



FORT MCMURRAY PUBLIC SCHOOL DIVISION

2025

SCHOOL BOARD ELECTION  
HANDBOOK

Be a leader in your community: become a school board trustee



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## Introduction

*For purposes throughout this document “candidate” refers to an individual who has been nominated to run for election as a school board trustee, and an individual who intends to be nominated to run for election as a school board trustee that has given written notice to the Returning Officer in accordance with section 147.22 of the Local Authorities Election Act – prior to December 31, 2024.*

The Fort McMurray Public School Division has partnered with the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo (RMWB) to conduct the 2025 school board trustee election. RMWB’s [website](#) provides information, links to election forms and documents, and updates for candidates.

Forms, regulations and Alberta Education’s 2025 School Board Elections Information Package can be accessed on the Government of Alberta’s [website](#).

**For information regarding the nomination and election process, please contact the Returning Officer:**

Attention: RMWB Elections Team, Legislative

Services, 7th Floor, Jubilee Building, 9909

Franklin Avenue, T9H 2K4

Phone: 780-743-7000

Email: [elections@rmwb.ca](mailto:elections@rmwb.ca)

This guide has been developed to answer questions and provide information most frequently asked by candidates prior to Nomination Day. While the information provided attempts to provide a good understanding of what it is to be a candidate, and it touches on several aspects, but it is your responsibility to be familiar with the candidate requirement. We urge you to obtain a reference copy of the *Local Authorities Election Act* and *Education Act* from [Alberta King’s Printer](#)

## Updates and Changes

The information in this package is subject to change. Please refer to the noted websites to view any posted changes, corrections, or updated forms. It is recommended that any potential candidate sign up for email updates through the RMWB website to remain up to date as information is revised or added. It is not the duty of the Returning Officer to ensure that candidates receive changes to information outside of the website.

Please review here for any updates and changes to the 2025 School Board Election Handbook.

<u>Update</u>	<u>Date of Change</u>	<u>Page Number</u>
Orientation Meeting	June 26, 2025	16
Organizational Meeting	June 26, 2025	16
Committee of the Whole Meeting	June 26, 2025	16



*Lorraine Albert - member of FMPSD Elders Council*

**Please note:** This is an information manual only and has no legislative sanction. For

certainty, please refer to the [Local Authorities Election Act](#).

## Section 1: What Interested Candidates Need to Know

Alberta school boards help shape the future of local communities by governing the education of young people. The provincial government, through the Minister of Education, grants school boards the authority to make decisions regarding the direction and quality of local public education. Accountability to the public is entrenched through the election of local school board trustees every four years.

The key responsibility for trustees is to stay in touch with community stakeholders so that they understand and reflect in their decision-making what all citizens value and want from their local public schools. It's important to note that trustees do not represent any one school, neighbourhood or community. Rather, they make decisions based on the needs of the entire jurisdiction. Trustees are entrusted to govern their division by balancing the diverse needs of students, families and communities. Their work encompasses several key areas:

- **Setting Direction:** Trustees establish the strategic vision and priorities for their division, ensuring that all students can succeed. This includes approving goals that reflect community input and comply with provincial guidelines.
- **Developing Policy:** By creating policies, trustees set the framework for how their division operates. These policies guide everything from fiscal oversight and student well-being to annual school calendars.
- **Budget Approval and Oversight:** Trustees approve the division's annual budget, ensuring that resources are allocated effectively and responsibly.
- **Superintendent Oversight:** Working together as the board, they hire and evaluate the superintendent, who is responsible for implementing board decisions and managing day-to-day operations.
- **Advocacy and Representation:** Trustees advocate for public education at the municipal and provincial levels, representing the interests of their communities.
- **Community Engagement:** Trustees actively communicate with parents, students and other stakeholders, ensuring everyone's voices are considered in board decisions.

The board is collectively responsible for governance and all trustees are bound by its decisions. Individual trustees hold no legal authority; decision-making power rests solely with the board. However, the role of a trustee carries leadership and accountability, both to their constituents and the broader community. In this capacity, trustees can serve as role models and set a positive example for others.

