

SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 63 (SAANICH)

POLICY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

**Report to Board Meeting of September 20, 2023**

Committee Members:	Trustee VanWell Trustee Elder Trustee McMurphy
Staff Support:	Dave Eberwein, Superintendent of Schools Jason Reid, Secretary Treasurer
Partner Representatives:	Don Peterson, STA Nola Welsh, CUPE Suzanne Chisholm, SAA COPACS – regrets
Other Attendees:	Chair Dunford, Trustee Silzer & Trustee Vandall

**Committee Meeting**

Tuesday, September 12, 2023

**A. PRESENTATIONS AND QUESTIONS**

No Items.

**B. ITEMS DISCUSSED**

**C. ITEMS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

1. Policy 9 – Board Operations

**Notice of Motion:**

I, Trustee VanWell provide notice that at the public meeting of the Board of Education on November 29, 2023, will move or cause to be moved the following motion:

That revisions to Policy 9 – Board Operations be approved.

2. Transportation Review

The Committee discussed proposed policy amendments for community consultation and agreed to recommend for the Board's approval the amendments presented in the attached "Policy Committee Proposed Amendments to Policy 21 (Bus and Van Transportation) - September 12, 2023". As the Board approved a consultation plan in April 2023 that included proposed policy amendments, the attachment highlights the revisions to the amendments previously presented in the consultation plan.

**Motion:**

The Committee recommends and I, Trustee VanWell move,  
That the proposed amendments to Policy 21 (Bus and Van Transportation) be approved for community consultation.

**D. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

No Items.

**E. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

- Policy 3 – Role of the Trustee – ProD Funds
- Policy Review – November 2024

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To: Policy Committee

Prepared By: Dave Eberwein  
Superintendent of Schools

Subject: Policy 9 - Trustee Attendance at Board Meetings

Date: June 1, 2023

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### **Purpose**

The Board requested a review of Policy 9 with regards to trustee meeting attendance. To provide the necessary context, this briefing note includes descriptions of applicable legislation and current Board Policy, as well seeking direction from the Board on next steps:

1. School Act - Sections 67(6) & 67(7) - Electronic participation by Trustees in meetings
2. Policy 9 – Board Operations - Section 9(9) - Trustee Participation in Meetings through Electronic Means
3. School Act – Section 52(2) - Disqualification for failure to attend meetings
4. Next Steps

### **Background**

1. School Act – Sections 67(6) & 67(7) - Electronic participation by Trustees in meetings

The School Act provides clear direction permitting School Boards the discretion of allowing or not allowing electronic participation of Trustees in meetings:

#### Section 67(6)

*A board may allow trustees to participate in or attend a meeting of the board by telephone or other means of communication if all trustees and other persons participating in or attending the meeting are able to communicate with each other.*

#### Section 67(7)

*If a trustee participates in or attends a meeting of the board by telephone or other means of communication as provided under subsection (6), the trustee is to be counted for the purposes of establishing a quorum.*

2. Policy 9 - Board Operations – Section 9(9) - Trustee Participation in Meetings through Electronic Means

Board Policy 9 contains sections dealing with Board Meeting procedures, Trustee Remuneration, Conflict of Interest and Trustee Attendance.

Section 9(9) deals specifically with Trustee meeting participation through electronic means:

*Policy 9(9) - Trustee Participation in Meetings through Electronic Means*

1. *A Trustee may participate in a meeting of the Board by electronic means or other communication facilities if the electronic means or other communication facilities enable the Trustees participating in the meeting and members of the public attending the meeting to hear each other.*
  2. *Trustees participating in a meeting of the Board by electronic means or other communication facilities are deemed to be present at the meeting.*
  3. *The Chair of the Board may refuse to allow a Trustee to participate in a meeting by electronic means or other communication facilities where the required electronic equipment is not available or where Special meetings are held in private and or for the purpose of hearing appeals or conducting hearings related to employee matters, or any Board matters which attract the principles of natural justice.*
  4. *Notwithstanding the requirements of these procedures, a Trustee cannot attend more than three (3) consecutive Regular meetings of the Board electronically without being authorized by resolution of the Board to do so.*
  5. *Trustees who connect to a meeting of the Board by video conference, teleconference or other means of electronic transmission will be considered in attendance at the meeting and form part of the quorum.*
3. School Act – Section 52(2) - Disqualification for failure to attend meetings

*Section 52(2)*

*If a trustee is continuously absent from board meetings for a period of 3 consecutive months, unless the absence is because of illness or with the leave of the board, the office of the member is deemed to be vacant and the person who held the office is disqualified from holding office as a trustee until the next general school election.*

**Next Steps**

The Superintendent is seeking direction from the Board on possible next steps in the review of Policy 9.

- a. Virtual Attendance:

The School Act provides Boards with the option of allowing electronic attendance by Trustees at meetings. The Board has provided this option through Policy 9(9).

