

POLICY 123: Board Representation and Liaison

The Board of Education of School District No. 8 (Kootenay Lake) wishes to maintain good rapport and communication with organizations and educational institutions within the communities the district serves.

The Chair shall appoint, or cause to be elected, annually, a representative to various organizations who will represent the interest of the Board of Education.

Representatives will provide regular reports to the Board at Meetings of the Board Held in Public regarding developments or events pertaining to the governance role of the Board of Education and will keep the Board informed of any developments which have potential impact on the delivery of public education.

Matters discussed confidentially by an organization that are relevant to the district shall be reported in closed meetings.

In response to requests from external organizations or agencies, 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 district and other organizations.

The Board will determine the process for appointing each representative as per policy 120: Board Meeting Procedures. The Board shall be guided by the following principles when naming representatives to other organizations:

- The Board's decision-making role can be exercised only by the Board as a whole, not by an individual trustee or committee;
- The Board's function is governance, rather than administration/operations;
- Responsibilities placed on trustees are to be closely related to the Board's central role as per Policy 111: Roles and Responsibilities of the Board.

The Superintendent may appoint personnel to work with the representative and shall determine the roles, responsibilities and reporting requirements of personnel.

The following organizations/committees will have Board representation as identified normally at the annual Inaugural Meeting or alternatively at a subsequent meeting of the Board.

External Committees

1. BC School Trustees' Association (BCSTA) Provincial Council.

Purpose:

- To represent the Board of Education at the British Columbia School Trustees Association (BCSTA).

Duties:

Related Legislation: Sections 8.4, 8.5, 22, 65, 74, 85 School Act, Ministry of Education and Child Care website

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- Attend Provincial Council meetings.
- Represent the Board's positions and interests at the provincial level.
- Communicate to the Board the work of the Provincial Council.
- Bring recommendations to the Board as and when necessary.
- Build positive relationships with BCSTA.
- Provide district report at the KBB meeting.
- Membership:
 - One (1) trustee; one (1) alternate; elected by the Board for one year.
- Meetings:
 - As called by Provincial Council. (Usually 4 per year, one at the AGM)

2. BC Public School Employers' Association (BCPSEA).

- Purpose:
 - To represent the Board of Education at the British Columbia Public School Employers' Association (BCPSEA).
- Duties:
 - Attend the BCPSEA meetings as required. Meetings are usually 4 -6 times per year (Symposium, AGM, budget telecon pre-AGM, regional meetings as and when needed, voting meetings, if needed)
 - Represent the Board's positions and interests at BCPSEA meetings.
 - Communicate to the Board the work of BCPSEA.
 - Bring recommendations to the Board as and when necessary.
 - Build positive relationships with BCPSEA.
- Membership:
 - One (1) trustee; one (1) alternate elected by the Board for one year.
- Meetings:
 - As called by BCPSEA; usually 4-6 per year (Symposium, AGM, budget phone conference pre-AGM, regional meetings as and when needed, vote meeting if needed).

3. Kootenay Boundary Branch (KBB) Branch of the BC School Trustees' Association.

- Purpose:
 - To represent the Board of Education at the Kootenay Boundary Branch (KBB) Executive meetings.
- Duties:
 - Represent the Board's positions and interests at KBB Branch meetings.
 - Bring recommendations to the Board as and when necessary.
 - Build positive working relationships with other Boards.
- Membership:
 - One (1) trustee; appointed by the Board Chair for one year if no Trustee is elected to an executive position at the KBB AGM.
- Meetings:

- Four (4) meetings per year or as called by the KBB Branch President.

4. Municipal Authorities and External Organizations

The Board seeks to have a mutually beneficial relationship with municipal authorities and other external organizations when common purpose can be identified. To that end the Board welcomes invitations to have District representation on such agencies.

If such agencies deal only with administrative matters, the Board of Education shall be represented by administrative staff selected by and reporting to the Superintendent. Where such agencies deal with governance issues, trustee representation may be considered, the terms of reference for the representative shall be as follows:

- Purpose:
 - Represent the Board's positions and interests to the agency.
- Duties:
 - Identify to the agency that the Board's decision-making role can be exercised only by the Board as a whole, not by an individual trustee representative and that the Board's function is governance, rather than administration or operational.
 - Communicate to the Board the work of the agency.
 - Bring recommendations to the Board as and when necessary including any need for the Board to establish positions on specific issues.
 - Build productive relationships which advance the interests of the Board.
- Membership:
 - One trustee as determined by the Board Chair as required.
- Meetings:
 - At the call of the external committee chair.

