

BOARD OPERATIONS

The Board's ability to discharge its obligations in an efficient and effective manner is dependent upon the development and implementation of a sound organizational design. In order to discharge its responsibilities to the electorate of the District, the Board shall hold meetings as often as 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 the business of the Board can be conducted in an orderly and efficient manner. All points of procedure not provided for in this Policy Handbook shall be decided in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order.

The Board's 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 general public to contribute to the educational process, Board meetings and a number of committee meetings will be open to the public. Towards this end, the Board believes its affairs must be conducted in public to the greatest extent possible.

There are times when British Columbia Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act legislation requires or when the Board determines that public interest is best served by private discussion of specific issues in "in-camera" sessions.

In order to carry out its responsibilities effectively, the Board will hold periodic meetings of several types. Formal meetings, at which all formal and legal business of the Board as a corporate body shall be done, may be designated as Inaugural, regular, special, or in-camera meetings. The Board may also hold informal meetings from time to time for the purposes of general discussion, workshops, meetings with other individuals or groups, or for information gathering and sharing.

The Board has adopted specific policy governing Board operation and the conduct of its formal meetings.

1. Board Composition and Elections

- 1.1. By Ministerial Order dated April 6, 2018 School District No. 57 (Prince George) Board of Education consists of seven Trustees elected from three Trustee Electoral Areas see Appendix A Electoral Map as follows: five from the Prince George Trustee Electoral Area, one from the Mackenzie Trustee Electoral Area and one from the Robson Valley Trustee Electoral Area.
- 1.2. Trustees on the SD57 Board of Education represent all students in the district regardless of the Trustee Electoral area in which they are elected.

Policy 7

2. Inaugural and Subsequent Annual Meetings of the Board

2.1. Inaugural Meeting

- 2.1.1. After the general local election of trustees, the Secretary Treasurer for the District shall convene a first meeting of the Board as soon as possible in accordance with Sections 49 and 67 of the School Act and, in any event, within thirty (30) days from the date that the new Board begins its term of office.
- 2.1.2. At the first meeting of the Board, the Superintendent shall announce the results of trustee elections and confirm that all trustees have taken the Oath of Office as required by the *School Act*, or cause to be administered, the Oath of Office for trustees present who have not taken it, attached hereto as Appendix B.
- 2.1.3. At the first meeting of the Board, the Superintendent shall cause to be administered the Trustee Code of Ethics for all trustees present who have not taken it, attached hereto as Appendix C.
- 2.1.4. At the first meeting of the Board, the Superintendent shall call for nominations for Board Chair, and, if there is more than one nominee, a vote by secret ballot will be conducted. If more than two nominations are made and if from the first ballot no nominee receives a clear majority, the nominee receiving the fewest votes shall be eliminated from the ballot. This procedure shall be continued until one candidate receives a clear majority, and that person shall preside for the ensuing year or until a new Chair is elected.
 - 2.1.4.1. Any other Trustee may nominate any Trustee and no seconder shall be required.
 - 2.1.4.2. Nominations shall be called three times.
 - 2.1.4.3. All voting shall be by ballots, except where Trustees are attending the meeting through electronic means which would necessitate electronic voting.
- 2.1.5. The Chair so elected shall assume the chair for the remainder of the meeting.
- 2.1.6. The Board shall proceed to elect a Vice-Chair, a British Columbia School Trustees Association Provincial Councillor, a British Columbia School Trustees Association Provincial Alternate Councillor, a representative to the B.C. Public School Employer's Association and an alternate representative to the B.C. Public School Employer's Association in the same manner as the election of the Chair.

Policy 7

2.1.7. Following the elections of the Chair and Vice-Chair the order of business shall include:

2.1.7.1. Preliminary discussion of appointments of trustees to committees and as representatives to outside organizations.