***Should Section 9(9) be updated to reduce duplication of language (i.e., 9.2.2 and 9.2.5) as well as update language to include more modern electronic forms of communication?***

***Does the Board wish to prioritize in-person attendance over virtual and, if so, does it wish to set parameters around this priority?***


b. General Trustee Attendance – Section 52(2)

Applying Subsection 52(2):

- Subsection 52(2) does not apply to deem the office of a trustee vacant when the trustee has been continuously absent from Board meetings for a period of three months, and during that time at least one of those absences was the result of illness.
- Without clear expectations having been communicated by a Board, a trustee simply notifying the Chair and/or the Board that an absence is the result of illness satisfies the exception “unless the absence is because of illness” in subsection 52(2).
- A Board can choose to communicate to trustees in writing expectations regarding attendance and required procedures for validation of absences due to illness (example: requiring a doctor’s note following repeated absences). Once communicated these procedures can then be implemented to validate future absences when administering subsection 52(2). Note that these procedures cannot be applied retroactively prior to the point in time they are communicated.
- A Board is not obligated by legislation to develop clear guidelines regarding validating absences due to illness, and a Board also has the authority under subsection 52(2) to grant “leave of the Board” for any reason. Therefore, this is not a matter of legislative compliance but rather what a Board views to be acceptable practice.

***What action(s), if any, does the Board want to consider in the process of having the office of trustee vacated through Section 52(2)?***

Respectfully submitted,



Dave Eberwein  
Superintendent of Schools

DE/klg

## Policy 9

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### BOARD OPERATIONS

The Board's ability to discharge its obligations in an efficient and effective manner is dependent upon the development and implementation of a sound organization design. In order to discharge its responsibilities to the electorate of the District, the Board shall hold meetings as often as necessary. A quorum, which is a simple majority of the number of trustees, must be present for every duly constituted meeting.

The Board has adopted policies so the business of the Board can be conducted in an orderly and efficient manner. All points of procedure not provided for in this Policy Handbook shall be decided in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order.

The Board's fundamental obligation is to preserve, and enhance, the public trust in education, generally, and in the affairs of its operations in particular. Consistent with its objective to encourage the general public to contribute to the educational process, Board meetings will be open to the public. Towards this end, the Board believes its affairs must be conducted in public to the greatest extent possible.

There are times when the BC Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPPA) legislation requires or when the Board determines that public interest is best served by private discussion of specific issues in "in-camera" sessions.

In order to carry out its responsibilities effectively, the Board will hold periodic meetings of several types. Formal meetings, at which all formal and legal business of the Board as a corporate body shall be done, may be designated as inaugural, regular, or special meetings.

The Board of Education for the school district is comprised by legislation of a total of seven (7) trustees elected from the following trustee electoral areas:

- Two (2) trustees from Central Saanich
- Two (2) trustees from Saanich
- Two (2) trustees from North Saanich
- One (1) trustee from Town of Sidney

The Board has adopted specific policy governing Board operation and the conduct of its formal meetings.

#### 1. Inaugural and subsequent annual meetings of the Board

- 1.1. The first or Inaugural meeting of the Board of Education in the year of trustee elections shall be held at the hour 7:00 o'clock post meridian on the first Monday after November 1<sup>st</sup> in the Board room of the administration building and shall be in accordance with Sections 45, 46, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53 and 54 of the School Act.

- 1.2. The Secretary Treasurer of the Board, or in their absence, the acting Secretary Treasurer, shall call the meeting to order and shall preside at such meeting until a Chair shall have been elected. Upon calling the Inaugural meeting to order the Secretary Treasurer shall proceed to read the returns of elections to the Board as certified by the returning officer and shall report that the necessary oaths and declarations have been completed in accordance with Section 50 of the School Act.
- 1.3. During the years in which there is not a trustee election an annual meeting shall be held at the hour of 7:00 o'clock post meridian on the first Monday in November in the Board room of the administrative building.
- 1.4. The Secretary Treasurer shall conduct the election of a Chair for the ensuing year. Nominations shall be made and a vote upon the persons nominated, if more than one, shall forthwith be taken by secret ballot. The person who receives the majority of votes of the trustees present shall be declared elected. If upon the first ballot no person receives a majority of votes, successive ballots will be taken until one of the persons nominated shall receive a majority. A majority of the Board may elect a new Chair or Vice-Chair at any time in accordance with Section 87.4 of the School Act.
- 1.5. The Secretary Treasurer shall then declare such person as the Chair of the Board for the ensuing year and shall vacate the Chair.
- 1.6. The Chair shall then forthwith call for nominations for Vice-Chair for the ensuing year or portion thereof, and shall conduct such proceedings in the same manner as enumerated in paragraph 2.4 above.

## 2. Regular Meetings

- 2.1. Each regular and special meeting of the Board shall ordinarily adjourn at the hour of 11:00 o'clock post meridian unless it is decided by a two-thirds majority of the trustees present to continue such meeting.
- 2.2. A quorum shall be a majority of those trustees holding office.
- 2.3. Unless there be a quorum present within one-half hour after the appointed time, the meeting shall stand adjourned.
- 2.4. The Secretary Treasurer shall ensure that each trustee receives a notice of meeting together with the agenda at least three days prior to the regular Board meeting date. Such agenda shall state all business to be transacted or considered thereat, and no other business shall be considered unless members of the Board agree by majority.
- 2.5. The time and dates for meetings for the ensuing year will be determined by the Board after consultation with the executive.
- 2.6. As soon after the hour of meeting as there shall be a quorum present the Chair shall preside and call the meeting to order.
- 2.7. In case the Chair is not present within fifteen minutes after the appointed time, the Vice-Chair shall preside, call the meeting to order, and continue until the arrival of the Chair.
- 2.8. Immediately after the meeting has been called to order the minutes of the preceding meeting or meetings shall be adopted as circulated, or corrected if necessary.

Subsequently they shall be certified as correct by the Secretary Treasurer and signed by the Chair or Vice-Chair as the case may be.

