



ONTARIO PUBLIC  
SCHOOL BOARDS'  
ASSOCIATION

**Leading Education's Advocates**

# OPSBA Roles & Responsibilities Guide



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# Introduction

*In establishing OPSBA, every effort has been made to provide fair and equitable representation through the Regions, on the Board of Directors and work groups. The strength of OPSBA lies in the Association's ability and willingness to recognize and support the various interests of the Member Boards of all sizes from all Regions of the province.*

*This document provides a summary of the key roles and responsibilities of OPSBA structures such as the Board of Directors, Executive Council, Core Issue Work Groups and Ad Hoc Work Groups. It also outlines roles and responsibilities of elected officer positions, Directors (Member Board appointed trustees to the Board of Directors), Voting Delegates and their Alternates.*

*Trustees are encouraged to take an active role in the Association, to help shape the direction of education in Ontario and to represent OPSBA and the public education agenda to Government and Legislative Committees.*

# The Board of Directors

**THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS IS THE PRINCIPLE SOURCE OF POLICY AND POLITICAL DIRECTION AND THE MAJOR DECISION-MAKING BODY OF THE ASSOCIATION. THIS GROUP MANAGES THE AFFAIRS OF THE ASSOCIATION AND CONSISTS OF THE FOLLOWING:**

President  
First Vice-President  
Second Vice-President  
Immediate Past President  
Five Regional Council Chairs  
Enrolment Vice-Presidents  
Member Board Directors

## **MEMBERSHIP ON THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

- Each Member Board (as defined in Section 3.02 of the [OPSBA Constitution and By-Laws](#)) is entitled to appoint at least one trustee to the Board of Directors
- The group of school authorities in North Region are entitled to elect one trustee to the Board of Directors as their representative
- The group of combined school authorities, educational and treatment centre boards, are entitled to elect one trustee as their representative on the Board of Directors
- Directors are appointed for a one-year term and are eligible for re-appointment
- The Indigenous Trustees' Council is entitled to appoint one trustee as their representative on the Board of Directors
- Each Member Board and group entitled to elect or appoint a Director as their representative (as outlined above) may also appoint an Alternate Director(s) to act in the absence of the Director

## **THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS IS RESPONSIBLE FOR:**

- Serving, as a collective, as the principal source of policy and political direction and the major decision-making body of the Association with leadership from Executive Council and input from its other advisory bodies between Annual General Meetings.
- Approving amendments to the OPSBA Constitution and By-Laws prior to confirmation of such amendments by the membership at the Annual General Meeting
- Appointing an external Auditor, if a vacancy occurs between Annual General Meetings
- Approving budgets, financial statements and establishing membership fees
- Bestowing OPSBA Honorary Life Membership
- Appointing liaison members to the Core Issue Work Groups, as required
- Establishing Ad Hoc Work Groups as required, which include, where appropriate, representatives from OPSBA's five Regions (North, West, East, Central East, Central West)
- Other responsibilities as adopted by the Board of Directors from time-to-time

## **THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETS:**

- Customarily four times a year
- At the call of the President
- On the written request of 10 of its members

***N.B: The Association pays the travel and accommodation costs for all Members of the Board of Directors when attending meetings of the Board. Alternate Directors will have their expenses paid ONLY when replacing an absent Director at meetings of the Board. (Guidelines on the back of the expense form)***

# Executive Council

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL IS COMPOSED OF THE FOLLOWING OFFICERS OF THE ASSOCIATION

President  
First Vice-President  
Second Vice-President  
Immediate Past President  
Five Regional Council Chairs  
Enrolment Vice-Presidents

## EXECUTIVE COUNCIL IS RESPONSIBLE FOR:

- Coordinating the Association's affairs
- Managing property and funds
- Assigning priority to issues to guide the work of OPSBA (subject to any regulations or restrictions which the Board of Directors may from time-to-time impose)
- Providing policy and advice/political direction
- Acting as the Labour Relations Steering Committee
- Transacting required business between meetings of the Board of Directors
- Other responsibilities as approved by the Board of Directors from time-to-time