2.2. Annual Meeting

2.2.1. Each year thereafter during the term of office the Board shall hold an annual meeting in November. The order of business shall include:

2.2.1.1. Election of Chairperson and Vice Chairperson;

2.2.1.2. Upon election, the Chairperson shall assume the chair and shall immediately conduct the election of a British Columbia School Trustees Association Provincial Councillor, British Columbia School Trustees Association Provincial Alternate Councillor, representative to the B.C. Public School Employer's Association and an alternate representative to the B.C. Public School Employer's Association in the same manner as the election of the Chair.

3. Board Meetings

3.1. The Board will publish a calendar of regular public meeting dates at the beginning of each school year. Ten regular meetings shall be scheduled throughout the year, beginning at 4:00 p.m. and ending at 6:00 p.m., while district schools are in session. After two hours have passed, the regular public meeting may be continued for up to two 30 minute periods with unanimous agreement of the trustees present.

3.2. In all meetings of the Board, procedures shall be guided by Robert's Rules of Order, except where provisions of the bylaws of the Board or the *School Act* may conflict, in which case the latter shall prevail.

3.3. All meetings of the Board will be recorded and recordings will be maintained for a period of twelve (12) months. Recordings of regular and special public meetings will be posted on the website.

3.4. A Trustee who states an intention to propose a motion at the next meeting, shall submit a recommendation and rationale, in the form of a proper written motion prior to the regular Board meeting it is to be debated at in order that it may be included in the agenda package for the meeting.

3.5. If a Board decision must be made urgently, a Trustee shall at the time provide a recommendation and rationale, in the form of a proper written motion to the Secretary Treasurer to be shared with Trustees for consideration to include the item in an amended agenda.

Policy 7

- 3.6. The Chairperson may enter into debate and vote as any other Trustee.
- 3.7. Prior to a decision being made on an issue, a Trustee may make a motion requesting that a public hearing, forum, focus group, task force, survey or poll or an ad hoc committee be formed to address the specific issue, or that the matter be referred to staff or the appropriate Committee.
- 3.8. Forty-eight hours' notice in writing shall be given of each special meeting of the Board, such must be given to each Trustee by delivery to their school district email.
- 3.9. Written notice of any special meeting of the Board may be waived provided that reasonable steps have been taken to notify all Trustees of the meeting and that not less than the number of Trustees required to make a quorum agree to the waiving of the written notice.
- 3.10. A quorum shall be a majority of Trustees holding office at the time of the meeting. No decision may be made in the absence of a quorum except to adjourn or recess the meeting or to take steps to establish a quorum.
- 3.11. All matters coming before the Board shall be considered in public sessions except the following:
 - 3.11.1. Personnel matters
 - 3.11.1.1. Salary claims and negotiations
 - 3.11.1.2. Efficiency, discipline or retirement of employees
 - 3.11.1.3. Employee promotion or termination
 - 3.11.2. Legal matters
 - 3.11.2.1. Accident claims
 - 3.11.2.2. Legal actions brought by or against the Board
 - 3.11.2.3. Legal opinions respecting any matters which are to be considered in private session
 - 3.11.3. Student matters
 - 3.11.3.1. Indigent students
 - 3.11.3.2. Student discipline