- 2.9. The Chair shall preserve order and decorum, and decide questions of order, subject to an appeal to the Board, and in the absence of the Chair, the Vice-Chair shall have the same authority while presiding as the Chair would have, if present.
- 2.10. Whenever the Chair is called upon to decide a point of order or practice, the point shall be stated without unnecessary comment, and the Chair shall cite the rule or authority applicable to the case.
- 2.11. The Chair shall have the same right of voting as the other members of the Board.
- 2.12. All questions shall be decided by a majority of votes but in the case of an equality of votes for and against the motion, the question is resolved in the negative and the Chair shall so declare.
- 2.13. In the absence of the Chair and the Vice-Chair from any meeting of the Board, the trustees present shall elect one of their number to act as Chair.
- 2.14. Should the Chair decide to vacate the position of the Chair for any purpose, they shall call upon the Vice-Chair to assume the responsibility in the interim.
- 2.15. Each trustee, prior to speaking on any question or motion, shall address themselves to the Chair.
- 2.16. When two or more trustees desire to speak at the same time, the Chair shall name the trustee who shall speak first.
- 2.17. When the Chair is putting the question, or when a member is speaking, no trustee shall interrupt except to raise a point of order, or for the purpose of explanation.
- 2.18. A trustee called to order by the Chair shall immediately cease speaking but may afterwards explain; if there is no appeal, the decision of the Chair shall be final.
- 2.19. Each member of the Board shall confine himself/herself to the question under debate.
- 2.20. Any trustee may require the question or motion under discussion to be read at any time during the debate but not in such a manner as to interrupt a member while speaking.
- 2.21. No trustee shall speak more than twice on the same question and not more than two (2) minutes each time unless the Chair determines the need to do otherwise or the Board moves for informal consideration of the question as per Robert's Rules of Order. The Chair may permit members of staff and partner groups to speak on the question as they consider appropriate in the circumstances.
- 2.22. The Chair shall declare the result of all votes, and in the case of a trustee wishing to be recorded as opposed it shall be so recorded in the minutes provided that such trustee states his/her wishes at the time that the vote is taken.
- 2.23. No person officially taking part in the Board meeting shall leave the Board room during a meeting without permission of the Chair.
- 2.24. All petitions, communications, accounts and reports within the jurisdiction of a standing committee may, on presentation to the Board, be referred to the proper committee or official by the Chair without motion.
- 2.25. A notice of motion shall be required to amend or suspend any standing order, policy, bylaw or rule of the Board. Such notice of motion may be submitted to any regular or



special meeting of the Board for information and shall be voted upon at a subsequent regular meeting.

2.26. All meetings of the Board shall be, unless otherwise herein prescribed, governed by Robert's Rules of Order, except when these rules are in conflict with the School Act or Regulations.

#### 2.27. Order of Business

The Secretary Treasurer in conjunction with the Superintendent of Schools and after consultation with the Chair of the Board shall prepare a proposed agenda for each regular meeting of the Board as follows:

2.27.1. Call to Order and Welcome

2.27.2. Adoption of the Agenda

2.27.3. Adoption of minutes of the last regular or special meeting or meetings

2.27.4. Business arising out of the minutes

2.27.5. a. Presentations (pre-booked and for Board receipt)

b. Delegations (pre-booked and for possible Board deliberation)

c. Questions (from partner groups and members of the public)

2.27.6. Report from the Chair

2.27.7. Report from the Superintendent of Schools

2.27.8. School Successes

2.27.9. Committee Reports

o Education Directions

o Finance, Facilities & Technology

o Human Resources

o Policy

2.27.10. Reports from Trustee Representatives

2.27.11. Correspondence

2.27.12. Question Period (from partner groups and members of the public)

2.27.13. Other business as admitted

2.27.14. For Information

2.27.15. Adjournment

### 3. In-Camera Board Meetings

3.1. If in the opinion of the Board or a standing committee of the Board, the public interest so requires, the Board or the standing committee shall adopt the procedure of moving into an "In-camera" session pursuant to section 69(2) of the School Act.

3.2. The order of business at all In-Camera sessions, unless varied by motion, shall be as follows:

- 3.2.1 Adoption of Agenda
  - Consideration of Late Items
  - Adoption of Agenda
- 3.2.2 Adoption of In-camera Minutes
- 3.2.3 Business Arising out of the Minutes
- 3.2.4 Report from Board Chair
- 3.2.5 Report from Superintendent of Schools
- 3.2.6 Presentations
- 3.2.7 Committee Reports
  - Education Directions
  - Finance, Facilities & Technology
  - Human Resources
  - Policy
- 3.2.8 Reports from Trustee Representatives
- 3.2.9 Correspondence
- 3.2.10 Question Period
- 3.2.11 Other Business as Submitted
- 3.2.12 For Information
- 3.2.13 Motion to Rise and Report

#### 4. Special Meetings

- 4.1. Special meetings of the Board may be called by the Chair at any time. Any trustee may request a special meeting, such request to be made to the Secretary Treasurer and shall include the names of three other trustees who have agreed to the need for such a special meeting. Prior to a special meeting being called, all trustees must be notified of the meeting and its purpose.

Robert's Rules clarifies that written notice includes electronic communication such as email.

