

# Role and Responsibilities of a Trustee

This summary provides an overview of the essential roles and responsibilities of trustees in Alberta's public education system, highlighting their governance, accountability, and community engagement duties.

## 1. Overview:

- Trustees are elected representatives responsible for governing public, separate, or francophone school boards in Alberta.
- They ensure that educational services meet community needs and comply with provincial legislation.

## 2. Key Responsibilities:

- **Governance:** Trustees do not have individual authority; they make decisions collectively as a board. They are accountable to the public for the board's decisions and the quality of educational services.
- **Education Plan:** Developing and monitoring the jurisdiction's education plan, ensuring it aligns with provincial goals and community needs.
- **Superintendent Oversight:** Hiring, evaluating, and holding the superintendent accountable for implementing board policies and priorities.
- **Student Achievement:** Focusing on student achievement and well-being, promoting a safe, inclusive, and respectful learning environment.
- **Engagement:** Providing opportunities for parents, students, staff, and community stakeholders to engage in educational planning and goal setting.
- **Policy Development:** Creating and implementing policies that guide the operational aspects of the school division.
- **Resource Stewardship:** Managing the board's resources effectively, including developing, approving, and monitoring the annual budget.
- **Advocacy:** Representing the board's interests to municipal, provincial, and federal governments, and advocating for educational priorities.

## 3. Effective Board Characteristics:

- **Teamwork:** Effective boards work collaboratively, leveraging the strengths and experiences of individual members.
- **Decision-Making:** They make informed decisions based on comprehensive data and community input.
- **Accountability:** Boards are accountable for their performance and transparent in their operations.
- **Role Clarity:** Clear distinction between the governance role of the board and the operational role of senior management.

#### **4. Legal and Ethical Compliance:**

- Trustees must comply with all relevant provincial legislation, including the Education Act and associated regulations.
- They are required to adhere to the board's code of conduct and ensure ethical leadership within the board.

#### **5. Accountability Framework:**

- The Assurance Framework in Alberta mandates boards to assess progress and demonstrate success through planning and reporting documents such as Education Plans and Annual Education Results Reports (AERRs).
- Performance measures include student growth, teaching quality, learning supports, governance, and local context.

#### **6. Additional Duties:**

- **Electing Leadership:** Trustees elect a board chair and vice-chair to lead the board.
- **Strategic Planning:** Establishing the board's mission, vision, and values, and setting long-term strategic priorities.
- **Policy Adherence:** Ensuring policies support staff health, safety, well-being, and human resource matters.
- **Facility Management:** Overseeing the management and maintenance of school facilities.
- **Recognition:** Implementing mechanisms to recognize students, staff, and community contributions.
- **Local Advocacy:** Communicating and advocating for the needs and priorities of their communities.

#### **7. Relationship with the Minister of Education:**

- Boards must provide information requested by the Minister and implement a reporting and accountability system as prescribed.
- The Minister has the authority to investigate and intervene in board operations if responsibilities are not met, including appointing an official trustee if necessary.

#### **8. Role of the Board Chair:**

- The board chair presides over meetings, ensures adherence to procedures, and acts as the spokesperson for the board.

- The chair is responsible for maintaining the board's focus on strategic goals and ensuring informed discussions during meetings.

### **9. Role of Individual Trustees:**

- Trustees represent their communities, bringing local concerns to the board and ensuring decisions reflect community values.
- They must uphold and support board decisions, even if they initially disagreed with them, and work towards effective implementation and monitoring of these decisions.

### **10. Resources and Training:**

- Trustees are encouraged to utilize various resources for effective governance, including the Alberta Good Governance Handbook and other educational materials.
- Continuous learning and professional development are essential for trustees to perform their roles effectively.



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