Policy 7

- 3.11.4. Property matters
 - 3.11.4.1. Negotiations regarding purchase, lease or sale of property
 - 3.11.4.2. Future site planning and designation
- 3.11.5. Investigations regarding possible school closures
- 3.11.6. Auditors' management letter
- 3.11.7. Medical matters respecting individual students or employees
- 3.11.8. Other matters that the Chairperson considers appropriate for initial discussion in camera
- 3.11.9. Such other matters as the Board may determine
- 3.12. No Trustee shall disclose to the public the proceedings of an in camera meeting unless a motion has been passed at the meeting to allow such disclosure.
- 3.13. A Trustee may make a motion to place an in camera item of business onto the agenda of the public session and, upon the motion being seconded and discussed, a simple majority vote in favour of the motion shall be sufficient cause to move the item into the public session.
- 3.14. Subject to appropriate sections of the [School Act](#), its attendant regulations, and existing contracts, the Board may exclude from attendance at an in camera meeting an employee under consideration by the Board relative to the employee's salary, promotion or termination, efficiency, discipline, retirement or any other matter directly concerning the employee.
- 3.15. Development of Regular Public Meeting Agenda (Open)
 - a) Call to Order
 - b) Ancestral Land Acknowledgement
 - c) Approval of Agenda
 - d) School District News
 - e) Presentations
 - f) Minutes of Previous Meetings
 - g) Business Arising from the Minutes
 - h) Old Business
 - i) Business and Operations Committee
 - j) Board Education Committee
 - k) Advisory Committee
 - l) New Business
 - m) District Administration Reports
 - n) Trustee Reports
 - o) Correspondence
 - p) Adjournment
 - q) Public Remarks Related to the Board Meeting

Policy 7

3.16. In-Camera Board Meetings (Closed)

- a) Call to Order
- b) Ancestral Land Acknowledgement
- c) Adoption of Minutes of Previous Meetings
- d) Special Meeting Topic
- e) Adjournment

3.17. Special Meetings (Open) and Special Confidential (Closed / In-Camera) Meetings

A special meeting of the Board may be called by:

- a) The Chairperson.
- b) The Secretary-Treasurer, upon written request of a majority of the Trustees holding office.
- c) A majority of the Board at a meeting of the Board.
- d) No business other than that for which the meeting was called shall be conducted at a special meeting.

4. Board Minutes

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

4.1. The minutes shall record:

- a) Date, time and place of meeting;
- b) Type of meeting (public or in-camera; inaugural, annual, regular or special);
- c) Name of presiding officer;
- d) Names of those Trustees and administration in attendance;
- e) Approval of preceding minutes;
- f) Only motions will be recorded in the minutes. Preamble, rationale, or discussions will not be recorded in the minutes, unless directed by the Board through resolution;
- g) Points of order;
- h) Appointments;
- i) Recommended motions proposed by Committees; and,
- j) Trustee declaration pursuant to Section 56, 57 or 58 of the [School Act](#).

4.2. The minutes shall:

- a) Be prepared as directed by the Secretary Treasurer;
- b) Be considered an unofficial record of proceedings until such time as adopted by a resolution of the Board; and
- c) Upon adoption by the Board, be deemed to be the official and sole record of the Board's business.

4.3. The Secretary Treasurer shall ensure that, upon acceptance by the Board, appropriate initials are appended to each page of the minutes, and that appropriate signatures and the corporate seal of the District are affixed to the concluding page of the minutes.

Policy 7

- 4.4. The Secretary Treasurer shall establish a codification system for resolutions which will:
- a) Provide for ready identification as to the meeting at which it was considered;
 - b) Provide for cross-referencing with resolutions of similar nature adopted by the Board at previous meetings; and
 - c) Establish and maintain a file of all Board minutes.
- 4.5. As part of its ongoing effort to keep staff and the public fully informed concerning its affairs and actions, the Board directs the Secretary Treasurer to institute and maintain effective and appropriate procedures for the prompt dissemination of information about decisions made at all Board meetings.
- 4.6. The approved minutes of a regular or special public meeting shall be posted to the website as soon as possible following approval. The Secretary Treasurer is responsible to distribute and post the approved minutes.
- 4.7. Upon adoption by the Board, the minutes of meetings other than Closed meetings shall be open to public scrutiny.