#### 5. Minutes

- 5.1. The Board shall maintain and preserve by means of minutes a record of its proceedings and resolutions.
- 5.2. The minutes shall record:
  - 5.2.1. Date, time and place of meeting;
  - 5.2.2. Type of meeting (inaugural, regular, in-camera or special);
  - 5.2.3. Name of presiding officer;
  - 5.2.4. Names of those trustees and administration in attendance;

- 5.2.5. Approval of preceding minutes;
- 5.2.6. Only motions will be recorded in the minutes. Preamble, rationale, or discussions will not be recorded in the minutes, unless directed by the Board through resolution;
- 5.2.7. Points of order;
- 5.2.8. Appointments;
- 5.2.9. Notices of motion;
- 5.2.10. Recommended motions proposed by Committees; and,
- 5.2.11. Trustee conflict of interest declaration pursuant to Section 58 of the School Act.

5.3. The minutes shall:

- 5.3.1. Be prepared as directed by the Secretary Treasurer;
- 5.3.2. Be considered an unofficial record of proceedings until such time as adopted by the Board; and
- 5.3.3. Upon adoption by the Board, be deemed to be the official and sole record of the Board's business.

5.4. The Secretary Treasurer shall ensure that appropriate signatures are affixed to the concluding page of the minutes.

5.5. As part of its ongoing effort to keep staff and the public fully informed concerning its affairs and actions, the Board directs the Superintendent to institute and maintain effective and appropriate procedures for the prompt dissemination of information about decisions made at all Board meetings.

5.6. The approved minutes of a regular or special meeting shall be posted to the website as soon as practicable following approval. The Superintendent is responsible to post the approved minutes.

5.7. Upon adoption by the Board, the minutes of meetings other than in-camera meetings shall be open to public scrutiny.

6. Rules of Order

6.1. All motions shall be in writing, if so required by the Chair.

6.2. Any motion to be operative shall require a seconder before any debate is permitted.

6.3. A motion having been made and seconded, shall be deemed to be in possession of the Board.

6.4. While a question is under debate no motion shall be received unless to refer it, to amend it, to table it, to postpone it definitely or indefinitely, to adjourn, to consider the question informally, or to move the previous question.

- 6.5. The previous question, until it is decided, shall preclude all amendments of the main question and shall be put without debate in the following words, "That this question be now put"; if this question be resolved in the affirmative, the original question shall be put forthwith, without any amendment or debate but if the previous question is resolved in the negative, the main question may be debated and amended.
- 6.6. Amendments shall be put in the reverse order to that in which they are moved, and shall be decided or withdrawn before the main question is put to the vote. Only one amendment shall be allowed to an amendment and any amendment more than once must be on the main question.
- 6.7. When the question under consideration contains distinct propositions, upon the request of any member of the Board, the vote upon each proposition shall be taken separately.
- 6.8. After the question is finally put by the Chair, no trustee shall speak to the question nor shall any other motion be made until after the result of the vote has been declared, and the decision of the Chair as to whether the question has finally been put shall be conclusive.
- 6.9. Whenever the Chair is of the opinion that a motion is contrary to the rules and privileges of the Board, they shall apprise the trustees thereof immediately, and shall cite the rule or authority applicable to the case without any argument or comment.
- 6.10. Whenever any matter of privilege or order arises, it shall immediately be taken into consideration.

## 7. Procedures for Delegations to Board

- 7.1. A delegation wishing to appear must submit to the Secretary Treasurer a request in writing stating the matters they wish to bring before the trustees and, if a brief is to be presented, a copy of the brief and the name of the spokesperson for the delegation.
- 7.2. If the request is to appear before the Board, the request and all supporting material must be received by the Secretary Treasurer (preferably electronically), prior to 16:30 hours on the Wednesday before the Board meeting.
- 7.3. If a delegation appears before the Board, the following procedures will be followed:
  - 7.3.1. The time allotted for the delegation's presentation will normally be five minutes;
  - 7.3.2. Board members may direct questions for clarification through the Chair to the spokesperson for the delegation; however, the matter will not be debated;
  - 7.3.3. Normally, the matter will not be considered by the Board at the meeting at which the delegation appears.
  - 7.3.4. The Chair of the Board may waive the notice requirement and permit a delegation to appear before a Board meeting if the Chair of the Board considers the matter to be an emergent item.

8. Audio/Video Recording Devices

- 8.1. The Board requires that anyone wanting to use recording devices at a public Board meeting must obtain prior approval of the Board Chair. This shall be communicated by the Board Chair at the beginning of the Regular or Special Meeting.

9. **Trustee Disqualification from Office Due to Absences**

- 9.1. **Section 52.2 of the *School Act* provides the authority to disqualify a Trustee from office should the Trustee be continuously absent from Board meetings for a period of three consecutive months unless those absences are due to illness or with the leave of the Board.**
- 9.2. **The decision to disqualify a Trustee will be in accordance with the *School Act* as well as Policy 9.9.**
- 9.3. **For the purposes of Policy 9.9, Board meetings shall be defined as regularly scheduled public Board meetings in the Board's annual calendar, as approved by the Board.**
- 9.4. **Consecutive months of absence shall consider only those months in which the Board has a regularly scheduled Board meeting. Consecutive months of absence may include month(s) from the previous school year and the current school year.**
- 9.5. **A Trustee who is unable to attend a Board meeting should provide advance notice to the Chair of the Board or the Secretary-Treasurer when possible.**

10. **Trustee Participation in Meetings through Virtual Means**

- 10.1. **Trustees should prioritize in-person attendance at Board meetings, but may attend through virtual means if required for extenuating circumstances such as illness, travel, child care responsibilities, or other circumstances that require Trustee attendance in another location.**
- 10.2. **Trustees may participate in a meeting of the Board through virtual means provided the technological capability is available for both audio and visual communication with the rest of the Board and must ensure that their location provides for privacy should there be a need for confidentiality.**
- 10.3. **In keeping with the provisions of Policy 9.10.2, the Board Chair may refuse to allow a Trustee to participate through virtual means.**
- 10.4. **Trustees participating in a meeting of the Board through virtual means are deemed to be present at the meeting and form part of the quorum.**
- 10.5. **Notwithstanding the requirements of these procedures, a Trustee may not attend more than three (3) consecutive regularly scheduled public Board meetings through virtual means without being authorized by resolution of the Board to do so.**

## 11. Trustee Remuneration

In accordance with the *School Act* a Board may authorize the payment of remuneration and reasonable allowance for expenses incurred by trustees in the discharge of their duties.