## REGIONAL VICE-CHAIRS:

- Serve on Executive Council in the absence of the Chair of the Regional Council

## EXECUTIVE COUNCIL CANNOT ACT ON ANY OF THE FOLLOWING MATTERS WHICH ARE THE SOLE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

- Submitting to Member Boards any matter or question requiring the approval of the Member Boards
- The appointment or removal of the President, Vice-Presidents and/or Executive Director
- Filling vacancies on the Board of Directors or the Office of the Auditor between Annual General Meetings
- Approving the annual budget and financial statements
- Amending the OPSBA Constitution and By-Laws
- Bestowing OPSBA Honorary Life Membership
- Approving the establishment of Core Issue Work Groups

## EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETS\*:

- Generally, once a month, or at any time on the direction of the President or Chair of Executive Council
- At the written request of any four of its Members

\* *Serving on Executive Council requires a time commitment of approximately 12 full days per year.*

***N.B.: Travel and accommodation costs will be paid by OPSBA for Members of the Executive Council when attending meetings of the Executive Council. A small honorarium is paid to Executive Council members in recognition of the additional time commitment.***

# Officers of the Association

## THE OFFICERS OF THE ASSOCIATION ARE:

President  
First Vice-President  
Second Vice-President  
Immediate Past President  
Five Regional Chairs  
Enrolment Vice-Presidents  
Secretary (Executive Director)

### THE ROLE OF THE PRESIDENT (OR DESIGNATE)

- Preside at all general meetings of the Association and Board of Directors meetings
- Be responsible for general supervision of the Association's affairs
- Be an ex-officio member of all committees and work groups
- Act as the spokesperson for the Association

### THE ROLE OF THE FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT

- Preside at meetings of the Board of Directors in the absence of the President
- Chair Executive Council meetings and report on its behalf to the Board of Directors (this responsibility is alternated with the Second Vice-President)
- Represent the Association in the absence of the President, as required
- Any other duties as determined by the President

### THE ROLE OF THE SECOND VICE-PRESIDENT

- Chair Executive Council meetings and report on its behalf to the Board of Directors (this responsibility is alternated with the First Vice-President)
- Represents the Association as required by the President
- Any other duties as determined by the President

### THE ROLE OF REGIONAL CHAIRS

- Provide a regional perspective on provincial issues at Executive Council meetings
- Serve as Chair of their Regional Council which includes presiding over meetings
- Work with the Association's administration to organize meetings
- Ensure regional concerns are explored at Regional Council meetings and when required presented to Executive Council and the Board of Directors
- Assess professional development and information needs for the Region and provide leadership in helping OPSBA meet those needs
- Help enhance Member Board commitment to OPSBA by:
  - ensuring feedback from the Region is provided on OPSBA policy issues and directions
  - encouraging liaison work among all Member Boards
  - ensuring that Member Boards in their Region are kept fully informed of OPSBA activities through the Board of Directors member(s) and Voting Delegate

**THE ROLE OF REGIONAL VICE-CHAIRS**

- Replace the Regional Chair when absent or as required at Regional Council meetings
- Replace the Regional Chair when absent from Executive Council meetings
- Attend Board of Directors and other meetings of the Association, as required

**THE ROLE OF ENROLMENT VICE-PRESIDENTS**

- Provide perspective from their school board(s) on provincial issues at Executive Council and Board of Directors meetings
- Any other duties as determined by the President

# Directors and Alternate Directors

**DIRECTORS ARE TRUSTEES WHO HAVE BEEN APPOINTED TO SERVE ON THE OPSBA BOARD OF DIRECTORS BY THEIR DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD OR AS THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE GROUP OF SCHOOL AUTHORITIES OR THE INDIGENOUS TRUSTEES' COUNCIL. MEMBER BOARD IS DEFINED IN SECTION 3.02 OF THE [OPSBA CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS](#).**