5. Public Participation

5.1. Formal Presentations

- 5.1.1. Individuals or groups may make presentations to the Board or its committees.
- 5.1.2. The Board Chairperson, in consultation with Trustees, may direct any formal presentation to one of the Board's committees.
- 5.1.3. The Board Chairperson, or the chairperson of a committee, in consultation with Trustees, reserves the right to decline any request to make a formal presentation.
- 5.1.4. Generally, the Board will defer any decision on a presentation until Trustees have had sufficient time for study and discussion. Presenters will be informed by the office of the Secretary Treasurer when the topic will be placed on a future Board meeting agenda.
- 5.1.5. Individuals or groups wishing to make a formal presentation to the Board must contact the Secretary Treasurer's office.
- 5.1.6. The Secretary Treasurer's office will notify the individual or groups of their inclusion on a Board agenda.
- 5.1.7. Once the presentation is completed and Trustees have had an opportunity for questions, it is in order for the group to remain or leave the meeting.

Policy 7

5.2. Informal Presentations

- 5.2.1. There shall be a public remarks period of up to 30 minutes following the adjournment of every regularly scheduled public Board meeting, to provide an opportunity for members of the public to make comments to the Board. Public remarks shall be relevant to items on the evening's approved regular public agenda. The Board will listen respectfully to comments, however may not respond to questions during this time.
- 5.2.2. Members of the public may submit written comments relevant to items on the evening's approved regular public agenda to the Board Chair by email at publicinput@sd57.bc.ca for consideration by the Board. Written submissions must be received by 5 p.m. on the Monday prior to the regular public meeting.
- 5.2.3. Individuals or groups wishing to make public remarks must identify themselves and the issue(s) to be presented on a speakers' list which will be available following the adjournment of the regular public meeting.
- 5.2.4. Each speaker from the public will be allowed five minutes to make comments. At the discretion of the Chairperson, additional time may be allotted.

6. Trustee Participation in Meetings through Electronic Means

A Trustee may participate in a meeting of the Board by electronic means or other communication facilities if the electronic means or other communication facilities enable the Trustees participating in the meeting and members of the public attending the meeting to hear each other.

- 6.1. The Chair of the Board may refuse to allow a Trustee to participate in a meeting by electronic means or other communication facilities where the required electronic equipment is not available or where Special meetings are held in private and or for the purpose of hearing appeals or conducting hearings related to employee matters, or any Board matters which attract the principles of natural justice.
- 6.2. Trustees who connect to a meeting of the Board by video conference, teleconference or other means of electronic transmission will be considered in attendance at the meeting and form part of the quorum.
- 6.3. Trustees attending a meeting remotely have full voting privilege, electronic votes shall be submitted to the Secretary Treasurer via text or alternate electronic arrangement.

Policy 7

7. Trustee Remuneration

Appropriate financial recognition shall be provided to Trustees as remuneration for their services.

Section 71 of the [School Act](#) provides for an annual remuneration to be paid to Trustees.

7.1. The annual remuneration for Trustees, as of July 1, 2021, shall be as follows:

7.1.1. Chairperson \$23,115

7.1.2. Vice-Chairperson \$21,615

7.1.3. Trustees \$20,115

7.2. The annual remuneration for Trustees will be reviewed by the Business and Operations Committee on an annual basis prior to March 31, commencing in 2021, within the following guidelines:

7.2.1. Remuneration for the Chairperson will be increased based on the same increment as the grid lift directed by the British Columbia School Employers' Association (BCPSEA) for exempt staff.

7.2.2. Remuneration for the Vice-Chairperson will be \$1,500 less than that of the Chairperson.

7.2.3. Remuneration for Trustees will be \$3,000 less than that of the Chairperson.

7.3. Trustees will be reimbursed for in-district travel, in accordance with Appendix D, for attendance at meetings.

7.3.1. Mileage may be claimed for attendance at regular and special board meetings.

7.3.2. Mileage may be claimed for attendance at committee meetings, liaison meetings or other school district functions at which Trustee representation is required or requested.

7.3.3. Optional Trustee travel, including school visits, parent advisory council meetings and meetings of committees of which the Trustee is not an appointed member will not be eligible for reimbursement.

