Bigfork School District #38

THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Legal Status, Operation and Organization

The legal name of this District is Bigfork School District #38, Flathead County, State of Montana. The District is classified as a class two (II) district and is operated according to the laws and administrative rules pertaining to a class two (II) district.

The Board of Trustees of Bigfork School District #38 is the governmental entity established by the state of Montana and constitutionally charged of the supervision and control of all aspects of the District's operations.

To achieve its primary goal of providing each child with a basic system of free quality education as required by Montana Law, the Board shall exercise the full authority granted to it by the laws of the state. Its legal powers, duties, and responsibilities are derived from the Montana Constitution and state statutes and administrative rules.

Policies of the District define and frame the manner via which the District conducts its official business. The policies of the District are modified/updated from time to time to reflect the operation of the District.

The Bigfork School District #38 maintains the Bigfork Elementary and Bigfork High Schools. Policy overrides handbooks if conflicts arise.

The District(s) constitute the taxable basis for purposes of construction, operation, and maintenance of the Bigfork Elementary and Bigfork High School.

All handbooks approved by the Board are regarded as and given the same significance as District policy.

Legal Reference: § 20-3-323, MCA § 20-3-324, MCA § 20-6-101, MCA § 20-6-201, MCA § 20-6-301, MCA § 20-9-309, MCA	District policy and record of acts Powers and duties Definition of elementary and high school districts Elementary district classification High school district classification Basic system of free quality public elementary and secondary schools defined – identifying educationally relevant factors – establishment of funding formula and budgetary structure – legislative review
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Article X, Section 8, MT Constitution

45 <u>Policy History:</u>

46 Adopted on: 7/21/1994
47 Revised on: 11/20/2003
48 First reading on: 10/13/21

49 Second reading/Adopted on: 11/10/21

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Membership and Terms of Office

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The District is governed by a Board of Trustees consisting of seven members. The powers and duties of the Board include the broad authority to adopt and enforce all policies necessary for the management. operations and governance of the District. Except as otherwise provided by law, trustees shall hold office for terms of three (3) years, or until their successors are elected and qualified. Terms of trustees shall be staggered as provided by law.

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All trustees shall participate on an equal basis with other members in all business transactions pertaining to the high school maintained by the District. Only those trustees elected from the elementary district may participate in business transactions pertaining to the elementary schools maintained by the District.

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The five trustees of Elementary District #38, a duly elected trustee from Swan Lake-Salmon Elementary District #73, and a duly elected trustee from Swan River Elementary District #4 shall comprise the Board of Trustees of Bigfork High School District #38. All trustees shall participate on an equal basis with other members in all business transactions pertaining to the high school maintained by the District.

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DESCRIPTION AND SECURITION THE SECURITION AND SECUR	
Legal References: § 20-3-301, MCA	Election and term of office
§ 20-3-302, MCA	Legislative intent to elect less than majority of trustees
§ 20-3-305, MCA	Candidate qualification, filing deadline, and withdrawal
§ 20-3-306, MCA	Conduct of election
§ 20-3-307, MCA	Qualification and oath
§ 20-3-341, MCA	Number of trustee positions in elementary districts - transition
§ 20-3-351, MCA	Number of trustee positions in high school districts
§ 20-3-352, MCA	Request and determination of number of high school district
	additional trustee positions – nonvoting trustee
§ 20-3-361, MCA	Joint board of trustees organization and voting membership
	§ 20-3-302, MCA § 20-3-305, MCA § 20-3-306, MCA § 20-3-307, MCA § 20-3-341, MCA § 20-3-351, MCA § 20-3-352, MCA

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Policy History:

- 37 Adopted on: 12/04/2003 38 First reading on: 10/13/21
- 39 Second reading/Adopted on: 11/10/21

All trustees are obligated to attend Board meetings regularly. Whenever possible, a trustee shall give advance notice to the Chairperson or Superintendent, of the trustee's inability to attend a Board meeting. A majority of the Board may excuse a trustee's absence from a meeting if requested to do so.

Board members, as individuals, have no authority over school affairs, except as provided by law or as authorized by the Board.