Trustees have a ***fiduciary responsibility***; an ethical obligation to act in the best interests of the school division and students, prioritizing transparency and avoiding conflicts of interest. They must act with honesty, integrity, and loyalty to the school division, placing the interests of the students and school system above their own personal interests or those of any other group. Key aspects include:

- **Transparency:** Trustees are expected to be open and accountable in their decision-making.
- **Conflict of Interest Disclosure:** Trustees must disclose any financial, business, or personal interests, or those of their closely associated individuals that could influence their judgement, ability to act impartially and/or make decisions. The [Education Act](#) outlines specific requirements for trustees to disclose and avoid conflicts of interest, including abstaining from votes or discussions where a conflict exists.
- **Acting in the Best Interest of the Division:** Trustees must prioritize the needs and well-being of the school division and its students.
- **Avoiding Undermining Decisions:** Trustees should support the decisions of the board and avoid acting in a way that undermines those decisions

## Role of the Trustee

*(Fort McMurray Public School Division Board Policy 3 – Role of the Trustee)*

The role of the trustee is to contribute to the Board as it carries out its mandate to achieve its mission and goals. The oath of office taken or affirmation made by each trustee when assuming the role binds that person to work diligently and faithfully in the cause of public education.

Please refer to Fort McMurray Public School Division [Board Policy 3](#), which outlines the role of the trustee.

## Trustee Code of Conduct

The Board commits itself and its members to conduct of the highest ethical standards. This high standard includes the proper use of authority and appropriate decorum exhibited as individuals and within group behaviour. It is expected that all personal interactions and relationships will be characterized by mutual respect, which acknowledges the dignity and affirms the worth of each person. The Trustee Code of Conduct requires that trustees respect the confidentiality appropriate to issues of a sensitive nature.

Please refer to [Fort McMurray Public School Division Board Policy 4: Trustee Code of Conduct](#), which outlines the trustee code of conduct as well as sanctions.

# Section 2: Board Policies, Committees and Representation

## Board Policies

After reviewing the role of trustees and the trustee code of ethics, interested candidates are encouraged to read further into Fort McMurray Public School Division's Board Policies to gain a better understanding on the fundamental principles and operations of the Board.

The complete Board Policy Handbook of Fort McMurray Public School Division is available on its [website](#). We highlight the following Board Policies:



- ❖ [Division Foundational Statements](#) (Board Policy 1)
- ❖ [Role of the Board](#) (Board Policy 2)
- ❖ [Role of the Board Chair](#) (Board Policy 5)
- ❖ [Board Operations](#) (Board Policy 7)
- ❖ [Board Committees](#) (Board Policy 8)

## Committees and Representation

The Board may delegate specific powers and duties to committees of the Board that are established by the Board.

Additionally, the Board may appoint trustees to represent the Board on various external committees, agencies and organizations. Such representation is established at the discretion of the Board to facilitate the exchange of information on matters of mutual concern and/or to discuss possible agreements between the Division and other organizations.

**Included on the next page** is a list of the Board's Committee and Board meetings, engagements and other various events. A full list of the [2024-2025 Trustee Meeting Schedule](#) is established at the Organizational meeting and can be viewed on the FMPD website (as well as being linked here). The 2025-2026 schedule will be drafted in June, pending final approval of the new Board when they are sworn in in October 2025.

### Community Reception



### Trustee School Visits



### Employee Recognition





## Committee Meetings and Events

FMPSD Board Representation for Meetings, Committees and Events		
Meetings - All Trustees		
Board Planning Session	Annually	Full day
Board & Superintendent Evaluation	Annually (format and time allotted varies)	Daytime and/or Evening
Organizational Meeting	Annually	Daytime
Regular Board Meetings	Monthly (Sep-Jun)	2:00 - 8:00 p.m.
School Visits	2 per month prior to CoW meetings	Daytime
Committee of the Whole Meetings (CoW)	Monthly (Sep-June)	3:00 - 6:00 pm
Joint Networks Meetings	2-3 times per year	Evening
School Education Plan Presentations	Annually (May)	2 half days - daytime
Alberta School Boards Association General meetings (attendance optional but highly encouraged)	Spring and Fall In Edmonton or Calgary	2-3 days (plus travel time)
Public School Boards Association of Alberta (PSBAA) (attendance optional but highly encouraged)	Spring and Fall meetings in Edmonton or Calgary	2-3 days (plus travel time)
Committee and Representative work - Trustees as Designated in Board Organizational Chart		
Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA) Zone 2/3	Monthly (Sep-Jun) in Edmonton	Daytime
Public School Boards' Council (PSBC)	4 per year in Edmonton	2 Consecutive days (plus travel time)
Negotiations Committee	As required	Usually Daytime
Management Compensation Committee	2+ per year	Daytime
Networks Liaison Committee	5 per year	Daytime
Networks meetings	Minimum 4 per year	Evening
Awards/Scholarship Committee	Several times per year	Daytime
Agenda Planning Committee	2 meetings/month	Daytime
Audit and Finance Committee	4 per year	Daytime
Advocacy Committee	4+ per year	Daytime
Policy Advisory Committee	4+ per year	Daytime
Student Liaison Committee	3+ committee 3 meetings with	Daytime

