

Policy 8

POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW

Policies provide a guiding structure to the division's ecosystem that are operationalized through the Superintendent and Administrative Procedures, actioning the board's commitment to *Engagement, Support and Success for each Learner*.

Ongoing assurance practices allow the organization to remain nimble, agile and responsive to emergent needs. As governance leaders, the Board of Trustees shall assess the need for policy with intentionality. A key responsibility of the board is assuring that policies are reflective of the values of the Board and the ongoing strategic directions of the Division.

Policy development empowers:

- visionary leadership that inspires opportunities and initiatives.
- meaningful engagement with our learners and communities.
- building positive professional relationships.
- appropriate learning experiences that are responsive to the needs of our learners and our communities.
- a place for all.

In the Foothills School Division, policy development and review are the responsibility of the Policy Review Committee. This committee is comprised of trustees and the Superintendent and/or designate(s). All Board policies and appendixes are reviewed as per the Policy Review Schedule or as needed. Edits that do not substantively change the intent of a policy will be made and will not be subject to the 8-week consultation outlined below.

In addition to being guided by the ongoing strategic directions of the Board, the committee shall also ensure alignment with the Board's policy framework and adherence to legislation.

The Board shall adhere to the following stages in its approach to policy making:

1. Determining 'when' policy is necessary
2. Due diligence and crafting
3. Engagement
4. Consultation
5. Ratification
6. Implementation
7. Review and align with governance responsibilities
8. Dissolution of redundant policies

STAGES IN DEVELOPING AND REVIEWING POLICY

1. *Determining 'when' policy is necessary*

The Board, in cooperation with the Superintendent, shall assess the need for a policy, as a result of its own monitoring activities or as required by the Government of Alberta. Any trustee, employee, taxpayer, parent, student or School Council of the Division may make suggestions regarding the possible development of a policy or the need for policy revisions on any matter by presenting a proposal for a policy or revisions, in writing, to the Superintendent. The proposal shall contain a brief statement of purpose or rationale.

Only those policies which are adopted and recorded in the minutes constitute the official policies of the Board.

2. *Due diligence and crafting*

The Policy Review Committee identifies the critical attributes of each policy to be developed. The committee may develop the policy itself or delegate the responsibility for its development to the Superintendent.

The committee will draft amendments to an existing policy or develop a new policy as the case may be. When appropriate, the Superintendent shall seek legal advice on the intent and the wording of the policy.

3. *Engagement*

The Policy Review Committee submits the policy draft or amendments to the Board, recommending approval for the first reading of the updated policy as presented.

The policy development process includes engagement with our partners in education, such as staff (including education partners, unions, and associations), as well as parents, students, and members of the broader learning community.

4. *Consultation*

If accepted in principle by the Board, the policy draft shall be distributed to the partners in education identified in *Engagement* for feedback by the date stipulated on the covering notice. This date will typically be eight (8) or more weeks from the date of first reading. All requests to extend the feedback deadline will be given due consideration.

In addition to distributing the policy draft to our partners in education, the policy draft will also be posted on the Division website. Comments and suggestions on the policy draft will be collected by the Superintendent and/or designate(s) and presented to the Board. Substantive additional changes to a policy draft may be made in response to stakeholder feedback. In such cases, the revised draft will be re-circulated to the Board and to the stakeholder groups for further feedback by the date stipulated on the covering notice. This date will typically be four (4) or more additional weeks.

5. *Ratification*

Once stakeholder comments have been taken into account, the policy will be recommended to the Board for final approval.

The Superintendent shall arrange for all Board policies and administrative procedures and subsequent revisions to be posted on the Division's website, in a timely manner, for staff and public access.

6. *Implementation*

The Board is responsible for the implementation of policies governing its own processes. The Board and Superintendent share the responsibility for implementation of policies relating to the Board-Superintendent relationship. The Superintendent shall develop administrative procedures to operationalize Board policies for the effective operation of the Division. The Superintendent must inform the Board of any substantive changes to administrative procedures.

7. *Review and align with governance responsibilities*

The Policy Review Committee is responsible for policy development and review. All Board policies and appendixes are reviewed as per the Policy Review Schedule or as needed.

Notwithstanding the general policy development process outlined above, the Board retains the right to develop, amend, delete or approve any of its policies at any time through its exceptional policy development process outlined below.

8. *Dissolution of redundant policies*

The Board may also delete a policy and subsequently delegate the Superintendent authority over this area. The Superintendent may choose to then develop an administrative procedure relative to this matter.

Exceptional Policy Development Process

In cases where the Board deems it advisable to forgo the regular policy development process, the reasons for choosing the exceptional policy development route will be publicly communicated at a regular Board meeting.

This will be true for instances where the Board is mandated to comply with legislated changes around the development of a new Board Policy – regardless of whether the matter falls within its governance responsibilities or not. Should the Board of Trustees deem that a legislative change requiring policy development is out of scope of governance and/or is operational in nature, legislative compliance will be addressed through appendixes situated under Policy 8.

In the absence of existing policy, the Board may make decisions, by resolution, on matters affecting the administration, management and operation of the Division. Such decisions carry the weight of policy until such time as specific written policy is developed.

Legal Reference: [Relevant Legislation & Guidelines](#)

Appendix A

PARENTAL NOTIFICATION AND CONSENT FOR INSTRUCTIONAL CONTENT

Effective September 1, 2025

In the Board of Trustees's commitment to providing inclusive, respectful, and transparent learning environments, parents will have the opportunity to make decisions regarding their child's participation in **mandated Alberta Education sexual health curricular content** that addresses sensitive subject matter in accordance with the *Education Act*.

This appendix addresses the requirement for advance parental notification and opt-in consent for content that deals **primarily and explicitly** with human sexuality.

As these requirements are operational, they have been included at the policy level in response to specific legislative direction outlined in Section 58.1 of the Education Act. Implementation will be supported through Administrative Procedures 207 – *Mandated Alberta Education Sexual Health Curriculum*.

This appendix shall be reviewed annually to ensure ongoing compliance with the *Education Act* and any applicable regulations or ministerial requirements. Should relevant legislation be amended or repealed, this appendix will be revised or rescinded accordingly by the Board of Trustees.

Appendix B

STUDENT-INITIATED NAME AND PRONOUN USE

Effective September 1, 2025

The Board of Trustees is committed to providing inclusive, respectful, and transparent learning environments for all students, parents will have the opportunity to make decisions regarding their child's preferred name and pronouns in accordance with the *Education Act*.

This appendix addresses the requirements related to parental notification and consent when a student requests to be referred to by a gender-related preferred name or pronoun.

As these requirements are operational, they have been included at the policy level in response to specific legislative direction outlined in Section 58.1 of the *Education Act*. Implementation will be supported through Administrative Procedure 320 – *Student Records*.

This appendix shall be reviewed annually to ensure ongoing compliance with the *Education Act* and any applicable regulations or ministerial requirements. Should relevant legislation be amended or repealed, this appendix will be revised or rescinded accordingly by the Board of Trustees.