



WESTMOUNT

CHARTER SCHOOL

Charter Board Policy Handbook



Table of Contents

Policy 1	- Vision and Mission	2
Policy 1.1	- Philosophy and Beliefs	3
Policy 1.2	- Goals, Outcomes and Strategies	4
Policy 2	- Roles and Responsibilities of the Charter Board	6
Policy 3	- Role of the Charter Board Member	8
Policy 4	- Charter Board Code of Ethics	9
Policy 5	- Role of the Charter Board Chairperson	9
Policy 6	- Role of the Charter Board Vice-Chairperson	11
Policy 7	- Charter Board Operations	12
Policy 8	- Charter Board Committees	13
Policy 9	- Policy Making	23
Policy 10	- Charter Board Authority/Superintendent Responsibilities	25
Policy 11	- Role of the Superintendent	26
Policy 12	- Appeals of Student Matters	28
Policy 13	- Hearings on Teacher Matters	30



Vision and Mission

Westmount's vision and mission statements guide and inform the directions, actions and determinations of Westmount Charter School Society, its members, Westmount Charter Board and its staff, students and parents.

VISION

Westmount Charter School, as a partner in the best learning system in the world, will be recognized as the centre for excellence in gifted education.

MISSION

To meet the learning needs of gifted students and promote their social-emotional development in a congregated setting.

Legal Reference: N/A
Cross Reference: Charter Agreement, Section 2
Date of Approval: June 7, 1999
Date of Revision: December 5, 2003, April 21, 2008
Due for Review: April 2011



Philosophy and Beliefs

Westmount's definition of giftedness and its beliefs around that definition form a philosophy which serves to support the vision and mission of Westmount Charter School.

1. Definition of Giftedness

Students are gifted when they perform, or show potential for performing, remarkably high levels of accomplishment in learning rate, depth of knowledge, and reasoning and problem-solving abilities when compared to others of their age, experience, and environment.

2. Beliefs

- 2.1 Gifted students, by virtue of outstanding ability in one or more of the multiple intelligences, are capable of exceptional performance.
- 2.2 Gifted students display a broad spectrum of characteristics and needs which distinguish them from their less able peers as well as from one another.
- 2.3 Gifted students require comprehensive, specialized educational programming if they are to maximize their varied abilities and ultimately fully realize their contribution to self and society.
- 2.4 Teachers of gifted students require specialized training and/or experience in the education of the gifted if they are to effectively guide the development of gifted behaviors in those students.
- 2.5 Parents of gifted students are vital partners in their child's education.
- 2.6 Members of the community at large have an important part to play in the education of gifted students.

Legal Reference: N/A
Cross Reference: Charter Agreement, Section 3
Date of Approval: April 12, 1999
Date of Revision: December 5, 2003, April 21, 2008
Due for Review: April 2011

Goals, Outcomes and Strategies

In addition to achieving the goals required of all public schools in Alberta, charter schools are responsible to establish specific charter goals(s) that set the school apart from other schools and which result in improved student learning. Outcomes are measurable statements which describe the achievement of goals, and strategies are the actions taken to achieve the goals and desired outcomes.

1. Charter School Goal

- 1.1 Each gifted student is provided with opportunities to optimize his or her own unique potential.
- 1.2 The Charter Board holds the Superintendent accountable for the achievement of Westmount's charter goal.

2. Outcomes

Westmount Charter School students will:

- 2.1 Demonstrate maximum achievements of skills and concepts in the Alberta Education curriculum.
- 2.2 Evidence growth in identified multiple intelligences.
- 2.3 Improve their ability to think critically and creatively, solve problems and conduct research.
- 2.4 Display an understanding of the interrelatedness of knowledge within and across the disciplines.
- 2.5 Develop independence, self-direction and self-discipline in learning.
- 2.6 Develop self-awareness and acceptance of one's capabilities, interests and needs.
- 2.7 Develop understanding, acceptance and appreciation for the capabilities, interests and needs of others.