FMPSD Board Representation for Meetings, Committees and Events		
Meetings - All Trustees		
Board Planning Session	Annually	Full day
Board & Superintendent Evaluation	Annually (format and time allotted varies)	Daytime and/or Evening
Organizational Meeting	Annually	Daytime
	students	
Ad Hoc New Schools/Facilities	As required	Daytime

### Committee Meetings and Events

Events		
Partners in Education Recognition Reception (All Trustees)	Annually	October (Evening)
Employee Recognition	Annually	May (Evening)
FMPSD Welcome Back	Annually	Morning
School Assemblies, Concerts, Special Events	By Invitation throughout the year	Daytime & Evening
Community Events & Meetings	Throughout the year	Daytimes & Evenings
Other		
ATA & CUPE	Teacher Induction, Meet & Greet	Varying Times
Trustee Development	Webinars, Conferences	Varying Times
Government meetings & sessions (with MLAs, Minister of Education, Alberta Education etc)	In-person/online	Varying Times

### Partners in Education Award Winners



## Section 3: School Year Calendars

### [2025-2026 School Year Calendar](#) (this is a link to the calendar)

Fort McMurray Public School Division's School Year Calendars are posted to the FMPSD website upon approval of the Board.

#### *Spotlight on Students*



Please visit the Division's [Calendar & Events](#) page to view the complete 2025-2026 School Year Calendar

## Section 4: Nomination and Election Guide

### Nomination Day

Nomination day is **Monday, September 22, 2025**.

The nomination period runs from **January 1, 2025 through to noon on Nomination Day**. Candidates wishing to submit their completed nomination form prior to Nomination Day will need to contact the Returning Officer by calling 1-825-963-5170 or emailing [elections@rmwb.ca](mailto:elections@rmwb.ca) to book an appointment.

Applicants must submit a [Notice of Intent](#) in full. Submit the completed form to the Returning Officer in one of the following ways:

- **Email:** [elections@rmwb.ca](mailto:elections@rmwb.ca)
- **In Person:** Attention RMWB Elections Team - Legislative Services, 7th Floor Jubilee Building, 9909 Franklin Avenue, T9H 2K4
- **Mail:** Attention: RMWB Elections Team - Legislative Services, Jubilee Building, 9909 Franklin Avenue, T9H 2K4

On Nomination Day, applications will be received by the Returning Officer **between 10:00 am and noon on Monday, September 22, 2025** at the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo - Legislative Services (7th Floor, Jubilee Building, 9909 Franklin Avenue T9H2K4).

Nomination packages may be handed in, in person. The [Notice of Intent](#), Nomination Paper and Candidate's Acceptance form - PSD (Form 4), Candidate Financial Information form (Form 5), and Candidate Contact form can be accessed on the [RMWB elections page](#). The RMWB also created a [School Board Trustee Nomination](#) Package of essential information (which includes Forms 4 & 5) for school board trustee candidates.

### Qualification of Candidates

To be nominated as a candidate in the school board election under the [Local Authorities Election Act](#), a person must be eligible under sections 21 and 27 of the *Local Authorities Election Act* and section 74 of the [Education Act](#) (if applicable) to be elected to the office, and not otherwise disqualified under section 22 or 23 of the *Local Authorities Election Act*.

### Advertisement Distribution

Candidates may prepare and distribute election information they deem necessary to share during the campaign period. When it comes to campaign advertising, including all forms of election billboards, placards, lawn signs, etc., candidates must follow the rules that are applicable to the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo. [RMWB Rules of Campaigning](#)

For further information, please contact the Returning Officer.

