findings and his recommendation as to resolution of the dispute to the Board.
 - 12.7 Each party to the dispute shall be given ample opportunity to respond both to the concerns raised by themselves with respect to the dispute, and the Superintendent's proposed resolution of the dispute. Board members and the Superintendent or designate(s) may question the parties to clarify the facts.
 - 12.8 The Board will discuss the matter in the absence of the parties and the Superintendent or designate(s).

12.9 The Board will make a decision in respect of the appeal and advise the parties in writing regarding the decision and the reasons for that decision. The Board decision shall be considered final.

13. As an alternate to conflict resolution and appeal procedures 12 above, third party mediation is also acceptable. The mediator shall be chosen by mutual agreement of the parties to the dispute. Costs for mediation shall be borne by the school.

Legal Reference: Section 20, 22, 60, 61, School Act
School Councils Regulation 171/98
School Councils Policy 1.8.3
School Councils Resources Manual (1995)
School Councils Handbook (1999)

Policy 18

PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

The Board believes in the consultative process of decision-making and consults broadly with all stakeholder groups within the community whenever possible. All regular Board meetings are open to the public, except for meetings where circumstances justify a meeting in private, as provided in the School Act. The Board supports the public's right to information regarding the education of students and the spending of educational dollars as part of our accountability to our ratepayers and parents. The Board distributes its Annual Education Results Report to all interested groups and the media. The Board also publicizes the Division's student achievement test and diploma exam results.

The Board has an obligation to keep the electorate accurately informed about Division activities. One mechanism for achieving this objective is the use of print, radio and television media.

The Board strives to foster quality relationships with the media and to establish a climate of communication that is open, ethical, credible and professional. It is the desire of the Board that Board meetings receive accurate and ample coverage by the news media. Trustees welcome the attendance of news media at Board meetings in order that items of business and the decisions of the meeting are reported to the public.

Specifically,

1. No person shall be excluded from a regular Board meeting except for disruptive behavior, or except under those circumstances that justify a meeting in private.
2. Delegations to the Board are welcome.
3. The Board will widely distribute within the Catholic Community our Three Year Education Plan and our Annual Education Results Report.
4. Information releases, which accurately communicate the Board's business to the public, may only be issued by persons authorized by the Board as per Policy 5 – Role of the Board Chair.
5. The Superintendent shall approve all information released to the media from central office.
6. All school-based media releases must be cleared through the Superintendent prior to release.
7. In all cases of media communications, the provisions of the FOIP Act and Board policy must be respected.

8. All media releases or other forms of communication regarding any Division operation, including school issued communications, must be accurate, complete and timely.
9. The Board Chair or Superintendent will plan and implement all major media announcements and news conferences.
10. Representatives of the media may be permitted into the schools for legitimate reporting and promotional purposes. This is at the discretion of the Superintendent or designate. Particular care must be exercised in protecting the rights of students when media are present.

Appropriate Division and school release forms in accordance with FOIP are to be completed.
11. In the event of emergency or crisis interactions, the Superintendent or designate shall determine what information shall be given to the media, and by whom.
12. In the event of a critical incident at a school site, all media communications are to be directed to the Superintendent until such time as a site-based media spokesperson contact is established. In such cases, direct on-site communication by students and staff with the media is to be coordinated through the media spokesperson and are otherwise discouraged.
13. The news media shall be provided copies of the agenda for regular Board meetings no later than two working days in advance of the day of the meeting.
14. Suitable accommodation for the news media shall be provided at all regular Board meetings.
15. It shall be the responsibility of the Superintendent or designate to notify the news media, as soon as possible, of any change in the regular time or place of a Board meeting, and to provide the media with notice of any important additions to the agenda that are not on the printed copy available to the media.

Legal Reference: Section 27, 60, 61, 70, 113, School Act
Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act
Policy 5 – Role of the Board Chair