Cross Reference: 1113 Vacancies

Legal References: § 20-3-301, MCA Election and term of office § 20-3-308, MCA Vacancy of trustee position § 20-3-324(22), MCA Powers and duties

§ 20-3-324(22), MCA Powers and duties
§ 20-3-332, MCA Personal immunity and liability of trustees

Policy History:

39 First reading on: 10/13/21

40 Second reading/Adopted on: 11/10/21

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THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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District Policy and Procedures

The policies contained in this manual are adopted, implemented, and enforced in accordance with the supervisory authority vested with the Board of Trustees in accordance with Article X, section 8 of the Montana Constitution and related statutes, regulations and court decisions.

Adoption and Amendment of Policies

Proposed new policies and proposed changes to existing policies shall be presented in writing for reading and discussion at a regular or special Board meeting. Interested parties may submit views, present data or arguments, orally or in writing, in support of or in opposition to proposed policy. Any written statement by a person, relative to a proposed policy or amendment, should be directed to the District Clerk prior to the final reading. The final vote for adoption shall take place not earlier than at the second (2nd) reading of the particular policy. New or revised policies that are required or have required language changes based on State or Federal law, or are required changes by administrative rule, may be adopted after the first (1st) reading if sufficient notice has been given through the board agenda.

All new or amended policies shall become effective on adoption; unless a specific effective date is stated in the motion for adoption. Policies, as adopted or amended, shall be made a part of the minutes of the meeting at which action was taken and also shall be included in the District's policy manual. Policies of the District shall be reviewed on a regular basis.

Policy Manuals

The Superintendent shall develop and maintain a current policy manual which includes all policies of the District. Every administrator, as well as staff, students, and other residents, shall have ready access to District policies.

30 Suspension of Policies

Under circumstances that require waiver of a policy, the policy may be suspended by a majority vote of the trustees present. To suspend a policy, however, all trustees must have received written notice of the meeting, which includes the proposal to suspend a policy and an explanation of the purpose of such proposed suspension.

Administrative Procedures

The Superintendent shall develop such administrative procedures as are necessary to ensure consistent implementation of policies adopted by the Board.

When a written procedure is developed, the Superintendent shall submit it to the Board as an information item.

43 Legal References:

Article X, Section 8 Montana Constitution
§ 20-3-323, MCA District policy and record of acts
10.55.701, ARM Board of Trustees

47 Policy History:

48 First reading on: 10/13/21

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Board Meetings

Meetings of the Board must occur at a duly called and legally conducted meeting. "Meeting" is defined as the convening of a quorum of the constituent membership of the Board, whether in person or by means of electronic equipment, to hear, discuss, or act upon a matter over which the Board has supervision, control, jurisdiction, or advisory power.

Regular Meetings

Unless otherwise specified, all meetings will take place in the High School Library. Regular meetings shall take place at 5:00 p.m. on the second (2nd) Wednesday of each month, or at other times and places determined by a majority vote. Except for an unforeseen emergency, meetings must be held in school buildings or, upon the unanimous vote of the trustees, in a publicly accessible building located within the District. If regular meetings are scheduled at places other than as stated above or are adjourned to times other than the regular meeting time, notice of the meeting shall be made in the same manner as provided for special meetings. The trustees may meet outside the boundaries of the District for collaboration or cooperation on educational issues with other school boards, educational agencies, or cooperatives. Adequate notice of the meeting, as well as an agenda, must be provided to the public in advance. Decision making may only occur at a properly noticed meeting held within the District's boundaries. When a meeting date falls on a school holiday, the meeting may take place the next business day. Meeting duration will be no more than two (2) hours in length unless a majority of the Board agrees through formal action to extend the meeting.

Emergency Meetings

In the event of an emergency involving possible personal injury or property damage, the Board may meet immediately and take official action without prior notification.

Budget Meetings

Between July 1 and August 10 of each year, the Clerk shall publish a notice stating the date, time, and place trustees will meet for the purpose of considering and adopting a final budget for the District, stating that the meeting of the trustees may be continued from day to day until final adoption of a District budget and that any taxpayer in the District may appear at the meeting and be heard for or against any part of the budget. This notice shall be published on the Bigfork School District website, at the Bigfork Elementary School, Bigfork High School and Bigfork District Office.

On the date and at the time and place stated in the published notice on or before August 20, trustees shall meet to consider all budget information and any attachments required by law. The meeting may continue from day to day; however, the Board must adopt a final budget not later than August 25.

