

The Red River Valley School Board (Board) is democratically elected to provide for the educational needs of the division. The overarching responsibility of the Board is student learning and achievement, aligned with the provincial Continuous Improvement Plan.

The Role and Responsibilities of the Board

The Board fulfills its role by functioning at the governance level as described below.

Leadership

- Plan, make decisions and set strategic direction with Board led priorities;
- Formulate Board policies which best serve student learning and achievement;
- Advocate for division priorities to government, the business community and other stakeholders on behalf of the community.

Stewardship

- Be financially responsible, ensuring the efficient and effective use of resources;
- Manage risks, ensuring proactive risk mitigation strategies are in place to respond to a range of circumstances and identifying and managing risk for the well being of staff and students;
- Ensure sustainable development and environmental awareness are integrated into strategic planning and decision making;
- Monitor and evaluate Board priorities and programs;
- Report to stakeholders.

Foster Relationships

- Set the tone for the culture of the entire division;
- Engage the community and ensure community input to decisions;
- Develop and maintain partnerships and collaboration with provincial and municipal governments, education partners and businesses within the community at large.

Senior Administration

- Appoint, set remuneration and define duties for the Superintendent/CEO (CEO), Assistant Superintendent and Secretary-Treasurer;
- Conduct regular evaluations of the CEO;
- Provide direction to division staff and students only through Senior Administration.

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System Priorities

- Focus on division wide issues and initiatives and act in terms of what is best for the system overall;
- Focus on accomplishing the overarching responsibility for student learning and achievement by ensuring students receive the quality of education needed to prepare them for success, in both school and in life, through the development of skills, knowledge and the confidence associated with positive well being in order to become healthy, active, and engaged members of their communities and beyond.

Strategic Planning

- Provide overall strategic direction for the division by establishing the Belief Statements, Mission, Vision, and Board Priorities as part of the strategic planning cycle;
- Provide overall direction for division education plans based on identified Board priorities;
- Ensure sufficient resources towards strategic priorities and approve the annual budget.

Decision Making

- Focus decisions to optimize student learning while balancing educational needs with available resources, at the governance level;
- Make informed and impartial decisions based on the best available data;
- Ensure sufficient mechanisms are in place to seek community input as deemed necessary;
- Make decisions that reflect the values and anticipated educational needs of the communities of the division;
- While strong and diverging views may be part of the debate, make decisions based on the established strategic priorities approved by the Board;
- Develop processes for the hearing of public appeals as required by statute or Board policy.

Specific decisions that require Board approval are outlined in *Policy #11 Decision Making Matrix*.

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Community Engagement

- Establish formal connections with the community, government and other relevant agencies and organizations to support Board priorities for the division;
- To this end, share information, proactively identify issues of importance, work collaboratively and build relationships to advocate for and build support for public education.

It is also the role of the Board to:

- Be visible within the community;
- Show support of school and divisional activities through physical attendance at division and school related public events;
- Engage with community organizations and agencies in building support for public education;
- Model a culture of respect and integrity.

From time to time, the division enters into formal partnerships with other organizations within the community. In such situations, the Board may appoint a Trustee to represent the Board on related community committees. Such representation is determined at each inaugural meeting and reconsidered annually. Trustees appointed to community committees are expected to report relevant information at the next regular Board meeting.

Role of the Trustee Liaison at Parent Advisory Council (PAC) Meetings

First and foremost, the PAC is a meeting for parents. It is important for Trustees to remember that they attend as invited guests. A brief report specifically referencing the school at which the meeting is being held and drawn from the Regular Board Meeting **may** be provided. Trustees may respond to questions from the PAC or they may refer parents to the Superintendent/CEO for further information / clarification. Trustees are not eligible to bring items for the agenda, or bring other guests to the meeting.

Trustee liaisons do not act on behalf of the corporate Board, nor do they represent the PAC with information back to the entire Board. The proper protocol for specific requests or messages to be relayed to the Board is a letter or email, endorsed by the entire PAC and sent to the Secretary-Treasurer or the Superintendent/CEO (if needed) to the Board for response.

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Monitoring and Evaluation

At the division level, it is the role of the Board to:

- Establish expectations for reporting to the Board;
- Monitor progress towards the achievement of division strategic priorities;
- Receive the audit report and ensure standards are met;
- Adhere to governing legislation and regulation throughout the division;
- Report division results to the community, as mandated by the provincial government.

With respect to governance, it is the responsibility of the Board to:

- Evaluate Board effectiveness through regular self evaluation;
- Pursue Board excellence through Trustee development and training;
- Encourage a qualified slate of candidates for Trustee elections and provide the authority for administration to inform the public of candidates and election issues;
- Ensure availability of orientation programs for new Trustees and that new Trustees have the opportunity to attend orientation programs delivered by their provincial association.

Role of a Trustee

Authority

The authority of the Red River Valley School Board rests with the corporate body, not with individual Trustees. Individual Trustees exercise their authority over division affairs only as they vote to take action at a legal meeting of the Board. In other instances, an individual Trustee, including the Chairperson, has power only when the Board, by Board policy or vote, has delegated authority to that Trustee.

Trustees do not have individual authority over the organization or Senior Administration. While the Board expects individual Trustees to be given common courtesy, it does not require Senior Administration or any other staff member to heed the opinions or instructions of an individual Trustee. Individual Trustees have no authority over staff and staff operations.

Commitment to the Decisions of the Board

As members of a democratically elected body established to provide governance and leadership, it is important and necessary for individual Trustees to be active participants at Board meetings and to encourage and represent a diversity of viewpoints. Individual Trustees are ultimately accountable to the public to bring forward the voice and views of the people within the jurisdiction of the division. Demonstrating a commitment to the decisions of the Board does not demand unanimous consent, rather Trustees:

- Support Board decisions that have been voted on and are reflected in the minutes of the Board meetings as policies or resolutions by demonstrating respect for that decision and preparing to explain the decision to the public;

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Red River Valley School Division
BOARD POLICY #3 - ROLE OF THE BOARD



- As members of a governance Board, focus on what needs to be accomplished for effective governance while at the Board table;
- Upon reviewing concerns from community members, staff or Trustees, the Board shall evaluate the relevant policy. Subsequent discussions will center strictly on whether the issue necessitates policy modifications or increased monitoring, avoiding deliberation on the operational details of the matter.
- Refer community members to the correct channels if necessary and inform Senior Administration of any substantial issues;
- Recognize the Chairperson as the official spokesperson of the Board, unless that responsibility has been delegated to another Trustee by Board resolution.

Trustee responsibilities are further defined in *Policy #6 Trustee Code of Conduct*.

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