3. Strategies

In response to the needs of gifted students, Westmount Charter School will:

- 3.1 Establish and maintain a school culture that values, promotes and recognizes achievement.
- 3.2 Foster the development of each student's full complement of intelligences.
- 3.3 Stimulate students to pursue higher level goals and aspirations.
- 3.4 Provide a safe, supportive learning environment that acknowledges similarities and honours differences.
- 3.5 Provide learning activities at an appropriate level and pace.
- 3.6 Provide a variety of learning activities that supplement or extend requirements of the curriculum.
- 3.7 Promote the development of critical and creative thinking, problem solving and decision-making, and independent study/research skills and processes.
- 3.8 Present content that is related to broad-based themes, issues or problems and serves to integrate knowledge within and across the various disciplines.

- 3.9 Provide students with opportunities to conduct individual or small group projects (investigations, inventions, artistic productions) of genuine interest.
- 3.10 Provide students with opportunities to demonstrate learning outcomes in individual and varied ways.
- 3.11 Expose students to a wide variety of fields of study, modes of expression, professions and occupations.
- 3.12 Provide students with access to many, varied and advanced human and material resources within and outside the school.
- 3.13 Assess student outcomes by using appropriate and specific criteria through self-appraisal, criterion referenced and standardized instruments.
- 3.14 Foster on-going professional development to enable school staff to enhance their ability to meet the needs of gifted students.

Legal Reference: N/A
Cross Reference: Charter Agreement, Section 3
Alberta Education, Charter Schools Handbook, 2002
Date of Approval: April 12, 1999
Date of Revision: December 5, 2003, April 21, 2008
Due for Review: April 2011

Roles and Responsibilities of the Charter Board

Under the *School Act*, the Charter Board is responsible for establishing policies concerning educational and associated services and programs provided by Westmount Charter School.

The Westmount Charter Board is responsible for governing the school by establishing policies that direct the management of the school and hiring a Superintendent who is responsible for implementing the policies of the Charter Board and Alberta Education.

The Charter Board believes that its values should be reflected in the ways in which it meets its responsibilities. Its values include:

- holding the interests of students as paramount;
- communicating openly, honestly and with a corporate voice;
- supporting, encouraging and recognizing the efforts undertaken by its staff;
- improving the governance of the Charter Board through organized learning activities; and
- understanding the impacts on the Charter Board/school of the various constituents

The Westmount Charter Board will:

1. Recruit, employ and review the performance of a superintendent.
2. Ensure the policies of the Charter Board and the practices of the School are consistent with relevant federal and provincial statutes, the Charter, the Society Bylaws and its contractual obligations.
3. Ensure the mission and goals of the School are met and that the philosophy of the School is considered in all matters.
4. Ensure the views of stakeholders are represented in matters concerning the educational and operational goals, plans and directions of Westmount Charter School. The primary strategies the Charter Board will employ when engaging parents, Society members, other governing bodies, and/or staff in its decision-making processes are collaborating, consulting and informing in appropriate contexts.
5. Monitor the general quality of student learning experiences and student achievement.
6. Evaluate the levels of confidence and satisfaction held by parents and Society members in the results achieved by the students of the School.
7. Steward the physical assets of the School.
8. Direct and monitor the finances of the School.
9. Foster a positive and productive culture within the School.
10. To meet its responsibilities, the Charter Board will:
 - 10.1 support student learning by speaking with an informed voice on behalf of public gifted education;
 - 10.2 support the School by speaking with an informed voice on the charter school movement;
 - 10.3 establish a clear sense of vision and mission through consultation in regard to the values and aspirations of stakeholders;
 - 10.4 establish Charter Board goals, plans and policies that enable others to meet these common purposes;

- 10.5 support innovation through policy development, resource allocation, building relationships and sustaining initiatives;
- 10.6 assure the equitable distribution of human, material and fiscal resources;
- 10.7 monitor the implementation of its policies, goals and plans;
- 10.8 ensure that appropriate systems of evaluation and reporting exist;
- 10.9 monitor, evaluate and report on its own performance; and
- 10.10 maintain a Charter Board Member Handbook that describes the operational practices and procedures of the Charter Board and shall serve as a resource to facilitate the smooth operation of a policy governance board.

Legal Reference: *School Act*, Part 3, Division 2
Cross Reference: Charter Agreement, section 5(3)
Society Bylaws, Article 5
Date of Approval: April 12, 1999
Date of Revision: December 5, 2003, April 21, 2008
Due for Review: April 2011

Role of the Charter Board Member

The role of a Westmount Charter Board Member is to make decisions that are in the best interests of the school, and to contribute to the Charter Board as it governs the organization and ensure it achieves its vision and mission. Charter Board members are expected to support the Westmount Charter School's mandate of providing educational opportunity for gifted and talented students in the Calgary area.