*Note: Directors that are appointed/elected to represent a group of boards or Indigenous Trustees (school authorities, school treatment centres or First Nation trustees) have similar responsibility to those listed above, but should endeavour to represent the views of the group rather than one member board.*

## **THE ROLE OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEMBERS (“DIRECTORS”):**

- Attend Board of Directors meetings
- Present concerns identified by their Member Board to Regional Chairs and the Board of Directors
- Vote on certain collective bargaining matters such as the ratification of a memorandum of settlement of central terms during bargaining years in accordance with the School Boards Collective Bargaining Act (SBCBA)
- Provide updates to their Member Board on OPSBA activities including in camera updates on bargaining matters, as appropriate
- Provide opinions that reflect the general feeling of their Member Board at any Board of Directors meeting
- Help build Member Board commitment to OPSBA through liaison activities and information sharing with other trustees and Member Boards
- Keep senior administration informed of OPSBA issues which may include sharing reports and position papers
- Ensure their Member Board and/or group of school authorities or Indigenous Trustees' Council, from which they are appointed to represent, are kept fully informed of OPSBA activities
- Ensure OPSBA is kept informed of school board needs, important issues and events

## **DIRECTORS CAN ENHANCE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE MEMBER BOARD AND OPSBA BY:**

- Providing reports to the Board of Trustees, at regular meetings of their board, on key issues discussed at Board of Directors meetings and other OPSBA conferences and events
- Ensuring their Member Board responds to OPSBA requests for information
- Ensuring their Member Board has the best possible participation in OPSBA policy positions by encouraging responses to OPSBA issues and discussion papers
- Ensuring the OPSBA office is advised of any changes in positions at the Member Board (E.g. Chair, Board of Directors Member, Voting Delegate, Director of Education, etc.). This includes address or other relevant changes

## **ALTERNATE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEMBERS (“ALTERNATE DIRECTORS”):**

- Replace Directors absent from Board of Directors meetings
- May attend and observe meetings of the Board of Directors, but vote ONLY when replacing their Member Boards absent Director



# Voting Delegates and Alternate Voting Delegates

**TRUSTEES WHO ARE APPOINTED BY A DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD, DISTRICT SCHOOL AREA BOARD, SCHOOL AUTHORITY OR CHILDREN'S TREATMENT NETWORK ("MEMBER BOARD") TO EXERCISE ALL RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES OF THE MEMBER BOARD, INCLUDING THAT OF VOTING AT THE ANNUAL AND GENERAL MEETINGS OF THE ASSOCIATION AND AT THEIR LOCAL REGIONAL COUNCIL MEETINGS.**

## **VOTING DELEGATES SHALL:**

- Work co-operatively with their OPSBA Director(s) to represent the interests of their Member Board at OPSBA and act as OPSBA liaison. They should therefore make every effort to be *knowledgeable of*:
  - issues currently under discussion at OPSBA
  - the position of OPSBA on these issues
  - the position of their Member Board on these issues
  - the full range of services that are available from OPSBA for trustees and administrators and encourage the maximum use of OPSBA services
- *Represent their Member Board* within the Region, to ensure their Member Board's position and views on OPSBA policy development and direction is shared:
  - at the meetings held by the Regional Council
  - as the Voting Delegate at the Annual General Meeting and Elections of OPSBA Officers
  - by ensuring that the Alternate Delegate is present if the Delegate cannot attend the above
- Be prepared to respond to an issue which may arise for the first time at any Regional or General meeting of OPSBA. The Voting Delegate should be prepared to provide an opinion which they believe would reflect the general feeling of their Member Board. If it is a personal opinion that is being shared, it is important to acknowledge that and subsequently confirm it with their Member Board
- Seek opinions of other Delegates at Regional Council and Annual General Meetings about issues of local concern so that they are prepared to vote on issues with the broadest knowledge base possible
- Ensure their Member Board is informed of OPSBA issues and activities

