



Governing Boards

By ATA

What is a Governing Board?

A Governing Board is a body established in each school according to the Education Act.

Composition:

- Parents
- School staff (teachers, representatives of both the non-teaching professionals and support staff)
- Daycare member (elementary)
- Students (cycle 2 of secondary school)
- Members of the community

Sections 42-46 (Education Act)

The Governing Board is composed of no more than 20 members

- A) At least 4 parents
- B) At least 4 school staff members, which must include...
 - At least 2 must be teachers
 - At least 1 non teaching professional or a teacher as a substitute
 - At least 1 support staff or a teacher as a substitute
 - 1 daycare representative (elementary)
 - 2 students (high school level)
- C) 2 community representatives (non voting member)

** The parent members (A) must be equal to the staff members (B)

What Does a Governing Board Do?

The powers and functions of the Governing Board are related to four areas:

- General
- Educational Services
- Community Services
- Physical and Financial resources

Governing Board Elections

- Each September, the chair of the Governing Board or the school principal calls a general assembly of the parents of the students who attend the school to elect parent representatives to the governing board.
- All representatives must be elected by September 30th.
- At the meeting the parents also elect a representative to the ETSB Parents Committee from among their representatives on the governing board.

Terms of Office and Vacancies

- The term of office for parent representatives is two years except for the first year a governing board is established when half the parents elected serve one year. The terms of office for other members is one year.
- If a parent representative leaves the governing board before completing his or her mandate, the other parent representatives on the governing board appoint a parent to fill the vacancy and complete the mandate.
- A parent representative whose child no longer attends the school may remain a member of the governing board until the next general assembly held before September 30 of the new school year.
- Term of the chair is one year.

Election of the Chairperson

- Is elected the first meeting of the governing board by all the voting members.
- Presides over meetings.
- Has the deciding vote in the event of a tie.
- The governing board does not elect a vice-chair.

Section 60

If the chair is absent or unable to act, the governing board shall designate a person from among the members who are eligible for the office of chair to exercise the functions and powers of the chair.

What Constitutes a Good Chair

- Is well prepared
- Presides over the meeting (starts and ends on time)
- Respects the rules of internal procedure
- Keeps a speaker list
- Keeps order and ensures speakers remain on topic
- Listens attentively
- Encourages all members to speak and explain their views
- Clarifies, gives information and summarizes
- Speaks no more than is necessary
- Ensures that discussions respect the mandate of the governing board

The Principal's Role on Governing Board...

- Acts as the resource person.
- Ensures that proposals are prepared and submitted and all necessary information is given before making decisions.
- By law, they are responsible for the minutes ensuring that they are completed, signed and stored safely. (Section 69)
- They must take part in the meeting but they are not a member.

Governing Board Decisions & Quorum

The decisions of the governing board are made by a majority vote of the members present and entitled to vote.

- A majority of members including half the parents
- Abstentions do not count
- Community representatives are non voting members
- Decisions are made in public and recorded in the minutes
- The chair casts the deciding vote in the case of a tie

Quorum - A majority of the members of the governing board, who are in office, including **at least half the parents**, is a quorum of the governing board.

Rules of Internal Management

The governing board establishes its own rules.

The rules of internal management should:

- Reflect the needs of the governing board
- Be reviewed every year

** The governing board must provide for at least 5 meetings during the year.

Rules of Internal Management - What to Include

Minutes – Who records the minutes

– Who receives the minutes (other than the members of THE GB)

***Note:**

Following approval, the minutes are signed by the chairperson and the principal or the person appointed by the principal.

The minutes must be kept by the principal in a register and are open to the public (Section 69).

Budget

- Management operating budget (\$250), usually used for refreshments, photocopying, babysitting, transportation

Minutes

What do they include:

- Date, time, and location of the meeting
- Names of the members present
- Names of members who sent regret or are absent
- Time the meeting was called to order
- Adoption of the agenda
- Adoption of the previous meeting minutes (with modifications)
Corrections should not change the sense of what was recorded but should clarify any factual or clerical mistake
- Exact wording of a motion with the vote
- Brief summary of items discussed
- Items that have been table or deferred
- Time of adjournment

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing is setting goals

→ Governing Boards govern

Managing is taking action to meet goals

→ School administrators manage and serve as resources to help guide the governing board in setting goals

ROLE OF THE GOVERNING BOARD

Governing Board members:

- ❖ Voice opinions of the groups they represent
- ❖ Discuss general orientations
- ❖ Work together
- ❖ Work in the students' best interest
- ❖ Encourage cooperation among people having an interest in the school

IMPORTANT: Conduct (Section 71)

- Members of the governing board must act within the scope of the functions and powers conferred on them, and exercise the care, prudence and diligence that a reasonable person would exercise in similar circumstances
- They must also act with honesty and loyalty and in the interest of the school, the students, the parents, the school staff and the community.