7.4. Trustees will be reimbursed for out-of-district travel in accordance with Appendix D.

Policy 7

7.5. While Trustee remuneration is intended to recognize the services of Trustees, from time to time Trustees may be required to attend exceptional, non-optional meetings (ie: Board Chair / Superintendent / Secretary Treasurer meetings called by the Ministry of Education). In the event the Trustee loses a day of pay or must use a vacation day, the Trustee may apply through the Secretary Treasurer to be appropriately compensated as approved by the Board.

7.6. An annual budget will be established for Trustee professional development.

7.6.1. Each Trustee will be entitled to \$3,500 for their own professional development. Trustees will be encouraged to attend:

- The B.C. School Trustees Association's annual general meeting
- The B.C. School Trustees Association's Trustee Academies
- The BC. School Trustees Association's Northern Interior Branch meetings
- Off-site working sessions as organized by the school district

7.6.2. An additional \$3,500 will also be used for Trustee professional development at the discretion of, and as directed by, the Board.

8. Trustee Expense Reimbursement

Trustees can recover reasonable out-of-pocket expenses when traveling on school district business in accordance with Appendix D.

9. Trustees will be provided services, materials and equipment in accordance with Appendix E.

10. Trustee Conflict of Interest

10.1. The Board considers conflict of interest to include:

- 10.1.1. Pecuniary interest – a matter that could monetarily affect a Trustee.
- 10.1.2. Indirect pecuniary interest – where the Trustee is a shareholder, officer or employee of a firm with a pecuniary interest in the matter; or in which the Trustee is a partner of a person, a member of a firm or is in the employment of a person or firm that has a pecuniary interest in the matter.
- 10.1.3. Deemed pecuniary interest – a matter in which the Trustee knows that their spouse, parent or child has a pecuniary interest.