## **ALTERNATE VOTING DELEGATES SHALL:**

- Be aware of the role of the Voting Delegate
- Be prepared to replace the Voting Delegate when necessary and represent their Board;
  - within the Region
  - at the meetings held by the Regional Council
  - at elections held at the Annual General Meeting and Regional Council meeting held at the AGM

***N.B.: Member Boards may choose to appoint trustees other than the Director or Alternate Director to serve as their Delegate/Alternate Delegate to Regional Council and as Voting Delegate/Alternate at Annual or General Meetings.***

# Core Issue Work Groups

**CORE ISSUE WORK GROUPS (“WORK GROUPS”) ADVISE THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS, THROUGH EXECUTIVE COUNCIL, ON MATTERS FALLING WITHIN THE IDENTIFIED AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY.**

**TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION PROGRAM WORK GROUP ARE ON PAGES 12 AND 13.**

## **ESTABLISHMENT:**

- The number of work groups and the membership is established each year by resolution of the Annual General Meeting based on recommendations from the Board of Directors and OPSBA budgetary considerations
- Work groups reflect the association’s focus and annual priorities and are established in general areas (E.g., finance, legislation, education program and curriculum, labour relations, communications and public relations, etc.)

## **COMPOSITION:**

- Members and alternate members will be appointed to the work groups as directed by resolution of the Annual General Meeting following elections at Regional Council meetings
- Any trustee from a Member Board in their local Region is eligible to serve on a work group
- Any Indigenous Trustee will be eligible to serve on a work group as the Indigenous Trustees’ Council representative
- The Board of Directors will appoint one member of Executive Council to each work group as a liaison

## **ESTABLISHMENT, REPORTING, QUORUM AND TERMINATION:**

- Core Issue Work Groups terminate by resolution of the Board of Directors or Executive Council or at the next Annual General Meeting of the Association
- Membership on a Core Issue Work Group terminates automatically if an appointed member fails to attend three consecutive meetings of the Core Issue Work Group, unless otherwise decided by resolution of Executive Council
- The term, mandate and membership of each Core Issue Work Group will be established each year through the Annual General Meeting based on recommendations from the Board of Directors with input from Executive Council
- Core Issue Work Groups report through Executive Council to the Board of Directors
- Quorum for each Core Issue Work Group meeting shall be a simple majority of the membership

## **WORK GROUP MEMBERS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR:**

- Attending Work Group meetings or participating in electronic meetings as representatives of their Regions or Indigenous Trustees’ Council
- Arranging for the alternate member to attend a Work Group meeting in their absence
- Being prepared to provide opinions on issues being discussed which they believe would reflect the general views of Member Boards in their Region. In like manner, Indigenous trustee representatives should be prepared to provide opinions on issues being discussed which they believe would reflect the views of OPSBA’s Indigenous trustees. They should be prepared to liaise on an issue with members of the Indigenous Trustees’ Council should the need arise.
- Ensuring that the development of OPSBA positions includes the broadest input from members by encouraging response to OPSBA requests for information and discussion papers that are circulated.

**WORK GROUP ALTERNATE MEMBERS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR:**

- Being aware of issues under discussion at upcoming meetings and prepared to attend and participate in work group meetings should their regional member contact them to attend in their absence.
- Attending meetings only when the regional member is unable to attend.

\*\* A minimum of two meetings of each Work Group will be scheduled annually. Additional meetings, held through electronic means (E.g., teleconference or videoconference, etc.) are sometimes required.