11.1. The Board authorizes that the Chair, Vice-Chair and other Trustees be paid Trustee remuneration effective **July 1, 2023**, as follows:

**Chair - \$22,197**

**Vice-Chair - \$20,375**

**Trustees - \$18,960**

These remunerations will be reviewed annually and will increase by no less than the economic increase to CUPE support staff wages in any year.

## 12. Trustee Expense Reimbursement

Travel and related expenses incurred by Trustees and district personnel will be reimbursed as follows:

### 12.1. Per Diem:

The per diem allowance shall be the same as used by the BC School Trustees' Association (BCSTA).

These allowances will be paid in US Funds when incurred in the United States.

### 12.2. International Travel:

Travel to international locations may result in costs that are higher than established per diem amounts for Canadian travel. All reasonable business travel costs will be reimbursed.

For the purposes of this policy, travel to international locations is defined as travel outside of Canada and the United States.

### 12.3. Lodging:

When selecting lodging, district personnel will consult and use either BC Government approved accommodation or accommodation at an equivalent or lower cost unless there are extenuating circumstances approved by a supervisor. All overnight accommodation on Board business is to be charged directly to School District No. 63 if possible, less any personal calls or items charged. Should it be necessary for the claimant to pay for lodging, a receipt is required to support reimbursement.

### 12.4. Mileage Rates:

Trustees and district personnel will be reimbursed at the rates noted below. The maximum amount claimable is limited to the cost of economy air fare between points travelled, when air transportation is available and practical.

### 12.5. Reimbursement Rates:

Reimbursement rate will be consistent with the rate set out in the teachers' collective agreement.

### 12.6. Travel Costs:

Whenever possible travel arrangements should be made through and billed directly to the Board Office and should be booked in advance so as to take advantage of any fare reductions that are available. Arrangements should be structured such that any benefits

that accrue from group bookings (for example, loyalty points or free travel benefits) go to the Board.

BC Government corporate supply arrangements open to school districts (for example for rental cars) should be used where economical.

Should the claimant pay transportation costs, the amount paid may be claimed provided receipts or tickets are attached to the claim form.

#### 12.7. Incidental Expenses:

Parking, taxi fares, telephone calls, ferry fares, etc., will be paid for by the Board when those expenses are necessary for Board business and when supported receipts. Expenses under \$5.00 will be reimbursed provided a short description of items is included on the claim form.

#### 12.8. Travel Advances:

A travel advance, in an amount not exceeding the estimated expenses to be incurred, may be made on request. To clear the outstanding advance, the claim form together with applicable receipts is to be forwarded to the Board Office for processing within seven days of the completion of the business or journey.

#### 12.9. Trustee Expenses:

Trustees are understood to incur Board-related expenses related to holding office, which are reimbursed by the remuneration paid to each trustee. Those Board-related expenses include mileage to and from regularly scheduled Board and Committee meetings and general expenses such as the portion of residential or cellular phones, internet costs and computer costs related to Board business. Additionally, trustees may claim reimbursement for one printer cartridge per year and additional vehicle insurance costs for business use of an automobile. Cell phone costs may be claimed by the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Board.

### 13. Conflict of Interest

13.1. The Board of Education (the "Board") directs its members not only to adhere to all laws regarding conflicts of interest but also to be alert to situations that have the appearance of a conflict of interest and to avoid actions that might be detrimental to themselves or to the Board.

13.2. If a trustee has any pecuniary interest in any matter, or a deemed pecuniary interest as defined in Part V of the School Act, and is present at a meeting of the Board at which the matter is considered, the trustee:

13.2.1. Shall at the meeting disclose his or her pecuniary interest and the general nature of the pecuniary interest;

13.2.2. Shall not take part in the discussion of or vote on any question in respect of the matter; and

13.2.3. Shall not attempt in any way, whether before, during or after the meeting, to influence the voting on any question in respect of the matter.

- 13.3. If the meeting is not open to the public, in addition to complying with the above the trustee shall immediately leave the meeting or the part of the meeting during which the matter is under consideration.
- 13.4. If a meeting is open to the public, every disclosure of pecuniary interest and the general nature of it shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. If the meeting is not open to the public, the fact that a disclosure of pecuniary interest was made, but not the general nature of that interest, shall be reported to, and recorded in the minutes of, the next meeting that is open to the public.



## 14. Logo and District Names

### 13.1 The Logo and Design Use

#### Description

The logo is the property of the Saanich School District and shall only be used by internal and external organizations with prior approval of the Superintendent.



### 13.2 Legal Name

Board of Education of School District No. 63 (Saanich)

### 13.3

Saanich School District or Saanich Schools

Reference: 50, 56, 57, 58, 59, 66-71, 71(1), 72 School Act  
Financial Disclosure Act  
Income Tax Act

Approved: November 2020  
Amended:

# Policy Committee Proposed Amendments to Policy 21 (Bus and Van Transportation) – September 12, 2023

Green bolded text are proposed additions to policy and red strikethrough text represent proposed deletions. Note that green text highlighted in yellow represent proposed additions or deletions (if strikethrough) to the proposed policy amendments reflected in the consultation plan approved by the Board in April 2023.

