

**JAMES BAY LOWLANDS
SECONDARY SCHOOL BOARD**

**BOARD GOVERNANCE POLICY
NO. GOV-09**

Date Adopted	October 24, 2018
Last Revised	
Board Motion	5598-10-18

BOARD COMMUNICATIONS

1. PURPOSE

This governance policy has been developed to ensure that communications from and across James Bay Lowlands Secondary School Board are well-coordinated, effectively managed, and responsive to the diverse information needs of internal and external stakeholders.

2. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- 2.1 Board communications must support the Board's philosophy as set out in Board Policy GOV-01 Values, Vision, and Mission.
- 2.2 Open, timely, and transparent communications strengthen relationships, support the programs and activities of the Board, and model collaboration within the learning community.
- 2.3 All employees, as well as members of the Board of Trustees, are responsible for effective and efficient communications.

3. POLICY

- 3.1 The James Bay Lowlands Secondary School Board recognizes the need for effective and organized communications among members of the system and to the educational community at large.
- 3.2 The Board is committed to providing open, timely, and appropriate communication among trustees and system and school administrators regarding important matters or issues that relate to or impact on the staff, school, and community.
- 3.3 The Board believes that miscommunication and/or lack of awareness will be avoided by providing direction to trustees and administration regarding fair, reasonable, and effective communications.

4. BOARD EXPECTATIONS

The James Bay Lowlands Secondary School Board has clear expectations for effective communication, and sets out the following responsibilities for employees and trustees.

4.1 Responsibilities of Employees and Trustees

It is the responsibility of all employees and trustees to:

- a) be publicly supportive of the school, of school programs, of all staff members, and of Board policies and administrative procedures;
- b) strive for continuous, effective two-way communication;
- c) ensure that written communications (i.e., report cards, information letters, bulletins, newsletters, electronic and social media communications) are of the highest quality and professionalism;
- d) use discretion when responding to inquiries from the community and channel inquiries and information to the appropriate person, when required;
- e) be informed about the Board's programs, services, facilities, resources and activities; and
- f) adhere to the terms of this Board policy and, in the case of trustees, to Board Governance By-Laws, when handling matters of complaints and grievances.

4.2 Additional Responsibilities of the Board of Trustees

Members of the Board of Trustees have additional responsibilities to:

- a) recognize that individual trustees are legally bound by the majority decisions of the Board, regardless of whether they supported the decision or voted in opposition;
- b) uphold in public the implementation of any Board resolution after it is passed by the Board;
- c) ensure that public statements are based on accurate information and knowledge;
- d) solicit suggestions and opinions about the system from as many sources as possible, when appropriate;
- e) assist in the orientation of new trustees;

- f) channel information to the supervisory officer and the finance and human resources administrator in order that they may identify emerging patterns or concerns; and
- g) communicate with the appropriate administrator concerning the resolution of concerns or complaints. [See Board Governance Policy GOV-10 Complaint Resolution]

4.3 Additional Responsibilities of the Chair of the Board

The Chair of the Board has additional responsibility to:

- a) explain Board decisions and positions;
- b) exemplify effective communications for all trustees to follow;
- c) maintain good relations with, and act as a spokesperson to the media on Board-related matters, in conjunction with the finance and human resources administrator and/or supervisory officer; and
- d) assist trustees in understanding their roles as communication agents for the Board, and encourage trustee involvement in professional development activities.

4.4 Additional Responsibilities of the Supervisory Officer or Designate

The supervisory officer or designate has additional responsibility to:

- a) act as the official spokesperson for the Board's program and operational items;
- b) ensure that trustees are consulted with and are kept informed of key messages and new system initiatives or programs in advance of implementation;
- c) keep the finance and human resources administrator informed regarding school initiatives;
- d) provide support to the principal, ensuring that accurate and consistent information is dispensed to the public and staff;
- e) provide the media and school staff with accurate information regarding Board policies, administrative procedures, and activities; and
- f) provide the media with advance Board reports and correspondence.

4.5 Additional Responsibilities of the Finance and Human Resources Administrator

The finance and human resources administrator has additional responsibility to:

- a) keep Board members fully informed regarding system initiatives;
- b) assist trustees in understanding their role as communications agents for the system; and
- c) facilitate the orientation of new trustees and encourage trustee involvement in professional development activities.

4.6 Additional Responsibilities of the Principal

The Principal has additional responsibility to:

- a) maintain ongoing communication with the supervisory officer and finance and human resources administrator on matters that impact the school and the community;
- b) inform and invite trustees to all events at the school which are open to the parents and community;
- c) act as the primary spokesperson for the school, under normal circumstances, unless the situation warrants consultation with senior administration;
- d) promote public awareness of the Board's and school's philosophies, policies, activities, and programs;
- e) acquire knowledge of the school community: how it is organized, its values and mores, physical character, population makeup, and power structure;
- f) provide accurate information to trustees and staff regarding school and community issues in order that they can deal effectively with emerging patterns and concerns;
- g) ensure that students' progress is reported to parents on a regular and consistent basis; and
- h) forecast activities or events that are appropriate for news coverage and provide the media and Board office with outlines, where required.

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Legal:

Education Act: Section 169.1 Duties and Powers of Boards: Communication

Education Act: Subsection 283 (2) Chief Executive Officer: Develop and maintain an effective organization

Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

Board References:

Board Policy GOV-01 Values, Vision, and Mission

Board Policy GOV-02 Role of the Corporate Board

Board Policy GOV-03 Role of the Supervisory Officer

Board Policy GOV-04 Delegation of Authority

Board Policy GOV-05 Multi-Year Strategic Plan

Board Policy GOV-06 Policy Development and Review

Board Policy GOV-10 Complaint Resolution