Special Meetings

Special meetings may be called by the Chairperson or by any two (2) trustees. A written notice of a special meeting, stating the purpose of the meeting, shall be delivered to every trustee not less than forty-eight (48) hours before the time of the meeting, except that the forty-eight (48) hours notice is waived in an unforeseen emergency as stated in § 20-3-322(5), MCA. Such written notice shall be posted conspicuously within the District in a manner that will receive public attention. Written notice also shall be sent not less than twenty-four (24) hours prior to the meeting, to each newspaper and radio or television station that has filed a written request for such notices. Business transacted at a special meeting will be limited to that stated in the notice of the meeting.

Executive Sessions

Under Montana law, the Board may meet in executive sessions to consider matters of individual privacy. Before closing a meeting, the presiding officer must determine that the demands of individual privacy exceed the merits of public disclosure and so state publicly before going into executive session. The Board also may go into executive session to discuss a strategy to be followed with respect to litigation, when an open meeting would have a detrimental effect on the litigating position of the District. This exception does not apply if the litigation involves only public bodies or associations as parties. Before closing a meeting for litigation purposes, the District may wish to consult legal counsel on the appropriateness of this action. No formal action shall take place during any executive session.

Legal References:	§ 2-3-103, MCA	Public participation – governor to ensure guidelines adopted
	§ 2-3-104, MCA	Requirements for compliance with notice provisions
	§ 2-3-105, MCA	Supplemental notice by radio or television
	§ 2-3-201, MCA	Legislative intent – liberal construction
	§ 2-3-202, MCA	Meeting defined
	§ 2-3-203, MCA	Meetings of public agencies and certain associations of public agencies to be open to public – exceptions
	§ 20-3-322, MCA	Meeting and quorum
	§ 20-9-115, MCA	Notice of final budget meeting
	§ 20-9-131, MCA	Final budget meeting
	10.55.701, ARM	Board of Trustees

Policy History:

Adopted on: 09/20/2001

Revised on: 10/02/2003, 04/29/2009, 11/12/2014

First reading on: 10/13/21

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School Board Meeting Procedure

Agenda

The authority to set the board agenda lies with the Board Chair in consultation with board members and the administration. The act of preparing the board meeting agendas can be delegated to the Superintendent.

Any topics requested by Board members or members of the public must first be approved by the Board Chair before being placed on the agenda. Citizens wishing to make brief comments about school programs or procedures will follow the public comment procedures in district policy.

The agenda also must include a "public comment" portion to allow members of the general public to comment on any public matter under the jurisdiction of the District which is not specifically listed on the agenda, except that no member of the public will be allowed to comment on contested cases, other adjudicative proceedings, or personnel matters. The Board Chairperson may place reasonable time limits on any "public comment" period to maintain and ensure effective and efficient operations of the Board. The Board shall not take any action on any matter discussed, unless the matter is specifically noticed on the agenda, and the public has been allowed opportunity to comment.

Copies of the agenda for the current Board meeting, minutes of the previous Board meeting, and relevant supplementary information will be prepared and distributed to each trustee at least forty-eight (48) hours in advance of a Board meeting and will be available to any interested citizen at the Superintendent's office forty-eight (48) hours before a Board meeting. An agenda for other types of Board meetings will be prepared, if circumstances require an agenda.

Consent Agenda

To expedite business at its meetings, the Board approves the use of a consent agenda, which includes those items considered to be routine in nature. Any item that appears on the consent agenda may be removed by a member of the Board. Any Board member who wishes to remove an item from the consent agenda must give advance notice in a timely manner to the Superintendent. Remaining items will be voted on by a single motion. The approved motion will be recorded in the minutes, including a listing of all items appearing on the consent agenda.

Minutes

 Appropriate minutes of all meetings required to be open must be kept and must be available for inspection by the public. If an audio recording of a meeting is made and designated as official, the recording constitutes the office record of the meeting. If an official recording is made, a written record of

the meeting must also be made and must also include:

• Date, time, and place of the meeting;

• Presiding officer;

Board members recorded as absent or present;

 Summary of discussion on all matters discussed (including those matters discussed during the "public comment" section), proposed, deliberated, or decided, and a record of any votes taken;

• Detailed statement of all expenditures;

- Purpose of recessing to closed session; and
- Time of adjournment.