## POLICY 21 - BUS AND VAN TRANSPORTATION

The Superintendent shall establish an efficient and effective student transportation system to provide for the transportation of students to and from their nearest catchment school. **Support for active student travel is an important part of a comprehensive approach to student transportation.** Student safety shall be the highest priority in the provision of student transportation by the district.

The transportation system shall be provided in accordance with the following Guiding Principles:

- 1 Routes, **subject to being economically viable**, will be established to ensure:
  - 1.1 transportation **to their regular program catchment school** for those students living outside the following walk limits by traveled road or walkway from ~~the their regular program catchment school~~ **nearest school in their catchment area:**
    - i. Kindergarten – Grade 5 Students: **2.5** ~~4.0~~ kilometer
    - ii. Students of Grades 6 – 12 inclusive: 4.8 kilometers
  - 1.2 **students entitled to transportation in paragraph 1.1 will not have to travel further than 2.5 kilometers by traveled road or walkway to the nearest bus stop.**
  - 1.3 **travel times are optimized for students being transported to their regular program catchment school from outside the walk limits established in paragraph 1.1.**
- 2 **The district will endeavor to establish routes that serve as many students eligible for service under guiding principle 1 as possible. A minimum of 15 students eligible for transportation services under guiding principle 1 are required for a route to be considered economically viable.**
- 3 ~~When it is necessary to address a concern of safety or to serve a district program catchment area,~~ **Additional transportation may be provided considered if there are significant safety concerns, such as a major highway crossing, or in support of vulnerable students with exceptional transportation needs.**
- 4 The transportation routes shall be established to operate within the operating budget established by the Board. Bus routes shall be published in August of each school year.
- 5 Consideration shall be given to providing service when a student is directed to attend a school other than the nearest school in their catchment area.

# Policy Committee Proposed Amendments to Policy 21 (Bus and Van Transportation) – September 12, 2023

- 6 Courtesy riders are district students not otherwise addressed in guiding principles 1 to 5, and may be transported if the legal seating capacity of the bus has not been reached. Seating priority is reserved for those students entitled to transportation by guiding principles 1 to 5. Courtesy riders attending District Programs (as defined in Administrative Procedure 560) will be prioritized over other courtesy riders.
- 7 As transportation routes are established to provide optimal service in accordance with paragraphs 1 to 5, transportation routes and bus stops will not be altered to enhance service for courtesy riders.
- 8 Active transportation will be promoted through a variety of means including, but not limited to:
  - 8.1 Working with local governments to address road safety concerns as well as identify opportunities to create active transportation routes to school;
  - 8.2 Providing communication to students, parents/guardians and the community on road safety issues; and
  - 8.3 Building student awareness on various active transportation options for arriving to school.
- 9 Riders will be charged a nominal registration fee, and an additional fee for late registrations. Late fees are intended to encourage timely registration and improve the effectiveness of route planning prior to school start-up. The establishment of fees and any required revisions will be approved by the Board.
- 10 The Superintendent will establish and keep current, safety procedures for the district's transportation system and for the rental of commercial buses or vans for student transportation. Passenger vans shall be limited to a maximum of 10 passengers.

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To: Policy Committee

Prepared By: Jason Reid

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Subject: Transportation Policy Review Consultation

Date: September 8, 2023

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## Purpose and Background

The purpose of this briefing note is to outline the next steps in the transportation review consultation and to recommend one change to the proposed transportation policy amendments.

Transportation policy development work began in the fall of 2022 including:

- conducting a provincial transportation survey (completed by other BC school districts),
- a review of transportation policies/procedures in other BC school districts, and
- a district survey seeking feedback regarding transportation services from parents, students, and staff.

Following review of the survey results in January 2023, the policy committee agreed that staff be requested to assess the options and implications for policy revisions that:

- lowers K-5 walk limits considering variation in school geography,
- reflects safety considerations in determining service / routes,
- encourages and supports active transportation and environmental considerations,
- encourages timely registration and discourages ghost riders (students who register and then do not access service),
- focuses route design on optimizing service for students entitled to service by policy,
- clarifies how courtesy riders are defined (including removing contradictory reference to serving a program catchment areas), and
- reflects consideration of supporting vulnerable students.

In March 2023, the Policy Committee reviewed proposed amendments to Policy 21 (Bus and Van Transportation) reflecting the above direction and the Board adopted the following motion:

*“That the Board approve the development of a consultation plan reflecting the proposed transportation policy amendments.”*

In April 2023, the Policy Committee reviewed the proposed consultation plan and the Board adopted the following motion:

*“That the Board approve holding, in the fall of 2023, community consultations in each of the three district zones on the proposed transportation policy as outlined in the briefing note of April 6, 2023, and that these consultations be supported by an online survey on the proposed policy.”*

Additional background information on the transportation policy development process to date can be found in the April 2023 Policy Committee Report.

## Next Steps

### Registration for 2023/24 School Year

For this fall we experienced increased registration of students attending their catchment school from outside the walk limits, which resulted in the need to limit riders within the capacity of certain routes. At this time, we’ve confirmed bus transportation for 2,356 riders including 592 courtesy riders. There are about 100 wait listed registrations (primarily courtesy riders) and over 300 new registrations that have been received over the past week to be processed. This year we received more than 700 late registrations following the close of registration in mid-June.