# Policy Development Work Group

## Terms of Reference

### **POLICY DEVELOPMENT WORK GROUP MANDATE:**

To provide recommendations to the Board of Directors/Executive Council on issues related to the analysis of legislation and the development of OPSBA policy in areas affecting education finance and governance, including, but not restricted to:

- Education finance and education finance reform
- Operating grants
- Declining enrolment
- School closures
- School capital
- Financial accounting and reporting
- The role of the Ministry, school boards, school councils
- Municipal election issues
- Education restructuring, deregulation, privatization
- Any additional needs and services in this area, including:
  - seeking input/collecting data from member boards on needs and services
  - providing timely information materials related to school board responsibilities
  - developing orientation materials, in-service programs, etc. for member boards
  - consulting and legal services

### **POLICY DEVELOPMENT WORK GROUP MEMBERSHIP:**

- Two trustees from each region and up to one alternate trustee (to attend in the absence of the regional members) appointed by resolution of each Regional Council
- In the Northern Region, one member will represent sub-region east and one member will represent sub-region west
- Members cannot be appointed from the same district school board
- One representative appointed by the Indigenous Trustees' Council
- One of the two Executive Vice-Presidents will act as liaison member appointed by resolution of the Board of Directors
- Optional (non-voting) senior school board officials appointed by resolution of the Work Group
- OPSBA staff support (non-voting), as assigned

### **POLICY DEVELOPMENT WORK GROUP QUORUM:**

- Simple majority of the membership

### **POLICY DEVELOPMENT WORK GROUP REPORTING RELATIONSHIP:**

- To the Board of Directors through Executive Council

### **POLICY DEVELOPMENT WORK GROUP MEETINGS:**

- May be held in person or electronically (E.g., teleconference or videoconference), as required

### **POLICY DEVELOPMENT WORK GROUP TERM:**

- Members shall be appointed for a one-year term, which ends at the subsequent Annual General Meeting when new membership is identified

## **Education Program Work Group Terms of Reference**

### **EDUCATION PROGRAM WORK GROUP MANDATE:**

To provide recommendations to the Board of Directors/Executive Council on issues related to education program reform, children's services and social policy, including, but not restricted to:

- Program restructuring, secondary school reform
- Curriculum/curriculum implementation
- Information technology
- Special education
- College of Teachers, teacher training
- Children's services, early learning
- Education Quality and Accountability Office
- Quality, accountability, testing and assessment
- Immigration, poverty and settlement
- Any additional needs and services in this area, including:
  - seeking input/collecting data from member boards on needs and services
  - providing timely information materials related to school board responsibilities
  - developing orientation materials, in-service programs, etc.
  - consulting and legal services

### **EDUCATION PROGRAM WORK GROUP MEMBERSHIP:**

- Two trustees from each region and up to one alternate trustee (to attend in the absence of the regional members) appointed by resolution of each Regional Council
- In the Northern Region, one member will represent sub-region east and one member will represent sub region west
- Members cannot be appointed from the same district school board
- One representative appointed by the Indigenous Trustees' Council
- One of the two Executive Vice-Presidents will act as liaison member appointed by resolution of the Board of Directors
- Optional (non-voting) senior school board officials appointed by resolution of the Work Group
- OPSBA staff support (non-voting) as assigned

### **EDUCATION PROGRAM WORK GROUP QUORUM:**

- Simple majority of the membership

### **EDUCATION PROGRAM WORK GROUP REPORTING RELATIONSHIP:**

- To the Board of Directors through Executive Council

### **EDUCATION PROGRAM WORK GROUP MEETINGS:**

- May be held in person or electronically (E.g., teleconference or videoconference), as required

### **EDUCATION PROGRAM WORK GROUP TERM:**

- Members shall be appointed for a one-year term, which ends at the subsequent Annual General Meeting when new membership is identified

## **Ad Hoc Work Groups**

The Board of Directors or the Executive Council may from time-to-time appoint Ad Hoc Work Groups as they deem expedient for the purpose of advising the Board of Directors or the Executive Council on specific matters. When appropriate, such Ad Hoc Work Groups shall include representatives from all Regional Councils.

The Board of Directors or the Executive Council (as the case may be) shall determine the jurisdiction, responsibilities and rules of procedure of each Ad Hoc Work Group. Each Ad Hoc Work Group shall report to the Board of Directors or the Executive Council (as the case may be).