## Candidate's Official Agent

Candidates may identify an official agent at the time of nomination and will notify the Returning officer with any changes to the Official Agent. Each candidate will determine the role of the Official Agent as they deem fit as per section 68 of the *Local Authorities Election Act*.

## Advance Vote

### Requirements to Vote

Advance Vote dates are permitted as alternative dates for voting. You do not have to declare any special circumstances to be permitted to vote at the Advance Vote. Each voter must present the required voter identification. Any person who does not comply with the legislation will not be allowed to vote.

Advance voting will be held for the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo at various locations and times as posted on the appropriate website. Please refer to the RMWB website to obtain information on the advance voting. Votes will be taken for the School Board Trustees at the various locations.

### Locations of the Advance Vote

Please check the RMWB municipality's website regularly for updates in regards to the locations, dates and times for advance voting.

## Special Ballot (Mail-in Voting)

Voters who are unable to vote at their designated advance vote or Election Day voting station, may apply to vote by special (mail-in) ballot, starting on August 1, 2025.

Contact the Returning Officer by phone: 780-743-7000 for more details on how to request a special ballot.

- Special Ballot Package Request (***Link to be updated soon***)
- View the Special Ballot process prepared by Municipal Affairs (***Link to be updated soon***)

## Advertisement Distribution at Voting Locations

Section 152 of the [Local Authorities Election Act](#) states:

- (1) Subject to subsection (2), a person who, at an advance vote or on election day,
  - (a) displays within a building used for a voting station or within the boundaries of the land on which a building used for a voting station is located, or
  - (b) distributes within a building used for a voting station or within the boundaries of the land on which the building used for a voting station is located,an advertisement, handbill, placard, poster, circular, pamphlet, newspaper or other paper except those posted by the deputy in accordance with this Act is guilty of an offence and liable to a fine of not more than \$500.
- (2) When a voting station is located in a building containing a complex of interlocking offices, stores or other facilities, the prohibition in subsection (1) applies only to the store, office or facility comprising the area used as a voting station.
- (3) Repealed 2018 c23 s53
- (4) Where a person displays an advertisement, handbill, placard, poster, circular, pamphlet, newspaper or other paper contrary to subsection (1), the deputy may cause it to be removed, and neither the deputy nor any person acting under the deputy's instructions is liable for trespass or damages resulting from or caused by the removal.

**Section 153** of the [Local Authorities Election Act](#) further states:

A person who, without authorization, takes down, covers up, mutilates, defaces or alters any notice or other document required to be posted under this Act is guilty of an offence and liable

- (a) if the person is an officer, to a fine of not more than \$1,000, and
- (b) in any other case, to a fine of not more than \$200

Please also refer to [Administrative Procedure 154: Political Electioneering](#) on Fort McMurray Public School Division's website.

## Candidate's Scrutineer

**Section 69** of the [Local Authorities Election Act](#) states:

- (1) If, at any time during voting hours, a person who is at least 18 years old presents to the presiding deputy a written notice, in a form acceptable to the returning officer,
  - (a) signed by a candidate, and
  - (b) stating that a person presenting the notice is to represent that candidate as the candidate's scrutineer at the voting station,the person presenting the notice shall be recognized by the presiding deputy as the scrutineer of the candidate.
  - (1.1) A person who has, within the previous 10 years, been convicted of an offence under this Act, the *Election Act*, the *Election Finances and Contributions Disclosure Act* or the *Canada Elections Act* (Canada) is not eligible to be recognized as a scrutineer.
- (2) Before a person is recognized as a scrutineer, the person shall make and subscribe before the presiding deputy at the voting station a statement in the prescribed form.
- (3) The presiding deputy shall not permit a candidate to have an official agent or a scrutineer present while the candidate is present in a voting station during voting hours.
  - (3.1) The presiding deputy shall not permit a candidate to have both an official agent and a scrutineer present at the same time in a voting station during voting hours.
- (4) A candidate or official agent personally may
  - (a) undertake the duties that the candidate's scrutineer may undertake, and
  - (b) attend any place that the candidate's scrutineer is authorized by this Act to attend.
- (5) The presiding deputy may designate the place or places at a voting station where a candidate, an official agent or a scrutineer of a candidate may observe the election procedure, and in designating the place or places, the presiding deputy shall ensure that the candidate, official agent or scrutineer can observe any person making a statement under section 53(1)(b) or (2), or 78.
  - (5.1) A scrutineer may perform the duties of a scrutineer at more than one voting station.