If the minutes are recorded and designated as the official record, a log or time stamp for each main agenda item is required for the purpose of providing assistance to the public in accessing that portion of the meeting.

Unofficial minutes shall be delivered to Board members in advance of the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board. Minutes need not be read publicly, provided that Board members have had an opportunity to review them before adoption. A file of permanent minutes of Board meetings shall be maintained in the office of the Clerk, to be made available for inspection upon request. A written copy shall be made available within five (5) working days following approval by the Board.

Quorum

No business shall be transacted at any meeting of the Board unless a quorum of its members is present. A majority of the full membership of the Board shall constitute a quorum, whether the individuals are present physically or electronically. A majority of the quorum may pass a resolution, except as provided in § 20-4-203(1), MCA, and § 20-4-401(4), MCA.

Electronic Participation

The Board may allow members to participate in meetings by telephone or other electronic means. Board members may not simply vote electronically but must be connected with the meeting throughout the discussion of business. If a Board member electronically joins the meeting after an item of business has been opened, the remotely located member shall not participate until the next item of business is opened.

If the Board allows a member to participate electronically, the member will be considered present and will have his or her actual physical presence excused. The member shall be counted present for purposes of convening a quorum. The Clerk will document it in the minutes, when members participate in the meeting electronically.

Any Board member wishing to participate in a meeting electronically will notify the Chairperson and Superintendent as early as possible. The Superintendent will arrange for the meeting to take place in a location with the appropriate equipment so that Board members participating in the meeting electronically

may interact, and the public may observe or hear the comments made. The Superintendent will take measures to verify the identity of any remotely located participants.

Meeting Conduct and Order of Business

General rules of parliamentary procedure are used for every Board meeting. Robert's Rules of Order may be used as a guide at any meeting. The order of business shall be reflected on the agenda. The use of proxy votes shall not be permitted. Voting rights are reserved to those trustees in attendance. Voting shall be by acclamation or show of hands.

Rescind a Motion

A motion to rescind (cancel previous action) may be made anytime by any trustee. A motion to rescind must be properly noticed on the Board's agenda for the meeting. It is in order any time prior to accomplishment of the underlying action addressed by the motion.

Audience Participation Cross Reference:

Legal References:	§ 2-3-103, MCA	Public participation - governor to ensure guidelines

§ 2-3-202, MCA	Meeting defined
§ 2-3-212, MCA	Minutes of meetings - public inspection
§ 20-1-212, MCA	Destruction of records by school officer

§ 20-3-322, MCA Meetings and quorum

§ 20-3-323, MCA

District policy and record of acts Jones and Nash v. Missoula Co., 2006 MT2, 330 Mont 2005

adopted

Policy History:

First reading on: 10/13/21

THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Audience Participation

The Board recognizes the value of public comment on educational issues and the importance of involving members of the public in its meetings. The Board also recognizes the statutory and constitutional rights of the public to participate in governmental operations. To allow fair and orderly expression of public comments, the Board will permit public participation through oral or written comments during the "public comment" section of the Board agenda and prior to a final decision on a matter of significant interest to the public. The Chairperson may control such comments to ensure an orderly progression of the meeting in the manner described in Policy 1420F.

Cross Reference:

1420 School Board Meeting Procedure

Legal Reference:

Article II, Section 8, Montana Constitution - Right of participation

Article II, Section 10, Montana Constitution – Right of privacy Chapter 2, Part 1, MCA Notice and Opportunity to Be Heard

Policy History:

First reading on: 10/13/21

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Uniform Complaint Procedure

The Board establishes this Uniform Complaint Procedure as a means to address complaints arising within the District. This Uniform Complaint Procedure is intended to be used for all complaints except those governed by a specific process in state or federal law that supersedes this process or collective bargaining agreement. Matters covered by a collective bargaining agreement will be reviewed in accordance with the terms of the applicable agreement.

The District requests all individuals to use this complaint procedure, when the individual believes the Board, or its employees or agents have violated the individual's rights under state or federal law or Board policy. Complaints against a building administrator shall be filed with the Superintendent. Complaints against the Superintendent or District administrator shall be filed with the Board.

