



The Northwest Catholic
District School Board
SCHOOLS OF HOPE

GOVERNANCE POLICIES

Section	Number
GP	5.0

GOVERNANCE PROCESS

Policy Title: The Role of the Chair

Policy:

The Chair assures the integrity of the Board's governance process and represents the Board publicly. Unless simply reporting Board decisions, the Chair is the only member authorized to speak on behalf of the Board, except when the Board delegates such authority. There must be a strong collegial relationship between the Chair and the members of the Board. This elected leadership position illustrates that fellow Trustees are placing confidence in the leadership of the Chair to guide the Board in its work.

Therefore the Chair shall:

1. Ensure that the Board functions in accordance with its own policies and those legitimately imposed upon it from outside the organization.
2. Chair Board meetings with all the commonly accepted powers of that position.
3. Make decisions on behalf of the Board that, with any reasonable interpretation, fall within and are consistent with the Board policies on Governance and Board-Director Relationship. The Chair shall keep the Board informed of such decisions.
4. Avoid making decisions about Governance policies that address Outcomes and Executive Limitations. Therefore, the Chair shall avoid supervising or directing the Director of Education.
5. Safeguard the integrity of the Board's processes and represent the Board of Trustees to the broader community.
6. Ensure that each Trustee has a full and fair opportunity to be heard and understood by the other members of the Board in order that collective opinion can be developed and a corporate decision reached.
7. Demonstrate leadership and guidance to enhance the Board's ability to discharge its obligations.

Duties of the Chair:

1. Reviewing the Agenda

- a. The Chair shall establish agendas in consultation with the Director of Education in the development of the Board meeting agenda.
- b. The Chair shall ensure that members of the Board have the information needed for informed discussion of the agenda items.
- c. The Chair shall ensure that meeting agenda content is only about those issues which, according to Board policy, clearly belong to the Board to decide and have not been delegated to the Director of Education.

2. Preserving an Orderly Process

- a. The Chair shall preside at all regular and special meetings of the Board and ensure that such meetings are conducted in accordance with the *Education Act*, the policies and procedures established by the Board using Robert's *Rules of Order*.
- b. The Chair shall preserve order and decorum and decide all questions of order or privilege. The Chair may rule any matter out of order, giving the reason for the ruling. The ruling of the Chair shall be final, subject only to an appeal to the Board without debate. A tie vote, with the Chair voting, sustains the Chair.
- c. The Chair shall call meetings to order in accordance with the prescribed meeting times and shall determine if a quorum is present.

3. The Chair shall announce the order of business of the Board and; state and put to vote questions which come before the Board.

4. The Chair shall declare the results of all votes on all matters before the Board.

5. Remaining Impartial

- a. The Chair has a duty to remain impartial. The Chair should have nothing to say on the merits of pending questions.
- b. The Chair may draw to the attention of the Board any factors which may be crucial and relating to the pending question and which appear to have been overlooked by the Board.
- c. In the event that the Chair decides to take part in the debate of a pending matter, the Chair shall call upon the Vice-Chair to take the Chair. In the event that the Vice-Chair has already spoken or desires to speak to the pending matter, the Chair shall appoint another member who has not spoken and does not desire to speak on the pending matter.
- d. With the unanimous consent of the Board, the Chair may speak to the pending matter without vacating the Chair.

- e. Normally, the Chair of a committee shall be allowed to speak to pending matters during committee meetings without vacating the Chair. The procedure described above shall be used if another member of the committee objects to the Chair taking an active part in any debate on a pending matter.
6. Expediting Business
 - a. The Chair is responsible for expediting the business of the Board in every way compatible with the rights of the members and for enforcing this policy as necessary, to ensure the orderly conduct of the Board's business.
 - b. In order to ensure the expeditious use of the Board's time, the Chair, subject to a member's right of appeal, shall refuse to recognize motions which are obviously frivolous or dilatory.
 - c. The Chair shall attempt to ensure that each member who wishes to be heard on a matter is heard, but, subject to a member's right of appeal, when it is obvious that the debate is becoming repetitive, the Chair shall indicate that the debate is closed and call the question.
 7. Reviewing & Signing Minutes
 - a. Prior to publication, the Chair of the Board and the Chair of each Board Committee or another Trustee designated by such Chair, shall be responsible for reviewing the minutes of the Board or the respective Committee.
 - b. Following the approval of the minutes by the Board, the Chair or his/her designate will sign the minutes.
 8. Providing Board Leadership
 - a. On every question, the Chairperson of a meeting who is at the same time a member in full standing may vote on any question.
 - b. The Chair, in consultation with the Director of Education, may call a Special Meeting of the Board at any time.
 - c. The Chair may act as an *ex-officio* member, with voting privileges, of all committees appointed by the Board. As an *ex-officio* member, the Chair shall have all the privileges of committee membership, including the right to make motions and to vote, but shall not be counted in the quorum.
 - d. The Chair shall be kept informed of significant developments within The Northwest Catholic District School Board and shall be in regular contact with the Director of Education to maintain a working knowledge of current issues and events.
 - e. The Chair shall encourage an interest in the whole school system and provide leadership in maintaining the Board's focus on the Mission and Vision.
 - f. The Chair shall ensure that members have the information needed for informed discussion of the agenda items.
 - g. The Chair shall be the chief spokesperson for the board except for those matters where the Board has previously delegated this role to another individual or group.

- h. The Chair shall aid in the establishing good relations with the public and the news media.
- i. The Chair shall convey the decisions of the Board to the Board’s Director of Education.
- j. The Chair shall be a signing officer for the district.
- k. The Chair shall accept responsibility, on behalf of the Board, for any and all Board decisions.
- l. The Chair shall ensure that the Board engages in regular review or self-evaluation of its effectiveness as a Board.
- m. The Chair shall provide leadership to the Board in maintaining the Board’s focus on the Board’s mission, vision and multi year plan as established under the Education Act Section 169.1.
- n. The Chair shall assume other responsibilities as may be specified by the Board.

<u>Cross Reference</u>		<u>Date Approved</u> March 22, 2003	Legal/Ministry of Education Reference
Section	Number		
			<i>Education Act S. 170, S. 171 Duties and Powers of Boards; S. 208(12) Voting of the Chairs</i>
			Bill 177-Student Achievement and School Board Governance Act, 2009
		<u>Date of Last Review</u> March 24, 2020	<i>Ed. Act S.230 Compliance with Board Obligations</i>
			<i>Education Act 169.1 Duties and Powers of Boards</i>
			<i>Education Act 218.1 Role of Chair</i> <i>Education Act 218.4 Duties of Chair</i>
			<i>Robert’s Rules of Order</i>

Appendix 1

The Role of the Vice-Chair

The Vice-Chair is elected by the Board to share the leadership role of the Chair. The Vice-Chair assists the Chair in ensuring that the Board operates in accordance with its own policies. The Board's ability to discharge its obligation is enhanced by the leadership and guidance provided by the Vice-Chair.

Duties of the Vice-Chair:

1. When the Chair is absent, the Vice-Chair shall perform all the duties and carry out all responsibilities of the Chair with full authority during his /her continued absence.
2. Preside at any Board or Committee meeting when the Chair desires to leave the Chair in order to debate questions.
3. The Vice-Chair shall assist the Chair and Director of Education in the development of the Board Meeting Agenda.
4. The Vice-Chair may be assigned duties and responsibilities by the Board Chair.
5. The Vice- Chair shall be an alternate signing authority for the Board.