- (6) When, in the provisions of this Act that relate to the election of a member of an elected authority, expressions are used requiring or authorizing an act or thing to be done or implying that an act or thing is to be done in the presence of an official agent, a scrutineer or a candidate, the expression is deemed to refer to the presence of those official agents and scrutineers
- (a) that are authorized to attend, and
  - (b) that have in fact attended at the time and place where that act or thing is being done,
- and if the act or thing is otherwise properly done, the non-attendance of an official agent or a scrutineer at that time and place does not invalidate it.
- (7) Except as otherwise provided in this Act, no person may impede a scrutineer from performing the duties of a scrutineer during voting hours.

**Section 71** of the [Local Authorities Election Act](#) further states:

If a person is appointed as a scrutineer under section 70, the person shall

- (a) before being admitted as a scrutineer to the voting station during voting hours, or
  - (b) before being permitted to attend at the voting station for the counting of votes,
- produce to the person in charge of the voting station the person's appointment as a scrutineer and take and subscribe to the statement under section 16 in the prescribed form.

## Election Day

Election day is **Monday, October 20, 2025**. Voting stations shall be open during the below hours:

*To be updated upon receiving dates/times from RMWB*

## Voting Stations

The list of voting stations will be listed on the RMWB website and posted in the local newspapers. Specific voting station locations will be shared once available.

## Voting Station Recount

In accordance with **Section 98** of the [Local Authorities Election Act](#), the returning Officer may make a recount of the votes cast at one or more voting stations if the returning officer deems grounds are considered reasonable to require a recount; or the returning officer receives an application for a recount in accordance with the Act. An application for a recount may be made during the 44 hours immediately following the closing of the voting stations. The deadline to apply for a recount under Section 98(4) is **4:00 pm, Wednesday, October 22, 2025**.

## Judicial Recount of Votes

In accordance with **Section 103** of the [Local Authorities Election Act](#), an application can be made by any elector to the Court for a recount at any time within 19 days after the close of the voting stations on election day.

## Who Can Vote

In accordance with **Section 47** of the [Local Authorities Election Act](#), a person must:

- (a) be at least 18 years old,
- (b) be a Canadian citizen,
- (c) resides in Alberta for the 6 consecutive months immediately preceding election day and the person's place of residence is located in the local jurisdiction on election day, and

In accordance with **Section 74** of the [Education Act](#), an individual is a resident of a separate school division when:

- (a) the person's place of residence is within the school division, and
- (b) where a separate school district is established, an individual residing within the boundaries of the separate school district is a resident of the separate school division if the individual declares that the individual is of the same faith as those who established the separate school district, whether Protestant or Roman Catholic;

A resident of a separate school division is eligible to vote for the public school division or the separate school division in which the person's residence is located, but not both.

## Section 5: Nomination Paper and Candidate's Acceptance

The below three forms should be completed and submitted as part of each candidate's nomination package (which can be found within this [package](#) from the *Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo* (RMWB):

- *Form 4 - Nomination Paper and Candidate's Acceptance*
- *Form 5 – Candidate Financial Information*

[RMWB's "How to Guide for Assistance in Completing Form 4"](#)

## Section 6: After Election

The role of the trustee is an important one. Each year, our Board makes decisions that have a tremendous impact on our local communities and individual residents. There are a few important dates that successful candidates would need to mark in their calendars.

**November 3, 2025** Orientation meeting, Division Office - 231 Hardin Street - Central Board Room 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

**November 4, 2025** Organizational meeting (where a chair will be elected) and the swearing-in ceremony for Trustees will occur at the Division Office - 231 Hardin Street - Central Board Room. 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.

**November 4, 2025** Committee of the Whole meeting will take place immediately after the organizational meeting from 3:00 - 6:00 p.m.

Nov 16-18, 2025 Alberta School Boards' Association Fall General Meeting

Nov 19-21, 2025 Public School Boards' Association of Alberta Fall Conference & FGM

May 28-30, 2026 Public School Boards' Association of Alberta Spring General Assembly

Oct 14-16, 2026 Public School Boards' Association of Alberta Fall Conference & FGM



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