The District will endeavor to respond to and resolve complaints without resorting to this formal complaint procedure and, when a complaint is filed, to address the complaint promptly and equitably. The right of a person to prompt and equitable resolution of a complaint filed hereunder will not be impaired by a person's pursuit of other remedies. Use of this complaint procedure is not a prerequisite to pursue other remedies and use of this complaint procedure does not extend any filing deadline related to pursuit of other remedies.

Deadlines requiring District action in this procedure may be extended for reasons related but not limited to the District's retention of legal counsel and District investigatory procedures.

Level 1: Informal

An individual with a complaint is first encouraged to discuss it with the appropriate employee or building administrator with the objective of resolving the matter promptly and informally. An exception is that a complaint of sexual harassment should be discussed directly with an administrator not involved in the alleged harassment.

Level 2: Building Administrator

When a complaint has not been or cannot be resolved at Level 1, an individual may file a signed and dated written complaint stating: (1) the nature of the complaint; (2) a description of the event or incident giving rise to the complaint, including any school personnel involved; and (3) the remedy or resolution requested. The written complaint must be filed within thirty (30) calendar days of the event or incident or from the date an individual could reasonably become aware of such event or incident. The applicability of the deadline is subject to review by the Superintendent to ensure the intent of this uniform complaint procedure is honored.

When a complaint alleges violation of Board policy or procedure, the building administrator will investigate and attempt to resolve the complaint. The administrator will respond in writing to the complaint, within thirty (30) calendar days of the administrator's receipt of the complaint.

If the complainant has reason to believe the administrator's decision was made in error, the complainant may request, in writing, that the Superintendent review the administrator's decision. (See Level 3.) This request must be submitted to the Superintendent within fifteen (15) calendar days of the administrator's decision.

In the case of a sexual harassment or Title IX complaint the applicable investigation and appeal procedure is Policy 3225P or 5012P. In the case of a disability complaint, the coordinator shall complete an investigation and file a report and recommendation with the Administrator for decision. Appeal of a decision in a disability complaint will be handled in accordance with this policy.

Level 3: Superintendent

If the complainant appeals the administrator's decision provided for in Level 2, the Superintendent will review the complaint and the administrator's decision. The Superintendent will respond in writing to the appeal, within thirty (30) calendar days of the Superintendent's receipt of the written appeal. In responding to the appeal, the Superintendent may: (1) meet with the parties involved in the complaint; (2) conduct a separate or supplementary investigation; (3) engage an outside investigator or other District employees to assist with the appeal; and/or (4) take other steps appropriate or helpful in resolving the complaint.

If the complainant has reason to believe the Superintendent's decision was made in error, the complainant may request, in writing, that the Board consider an appeal of the Superintendent's decision. (See Level 4.) This request must be submitted in writing to the Superintendent, within fifteen (15) calendar days of the Superintendent's written response to the complaint, for transmission to the Board.

Level 4: The Board

Upon written appeal of a complaint alleging a violation the individual's rights under state or federal law or Board policy upon which the Board of Trustees has authority to remedy, the Board may consider the Superintendent's decision in Level 2 or 3. Upon receipt of written request for appeal, the Chair will either: (1) place the appeal on the agenda of a regular or special Board meeting, (2) appoint an appeals panel of not less than three trustees to hear the appeal and make a recommendation to the Board, or (3) respond to the complaint with an explanation of why the appeal will not be heard by the Board of Trustees in accordance with this policy. If the Chair appoints a panel to consider the appeal, the panel will meet to consider the appeal and then make written recommendation to the full Board. The Board will report its decision on the appeal, in writing, to all parties, within thirty (30) calendar days of the Board meeting at which the Board considered the appeal or the recommendation of the panel. A decision of the Board is final, unless it is appealed pursuant to Montana law within the period provided by law.

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6	Cross Reference:	3210 - Equal Educational Opportunity and Nondiscrimination	
7		5010 - Equal Employment Opportunity and Nondiscrimination	
8		3225-3225P – Sexual Harassment of Students	
9		5012-5012P – Sexual Harassment of Employees	
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11	Legal Reference:	Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Civil Rights Act)	
12		Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990	
13		§ 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973	
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17	Policy History:		
18	First reading on: 10/	13/21	
19	Second reading/Ado		