Late registrations and ghost riders (those who register and do not ride the bus) continue to significantly challenge the registration process. This issue was the rationale for the proposed policy language providing for a nominal registration fee and an additional late registration fee.

The administration of registrations this year has also highlighted language within administrative procedure that should also be reflected in policy. The bus registration procedures in [Administrative Procedure 560 \(Student Bus Transportation Services\)](#) include the following:

*“Applications for bus service will be considered in the following order:*

- 1. Students attending their home school and living outside walk limits.*
- 2. Students attending District programs.*
- 3. Students attending school of choice (courtesy riders). Courtesy riders will be prioritized on a furthest distance basis and ridership will not be confirmed until after October 1, when routes and loads are established.”*

This language is applied in the registration process to prioritize courtesy riders attending district programs (such as French Immersion) over other courtesy riders. While this language has been in place for many years, because of its significance there should be underlying policy

language that supports this administrative procedure<sup>1</sup>. Therefore I recommend the following addition to Policy 21 clause 6 “*Courtesy riders attending District Programs will be prioritized over other courtesy riders*” (See highlighted text in Attachment 1).

Our experience this year also highlights that a likely outcome of lowering the K-5 walk limits will be reduced capacity available for courtesy riders including those attending district programs.

### Next Steps in Consultation

An open house will be scheduled in each of the three zones (North, Central, South) this fall. At these meetings, district staff will present the following contextual information:

- the current transportation policy;
- issues and concerns we have heard;
- what we learned from the provincial transportation survey (of other BC school districts) and review of other BC school district policies;
- what we learned from the transportation survey to parents, students and staff; and
- the proposed policy amendments and resulting service changes anticipated<sup>2</sup>.

Following this presentation and questions and answers, the following questions will be posed to participants for feedback and discussion.

1. Do the proposed policy amendments reflect the concerns identified to date and the direction from the policy committee (i.e. the direction from the January 2023 policy committee meeting)?
2. Is there anything else that should be considered?

A survey will be distributed to participants following each meeting to more formally solicit feedback from those who may not be comfortable speaking in the meeting.

An “early” draft of the open house presentation is included as Attachment 2.

Following presentation of the final proposed policy amendments to the Policy Committee reflecting feedback from the open house meetings, the Policy Committee would then be in a position to provide notice of motion later in the fall or early winter, with final adoption following a further 2 months of consultation as per [Board Policy 6 \(Policy Making and Review\)](#).

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<sup>1</sup> At the time of final adoption of a revised policy, all relevant administrative procedures will be redrafted to align with the new policy and for consistency.

<sup>2</sup> For the consultation, a point the committee wished to clarify was what would be viewed to be a nominal registration fee, and an additional fee for late registrations. Reviewing what we have seen in other school districts, a nominal registration fee could be \$25 and for late registrations \$100.

Staff Recommendation

That the Board approve the change to the proposed Policy 21 (Bus and Van Transportation) policy language amendments for consultation.

Respectfully submitted,

Jason Reid  
Secretary-Treasurer

Attachment: 1 – Proposed Amendments to Policy 21 (Bus and Van Transportation)  
2 – Draft Open House Presentation

# Attachment 1 – Proposed Amendments to Policy 21 (Bus and Van Transportation)

## POLICY 21 - BUS AND VAN TRANSPORTATION

The Superintendent shall establish an efficient and effective student transportation system to provide for the transportation of students to and from their nearest catchment school. **Support for active student travel is an important part of a comprehensive approach to student transportation.** Student safety shall be the highest priority in the provision of student transportation by the district.

The transportation system shall be provided in accordance with the following Guiding Principles:

- 1 Routes, **subject to being economically viable**, will be established to ensure:
  - 1.1 transportation **to their regular program catchment school** for those students living outside the following walk limits by traveled road or walkway from ~~the their regular program catchment school~~ **nearest school in their catchment area**:
    - i. Kindergarten – Grade 5 Students: ~~2.5~~ **4.0** kilometer
    - ii. Students of Grades 6 – 12 inclusive: 4.8 kilometers
  - 1.2 **students entitled to transportation in paragraph 1.1 will not have to travel further than 2.5 kilometers by traveled road or walkway to the nearest bus stop.**
  - 1.3 **travel times are optimized for students being transported to their regular program catchment school from outside the walk limits established in paragraph 1.1.**
- 2 **The district will endeavor to establish routes that serve as many students eligible for service under guiding principle 1 as possible. A minimum of 15 students eligible for transportation services under guiding principle 1 are required for a route to be considered economically viable.**
- 3 ~~When it is necessary to address a concern of safety or to serve a district program catchment area,~~ **Additional transportation may be provided-considered if there are significant safety concerns, such as a major highway crossing, or in support of vulnerable students.**
- 4 The transportation routes shall be established to operate within the operating budget established by the Board. Bus routes shall be published in August of each school year.
- 5 Consideration shall be given to providing service when a student is directed to attend a school other than the nearest school in their catchment area.
- 6 Courtesy riders are district students not otherwise addressed in guiding principles 1 to 5, and may be transported if the legal seating capacity of the bus has not been reached. **Seating priority is reserved for those students entitled to transportation by guiding principles 1 to 5. Courtesy riders attending District Programs will be prioritized over other courtesy riders.**
- 7 **As transportation routes are established to provide optimal service in accordance with paragraphs 1 to 5, transportation routes and bus stops will not be altered to enhance service for courtesy riders.**