5. District Parent Advisory Council (DPAC)

- Purpose:
 - Represent the Board's positions and interests to the agency.
- Duties:
 - Represent the Board at DPAC meetings
 - Communicate the work of the Board to DPAC when requested
 - Attends DPAC meetings;
 - Communicates to DPAC the work of the Board
 - Builds positive working relationships with DPAC.
- Membership:
 - Vice Chair and one alternate as determined by the Board Chair as required. Other Trustees may attend as observers.
- Meetings:
 - Monthly or as called DPAC Chair.

6. School Liaison Trustee Role

- 6.1 While a trustee serves the communities they are elected to represent, a trustee's primary role is to act as a member of the corporate Board.
- 6.2 The School Act gives no individual authority to an individual trustee. As a member of the corporate Board, trustees are accountable to the public for collective decisions of the Board, and for the delivery and quality of education services.
- 6.3 Trustees must always be guided by the Trustee Code of Conduct including confidentiality and the Oath of Office.
- 6.4 Trustees must represent the best interests of the entire School District. This representation must supersede any conflicting loyalty such as that to advocacy or interest groups, other Boards or staff, or third-party users of the School District's services.
- 6.5 Liaison opportunities for individual trustees provide for increased communication between trustees and school communities. Schools within in School District are divided between trustees to ensure the trustees have knowledge of their electoral area liaison schools and the programs and initiatives that are achieving the School District's goals.
- 6.6 The rationale, purposes and parameters of trustees, being the liaison between the Board and assigned schools, is provided as follows:
 - 6.6.1 To provide the Board with an opportunity to have a presence at each school.
 - 6.6.2 The trustee liaison participates in school activities as requested or invited by the school principal.
 - 6.6.3 The trustee liaison must follow the Board communication policy and procedures.
 - 6.6.4 Trustees can show appreciation and support and help celebrate student, staff, and community successes. Parents, caregivers, and community members are then aware of their Liaison Trustee contact. Trustees are not invited to operational or administrative functions of the school, such as staff meetings or meetings related to the management of the school.
 - 6.6.5 When the trustee liaison hears any emerging issues at assigned schools or sites; it is their responsibility to advise the Superintendent of Schools/CEO and Board Chair for immediate handling.

7. The role of the trustee liaison is not intended to undermine or supersede the role of the school principal, Parent Advisory Committee Chair or other staff.

7.1 A Trustee adheres to their role within governance as outlined in Policy 111: Roles and Responsibilities of the Board of Education;

7.2 The defined process for resolution of parent/caregiver concerns is outlined in [AP 1310 - Communication](#) and the [SD8 Communication Protocol](#); or through other processes for discussing concerns by the school or district staff.

8. Trustees must respect the Superintendent of Schools/CEO's responsibility for the day-to-day administration of the School District. Complaints and criticisms from parents, staff or the public for the Superintendent should be forwarded to the Superintendent for the Superintendent's handling.
9. Trustees must not attempt to exercise individual authority over the organization and recognize that they do not direct staff.
10. Attendance at school events by the trustee liaison would vary in detail from school to school, and this would be clearly defined through discussion with the School Principal, as is deemed appropriate by the Superintendent.
11. Should a trustee wish to visit a school that is not included within their specific school assignment, they may do so with an invitation from that school's principal. Such a request should be initiated by contacting the Superintendent of Schools.
12. The role of trustee liaison is intended to strengthen the bond and further communications between schools and the Board in a manner that demonstrates the work of Boards while clearly respecting the role and authority of school administrators and staff.
13. Trustee Liaison Checklist:
 - Become familiar with and adhere to the Trustee Code of Conduct.
 - Ensure clarity and understanding of the trustee liaison role. Liaison school visits should be with a purpose or intent.
 - Be cautious about interrupting the learning environment. Staff will understand that they do not need to interrupt their day-to-day activities when a trustee visits their school.
 - The trustee liaison must ensure they sign in and sign out at the school's main office in adherence to all school visitor safety protocols.
 - Where possible, the trustee liaison will take part in activities at other schools throughout the district by invitation or as requested.
 - The trustee will attend school Parent Advisory Committee meetings when invited. If invited, the PAC Chair will contact the trustee liaison and the trustee will ensure that they attend as observers or to represent areas related to governance. All items brought forward of an operational nature will be directed to the principal.