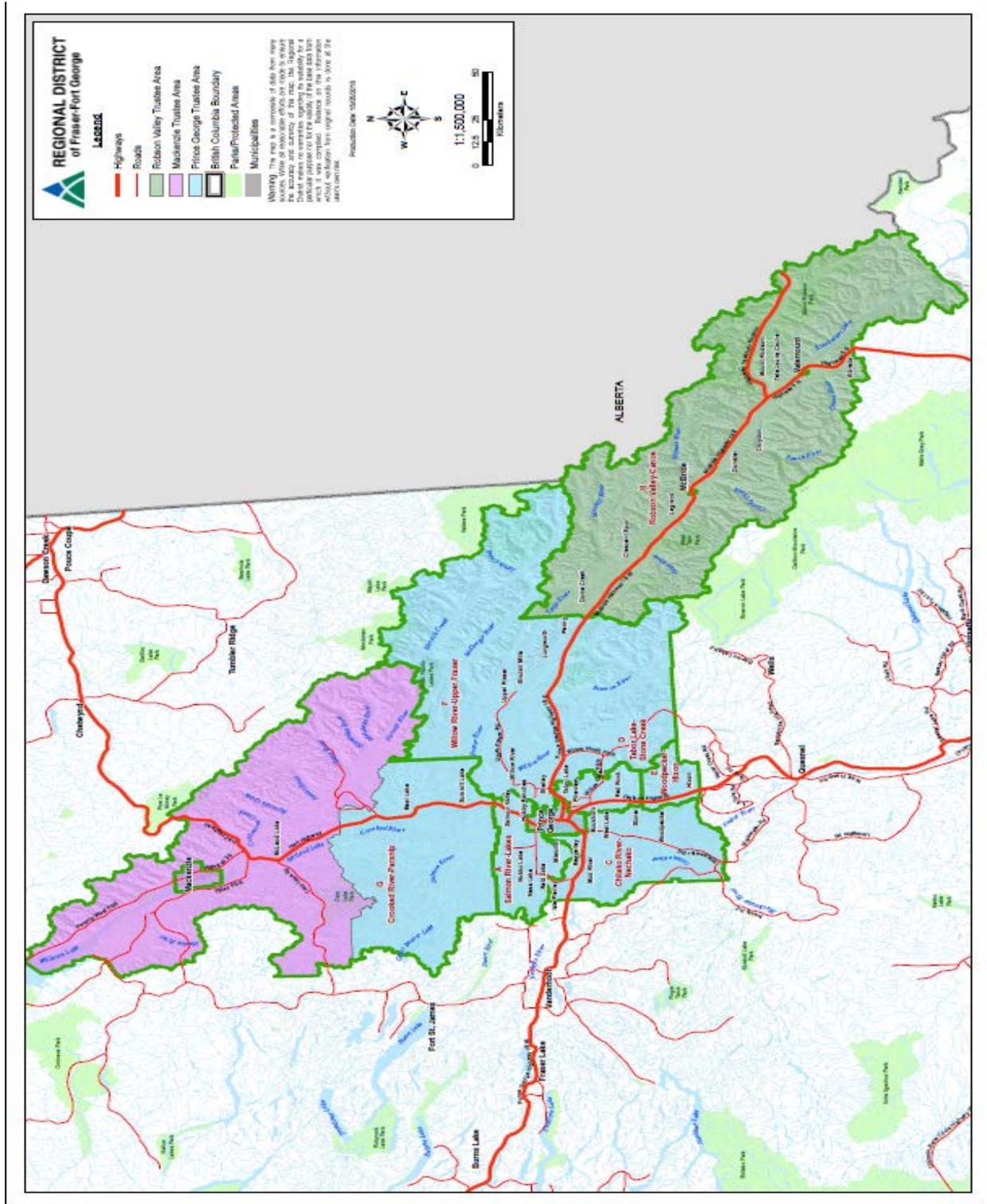
Policy 7

- 10.1.4. Non-pecuniary conflict of interest – a matter in which the Trustee’s interest in the matter is immediate and distinct from the public interest; where it can be reasonably determined that the Trustee’s private interest in the matter will influence their vote on the matter; and where the Trustee’s relations or associates stand to realize a personal benefit from a favourable decision on the matter.
- 10.2.A Trustee with a conflict of interest in a matter, who is present at a Board or committee meeting at which the matter is to be considered, must, at that meeting:
- 10.2.1. Disclose the general nature of the interest;
 - 10.2.2. Refrain from any discussion or vote on the matter;
 - 10.2.3. Not attempt in any way, before, during or after the meeting, to influence any vote relating to the matter.
- 10.3.If the meeting at which a Trustee discloses a conflict of interest is an in camera meeting, the Trustee, in addition to the requirements of 10.2 above must leave the meeting during the Board’s consideration of the matter.
- 10.4.If a Trustee’s conflict of interest is not disclosed at a meeting because the Trustee is not in attendance at the meeting, the Trustee shall disclose the interest at the next Board meeting and also comply with 10.2.2 and 10.2.3 above.
- 10.5.The duty to disclose a pecuniary, deemed pecuniary or indirect pecuniary interest does not apply where the interest is of a general, widespread or insignificant nature.
- 10.6.A Trustee with a direct or indirect pecuniary interest in teacher or support staff collective bargaining shall not participate or represent the Board in those activities.

Legal References: *School Act* 50, 56, 57, 58, 59, 66-71, 71(1), 72
 Financial Disclosure Act
 Income Tax Act

Related Policies:
Policy 1 – Foundational Statements
Policy 8 – Board Committees
Policy 9 – Board Representatives
Policy 16 – Indemnification Bylaw

Approved: 2022.06.22



Policy 7 Appendix B

OATH OF OFFICE FOR SCHOOL TRUSTEES

I, «Name», do «SwearAffirm» that:

- I am qualified to hold office as a trustee in School District No. 57 (Prince George) and meet the trustee qualification requirements set out in the *School Act*,
- I have not, by myself or any other person, knowingly contravened the *School Act* respecting vote buying, intimidation or other election offences in relation to my election as a trustee;
- I will abide by the *School Act* and will faithfully perform the duties of my office, and I will not allow any private interest to influence my conduct in public matters;
- I will comply with the requirements of the [School Act](#) that relate to conflict of interest and, in particular, I will comply with the requirements relating to disclosure of pecuniary and indirect pecuniary interest in a matter.