IMPORTANT: CONFLICT OF INTEREST SECTION (Section 70)

A governing board member who has a direct or indirect interest in an enterprise that puts that member in conflict of interest with the school must disclose the interest in writing to the principal.

In such a case, the Member should withdraw from the meeting while the issue is being discussed and voted on (Section 70).

Having a conflict of interest is not prohibited, but not declaring it could lead to forfeiture of office.

ROLE OF THE GOVERNING BOARD

- The Education Act defines the powers and responsibilities between the governing board and principal.
- The governing board powers are defined in Sections 74-95.
- The principal's powers are defined in Sections 96.12-96.26.
- The governing board is the focal point for decisions that affect the life of the school.

Governing Boards:

- Determine what the school should achieve through the educational project
- Seek collaboration of persons having an interest in the school.
- Encourage communication and dialogue between all parties in order to achieve student success.

THE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR

- Is the academic and administrative director of the school
- Ensures that the decisions of the governing board are being implemented
- Ensures objectives of the educational project are achieved
-

Section 96.12

The principal, under the authority of the director general of the school board, shall ensure that educational services provided at the school meet the proper standards of quality.

The principal is the academic and administrative director of the school and shall see to the implementation of the decisions of the governing board and of the other provisions governing the school.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF POWER

DECISION

- Certain responsibilities (obligations) that it should assume and on which it should make a decision.
I.E. preparing the annual report and how to inform the community

ADOPTION

- The option to change, adapt, add or remove elements of a proposal submitted by the principal.
I.E. annual budget, Educational Project, GB annual report

DIFFERENT TYPES OF POWER

APPROVAL

- Accept or reject proposals without making changes (say *yes* or *no*)

If rejected, a new proposal must be submitted to the governing board for approval before its implementation.

I.E. basic school regulation, educational activities, anti-bullying plan

INFORMATION

- Receive information after a decision is made by the principal with no possibility to reconsider the decision

I.E. local program of study, student achievement, instructional methods, enrolment criteria

CONSULTATION

- Provides an opinion on any matter with the possibility of influencing the final decision.
- Consulted by the school board and the principal on certain issues related to the operation of the school.
- May also take the initiative to advise the school board.

I.E. Deed of establishment, criteria for principal, budget building

Section 78

The governing board shall advise the school board concerning:

- 1) Any matter the school board is required to submit to the governing board;
- 2) Any matter likely to facilitate the operation of the school;
- 3) Any matter likely to improve the services provided by the school board.

SUBJECTS OUTSIDE THE MANDATE OF THE GOVERNING BOARD

- Personnel management (hiring, assignment of workload, choice of supply teachers, discussion about members of staff)
- The situation of a particular student
- Teaching methods: choice of approaches, activities and types of homework to achieve the objectives of the programs
- The choice of report card and exams
- Class size and organization
- The school calendar
- Professional development of the staff

CONCLUSION

Governing board's principle function:

- Provide guidance and positive influence.
- Promote the exchange of information and expertise in order to foster positive relationships.

Section 74

The governing board shall analyze the situation prevailing at the school, principally the needs of the students, the challenges tied to student success and the characteristics and expectations of the community served by the school. Based on the analysis and taking into account the commitment-to-success plan of the school board, the governing board shall adopt the school's educational project, oversee the implementation and evaluate the project at the intervals specified in it.

Each of these stages shall be carried out through concerted action between the various participants having an interest in the school and in student success. To that end, the governing board shall encourage the collaboration of students, parents, teachers, other school staff members, and community and school board representatives.

TEAMWORK!

THE KEY TO A SUCCESSFUL GOVERNING BOARD!!