# Attachment 1 – Proposed Amendments to Policy 21 (Bus and Van Transportation)

- 8 Active transportation will be promoted through a variety of means including, but not limited to:
  - 8.1 Working with local governments to address road safety concerns as well as identify opportunities to create active transportation routes to school;
  - 8.2 Providing communication to students, parents/guardians and the community on road safety issues; and
  - 8.3 Building student awareness on various active transportation options for arriving to school.
- 9 Riders will be charged a nominal registration fee, and an additional fee for late registrations. Late fees are intended to encourage timely registration and improve the effectiveness of route planning prior to school start-up. The establishment of fees and any required revisions will be approved by the Board.
- 10 The Superintendent will establish and keep current, safety procedures for the district's transportation system and for the rental of commercial buses or vans for student transportation. Passenger vans shall be limited to a maximum of 10 passengers.

**Transportation Policy Review  
[North/Central/South] Zone Open House  
[Date]**



# Work Completed to Date

- Provincial Transportation Survey (BC School Districts) (Fall 2022)
- Review of BC School District Policy/Procedure (Fall 2022)
- District survey (Parents/Guardians, Student and Staff (January 2023)
- Policy Committee Direction (January 2023)
- Draft Policy Language (March 2023)



# Next Steps in Process

- Open House Meetings (North, Central and South zones) (Fall 2023)
- Policy Committee reviews final draft policy language (Fall 2023)
- Board Notice of Motion to amend policy (Winter 2024)
- Policy adoption following 2 months consultation (Spring 2024)
- Policy Implemented for 2024/25 school year



# Current Policy

- Establish routes that transport students living outside the walk limits (grades K to 5: 4.0 km / grades 6 to 12: 4.8 km) to and from their nearest catchment school. (Policy 21)
- Manage within the operating budget established by the Board. (Policy 21)
- Transport courtesy riders on existing routes only if additional capacity is available. (Policy 21)
- When necessary to address a concern of safety or to serve a district program catchment area, additional school transportation may be provided. (Policy 21)
- Programs of Choice, including French Immersion, are established without transportation assistance from the district. (Policy 24)



# Current Administrative Procedure 560

- Outlines procedure for application and registration for bus service
- Registrations are prioritized in the following order
  1. Students attending catchment school from outside walk limits
  2. Students attending District programs
  3. Students attending school of choice – confirmed after October 1<sup>st</sup> and greatest distance prioritized



# Transportation System Observations

## Observations from Provincial Survey and Policy Review

- Of the 33 districts that responded, 15 reported having lower walk limits particularly at elementary
- Most districts with lower walk limits also have minimum walking distances to bus stops, minimum spacing of bus stops, or designated certain urban areas as non-service zones.
- Of the 32 districts that responded, 25 reported that fees were not charged.
- More recently developed policies reflect an increased focus on active transportation
- Many policies have language limiting travel times for students travelling to their catchment school and/or specify that routes will not be altered to accommodate courtesy riders.



# Transportation System Observations

## Saanich Specific Observations

- Saanich serves a greater proportion of students when compared to school districts with similar geography (data from Provincial Survey)
- The combination of geographically contained catchments and higher elementary walk limits has resulted in variation in service across the district.
- More options are available for north zone students travelling to a French Immersion program school when compared with south zone students.





# What we heard in the survey

- Transportation services are very important to families
- A desire and for many an expectation that policy be changed to increase overall service levels
- Survey Questions: “What should the Board consider when determining how transportation routes and services are established?”

THEME	Distance to Catchment School	Distance to Bus stop	Active Transportation Options / Road Safety	Rider Age	Student Vulnerability	Route Length / Wait Times	Courtesy Riders / Programs of Choice
COUNT	85	49	97	59	30	78	42

- Strong support for many considerations in establishing routes that are in conflict with one another (ex. distance to bus stop versus route time). Many respondents selected many or all considerations.



# What we heard in the survey

- Route length/wait times was the theme most often identified as a single priority and many responses described student experience with long route times and/or long wait times between bell time and drop-off or pick-up.
- Road safety and student vulnerability were also often a focus in many responses.
- Many responses noted that safety and serving vulnerable students should be prioritized over active transportation and environmental concerns.
- Many commented on limited active transportation routes in some areas, that active transportation was age dependent and that active transportation was more challenging during winter months.
- Many respondents were opposed to any fees; however, more respondents were in favour of fees to maintain services if necessary or to enhance services.
- Many respondents that were not otherwise in favour of fees, were supportive of a late registration fee if it would improve the timeliness of registrations and the effectiveness of route planning before school start up.



# Policy Committee Direction (Jan 2023)

Following review and consideration of the survey results, in January 2023 the Policy Committee requested that staff assess options for policy revisions that:

- lowers K-5 walk limits considering variation in school geography,
- reflects safety considerations in determining service / routes,
- encourages and supports active transportation and environmental considerations,
- encourages timely registration and discourages ghost riders (students who register and then do not access service),
- focuses route design on optimizing service for students entitled to service by policy,
- clarifies how courtesy riders are defined (including removing contradictory reference to serving a program catchment areas), and
- reflects consideration of supporting vulnerable students.



# Proposed Policy Revisions

Walkthrough and discuss proposed policy revisions.



# Discussion

## Discussion Questions

1. Do the proposed policy amendments reflect the concerns identified to date and the direction from the policy committee (i.e. the direction from the January 2023 policy committee meeting)?
2. Is there anything else that should be considered?