«Name»

«SwornAffirmed» before me in the City of Prince George, in the Province of British Columbia, this ___ day of November 20__.

CODE OF ETHICS

As an elected trustee on the Board,

I will devote time, thought and study to the duties and responsibilities so that I may render effective and creditable service.

I will recognize that the expenditure of school funds is a public trust and I will endeavour to see that all such funds shall be expended efficiently, economically and for the best interest of the students.

I will endeavour to work with my fellow trustees in a spirit of harmony and cooperation in spite of difference of opinion that may arise during debate. I will observe proper decorum and behaviour, encourage full and open discussions in all matters with my fellow trustees and treat them with respect and consideration and I will not withhold or conceal from them any information or matter with which they should be concerned.

I will base my personal decision upon all available facts in each situation, vote my honest conviction in every case, unswayed by partisan bias of any kind, and thereafter abide by and uphold the final majority decision of the board.

I will not use the schools or any part of the school program for my own personal advantage or for the advantage of my friends, I will do everything possible to maintain the integrity, confidence and dignity of the office of school trustees and I will resist every temptation and outside pressure to use my position as a trustee to benefit either myself or any other individual or agency.

I will remember at all times that as an individual, I have no legal authority outside the meetings of the board, unless the board has so delegated. My relationships with the school staff, the local citizenry and the media will be conducted on the basis of this fact.

I will not discuss the confidential business of the board outside of a school board meeting or a committee meeting thereof.

I will always bear in mind that the primary function of the board is to establish the policies by which the schools are to be administered, and that the daily administration of the educational program and conduct of school business shall be the responsibility of the Superintendent of Schools and staff.

I will attempt to understand the needs and aspirations of the entire school system and do my best to support effective educational programs for the students.

Signed November __, ____

REIMBURSEMENT OF TRAVEL AND MEETING EXPENSES

The Board requires an orderly procedure for ensuring that representatives of the Board and Trustees can recover reasonable out-of-pocket expenses when traveling on school district business.

Representatives of the Board and Trustees who are required to travel on school district business shall be reimbursed for appropriate expenses incurred in accordance with [Policy 4133.1 Reimbursement of Travel Expenses](#).

SERVICES, MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT PROVIDED TO TRUSTEES

1. A District owned cell phone and laptop in accordance with the following parameters:
 - The school district owns this equipment
 - The computer/peripherals will be used predominately for school district work/business.
 - All systems will be configured and maintained in accordance with the current district technology standards document.
 - The use of the computer will align with School District No. 57 (Prince George) Policy 6179 Acceptable Use of Networks related to acceptable use of network.
 - Data contained on the computer could be subject to a Freedom of Information and *Protection of Privacy Act* request.
 - The Trustee to whom this equipment is assigned is responsible for its safekeeping off school property. Any loss or damage to the equipment may result in the Trustee being responsible for up to 50% of the replacement cost. It is therefore strongly suggested that Trustees investigate coverage of equipment through their home insurance policy. This normally requires a rider to the existing policy. The school / department funding the purchase of the equipment is not responsible for any additional insurance costs incurred.
2. District Email Account
3. Access to the Central Administration Office is provided to Trustees from all electoral areas. Additionally, access to Mackenzie and Robson Valley Schools is provided to Trustees from those electoral areas. Access to facilities is provided in order for Trustees to discharge their duties under the role of a Trustee.
4. Supply of paper from the Central Administration Office and the ability to claim expenses for printer ink.

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