

What does a trustee do? What is the role of a trustee?

- The role of school board trustees is defined by board policy. [CLICK HERE](#). The power and responsibility rests with the board, not individual trustees. Alone, trustees have the same authority as any other individual. It is the shared voice of the board that has the ability to make decisions.
- The board is responsible for setting strategic directions for the district and leaving the implementation of those decisions to district and school administration.
- In order to do this work, they need to remain current and informed about education in general and the needs across our community. To do this, you will oftentimes see trustees visiting our schools, attending events, engaging with our community, connecting with trustees in other jurisdictions and participating in professional development to support them in making the best decisions for education that shapes the future of our community.

What types of decisions do the trustees make?

- Hiring the Superintendent of Schools is one of the most important decisions the board makes as it is their one employee who carries out the strategic direction of the board.
- The Board of Trustees is responsible for establishing the three year Education Plan which directs the district and all of our schools.
- The board also reviews the Annual Education Results Reports outlining successes and challenges.
- The board provides overall direction and approves the \$125 million annual budget that funds all of our schools and the district.
- The board also plays a role in the hiring of principals and senior administrators.
- The board also sits on a variety of district and provincial committees that influence and direct public education locally.

How does a school trustee benefit/affect me as a parent?

- A board works to ensure the values and priorities of the community are reflected in its schools. School board trustees serve the broader community bringing those perspectives to the table in setting strategic directions for the district. This ensures the district is responsive to the needs of parents and families. The alternative would be leaving those decisions to administration at a local or provincial level. This may not fully reflect the unique needs of local school communities.
- It's important to remember that public school education impacts the entire community and trustees have a responsibility to all members, even if they don't have children in school. A word mark for the district is *Your Children, Our Students, Everyone's Future!* This demonstrates the important role the district plays in shaping the future of our community. Education impacts the entire community!

How are the success of RDPSD three pillars measured? And what is the board's responsibilities to these priorities?

- The board reviews the district education plan, and uses information collected in the process of formulating that plan to set direction for the district.
- District and School Education Plans include specific performance measures that assess our success on each of our priorities. These are a combination of data generated by both the district and Alberta Education. Plans may include specific results, survey responses and anecdotal information.
- Twice a year representatives from Alberta Education meet with district administration to review both our Education Plans and Annual Education Results Reports to ensure they align with district and provincial priorities.
- School Councils should also be consulted in the development of both the Education Plan and Results Reports for each school.

Why should we vote for a trustee?

- Whether you have children attending school or not, your voice is important. Our community depends on having graduates who are well prepared to contribute to our society. Your vote ensures our district has a strong board to govern the work of achieving that goal.
- For the same reason you should vote for City Councillors, MLAs and MPs. Voting for elected representation is the foundation of democracy.
- School board trustees play a key role in setting the vision and direction for the district. Locally elected trustees ensure that education is responsive to the needs of our community. Electing representatives you feel best meet the needs of your children and our community helps ensure the district achieves its fullest potential.
- An inclusive and responsive public education system is critical to the foundation of our future. Voting for and electing trustees who represent and respect these values will ensure public education remains strong.

Why is it important that we know what our trustees are doing? How do we ensure that a trustee is representing the electorate?

- Trustees are the community's voice in the district.
- Their work impacts how education operates in the district. School board trustees are accessible and available to hear your questions and concerns about education.
- Ultimately every four years, during election time is when our community decides who will best represent the wishes of our community.
- The public is welcomed and encouraged to attend school board meetings. Debate on issues occurs at these meetings and you will be able to hear trustees speak about agenda items.
- It's important to know what your elected trustees are doing because their actions and decisions directly affect the education your child receives. By setting budget priorities, hiring administrators, and making policy directions, the education of your child is impacted.

How do trustees advocate for more money?

- Funding for the district comes almost entirely from the province and those dollars are scarce. By advocating with our MLA's and other members of government as well as through trustee associations, the board makes the needs and priorities of the district known to those who make those decisions.
- Funding for the District comes almost entirely from the Provincial government. These dollars are often insufficient in covering the wide variety of needs in the District. By communicating regularly with MLA's and other members of government, Trustees advocate for both specific needs and an increase in general funding.
- Trustees also belong to provincial trustee associations such as the Alberta School Boards Association and the Public School Boards Association of Alberta. This allows us to network with other trustees in the province to collectively lobby government on a variety of funding issues.
- Trustees also work within their local communities to build partnerships with a variety of organizations to help find shared dollars to fund projects which are important to all of us. Building partnerships is a great way to include stakeholders in both decision making and shared responsibility.

What term limit is there for trustees?

- The term of office for school board trustees is governed by the *Local Authorities Election Act* and is consistent across the province. There are no provisions for the number of terms a locally elected official may hold office. Ultimately the voters decide how long a trustee is best meeting the needs of their community when elections are held every four years.

How much time commitment is involved as a trustee?

- The time commitment of trustees varies. It can involve as much or as little time as is necessary to effectively serve and make decisions for the district. On average, trustees spend 10 hours a week. This includes attending meetings, visiting schools, participating in events, serving on committees and connecting on issues in education.
- There is a board agenda which is released before every board meeting. These agendas contain important information for trustees and there is always a time commitment and reading and reviewing this information.

How do parents know who their school's trustee or senior admin liaison is? What is their role as liaison?

- [CLICK HERE](#) for a listing of both trustee and senior administration liaisons for each school. Information is also available on the district website in each school profile. "Contact Us" on individual school websites also provides information on your liaisons.
- The roles and responsibilities of trustee and senior administration liaisons are identified on our webpage. [CLICK HERE](#)

What happens during a board meeting?

- A school board agenda will typically include reports on specific initiatives and activities of the district to help inform trustees on matters they make decisions on. Some of this is provided as information, while other agenda items involve generative discussion in setting future direction. The board also carries a fiduciary responsibility to ensure the district is well-managed. The board also sets the strategic direction for the district.
- Board meetings are formal, but public meetings. Business is carried out according to either Robert's Rules of Order, or Bourinot's Rules of Order. The Chair controls conversation and participation during the meeting and every attempt is made to make sure items are dealt with respectfully, thoroughly, and in a timely manner.

What will I learn if I attend a board meeting?

- You will see school board trustees in action. Most important work happens around the board table as trustees receive information that helps inform them make decisions. This also provides you greater understanding and knowledgeable Red Deer Public Schools.
- It's important to recognize however this is not the only work of trustees, being connected, increasing their knowledge, and working with other trustees all benefit the district.
- Board meetings are very informative. You will learn about different departments in the District and what their priorities are and how they operate. You may see a variety of different celebrations from student success to staff recognition. You may hear statistics on student numbers, class size, student fees, budgets, and a wide variety of other important information. You may also hear debate on current items that are affecting education both in Red Deer and Alberta.

Where are board meeting minutes found?

- Agendas, minutes and highlights of school board meetings are located on the district website. [CLICK HERE](#)

Who can attend a board meetings?

- Public meetings of the Board of Trustees are open to the general public. We encourage our community to attend school board meetings at any time.