



LEADERSHIP, ADVOCACY AND SERVICE FOR MANITOBA'S PUBLIC SCHOOL BOARDS

September 30, 2020

TO: Board Chair, Superintendent and Secretary-Treasurer, All Divisions and Districts

FROM: Josh Watt, Executive Director

RE: Summary—Current Provisions Concerning School Board meetings and By-elections

In light of several inquiries received at the association office recently, I am contacting you at this time to provide a summary of current requirements relating to the conduct of school board business, specifically school board meetings and by-elections to fill vacant seats. This information is current as of today's date, but is subject to future amendment.

1. The requirement that trustees physically attend a board meeting at least every three months has been suspended until March 16, 2021. This was communicated in a letter to all school board chairs from Assistant Deputy Minister Sarah Whiteford, dated September 10, 2020.
2. The requirement that the board chair, a trustee, the superintendent and the secretary-treasurer(or designates) be present in the board's meeting room during an electronic board meeting has been suspended for the duration of the 2020-21 school year. This was communicated in the same letter to school board chairs noted in point 1, above.
3. Public Health has advised that school board meetings fall into the category of services that are exempt from restrictions that were broadly imposed when the Capital Region COVID-19 Prevention Order came into effect on September 28, 2020. These exemptions are outlined in the order. As such, school board meetings are not required to adhere to limits on gathering size, although they do need to observe physical distancing and masking requirements. Provided that physical distancing measures can be observed, school board meetings may exceed limits on gathering size.
4. For those divisions currently involved in a by-election process, those by-elections are also considered to be in the category of services that are exempt from the restrictions imposed by the order cited in point 3, above. This means that restrictions on gathering size do not apply to the conduct of a by-election, but again, physical distancing and masking requirements must be observed.

I trust this information may answer some questions that are circulating within your school division. If you require further clarification, please email me at jwatt@mbschoolboards.ca. Thank you.

JW:hd