The Charter Board is a corporation. The decisions of the Charter Board in a properly constituted meeting are those of the corporation. A Charter Board member who is given corporate authority to act on behalf of the Charter Board may carry out duties individually, but only as an agent of the Charter Board. In such cases, the actions of the Charter Board member are those of the Charter Board, which is then responsible for them. A Charter Board member acting individually has only the authority and status of any other member of Westmount Charter School Society.

Charter Board members are expected to:

1. Become familiar with Westmount's policies and procedures, meeting agendas, and reports in order to participate in Charter Board business.
2. Participate in, and contribute to, the decisions of the Charter Board and ensure that decisions made are made using due diligence.
3. Support the decisions of the Charter Board and refrain from making any statements to the contrary.
4. Strive to develop a positive and respectful learning and working culture both within the Charter Board and the school.
5. Refer queries, or issues and problems not covered by Charter Board policy, to the Charter Board for corporate discussion and decision.
6. Refer administrative matters to the Superintendent. The Charter Board member, upon receiving a complaint from a parent or Society member about school operations, will refer the individual back to the school and will inform the Superintendent of this action.
7. When possible, participate in seminars, conferences or workshops to enhance the quality of leadership and service offered to the school.
8. Share the materials and ideas gained with fellow Charter Board members at the Charter Board meeting immediately following a professional development activity.
9. To serve in a dual capacity as Directors of Westmount Charter School Society and fulfill their responsibilities as Directors pursuant to legislation and Society bylaws.
10. To support the charter school movement in Alberta.

Legal Reference:	<i>School Act</i> , Section 60 <i>Societies Act</i>
Cross Reference:	Society Bylaws, Article 5
Date of Approval:	April 21, 2008
Date of Revision:	
Due for Review:	April 2011

Charter Board Code of Ethics

Charter Board Membership is a significant challenge and responsibility. Decisions made by Charter Board Members directly affect the quality of educational services provided for students and the overall direction of the school jurisdiction. The importance of this role underscores the need for Charter Board Members to establish and adhere to a code of conduct.

The Chairperson will ensure that new members are familiar with the Charter Board Member Code of Ethics as part of the new Charter Board Member orientation process.

The Chairperson will be responsible for periodically reviewing the Charter Board Member Code of Ethics with Charter Board Members.

1. Charter Board Member Responsibility to the Office

Charter Board Members should honour the responsibilities which this membership demands by:

- 1.1 Thinking always in terms of children first.
- 1.2 Understanding that the basic function of the Charter Board Members is policy making rather than administrative, and accepting the responsibility of learning to discriminate between these two functions.
- 1.3 Accepting the responsibility, along with fellow Charter Board Members, of seeing that adequate facilities and resources are provided for the proper functioning of the school.
- 1.4 Refusing to play politics in either the traditional partisan or in any other petty sense.
- 1.5 Representing at all times the entire school body.
- 1.6 Accepting the responsibility of becoming well informed concerning the duties of Charter Board Members and the proper functions of the school.
- 1.7 Recognizing responsibility as a provincial as well as a local official to seek the improvement of education not only at Westmount but throughout the Province of Alberta.
- 1.8 Having the administrative officers present at regular meetings of the Charter Board.
- 1.9 Granting the administrative officers the privilege of discussion at the Charter Board meetings.
- 1.10 Referring complaints to the proper administrative officers and discussing them at the regular meetings if an administrative solution is not achieved.

2. Charter Board Member Responsibility to the Community

Board Members should meet their responsibility to the school community by:

- 2.1 Attempting to appraise fairly both the present and the future educational needs of the school community.
- 2.2 Regarding it as a major responsibility of the Charter Board to interpret the aims and the activities of the school to the school community.
- 2.3 Insisting that all the school business transactions be conducted on an ethical basis.

- 2.4 Vigorously seeking adequate financial support of the school.
 - 2.5 Refusing to use their position on the Charter Board for personal gain.
3. Charter Board Member Relationship With Other Charter Board Members
- Charter Board Members should respect their relationship with other Charter Board Members of the Charter Board by:
- 3.1 Recognizing that authority rests only with the Charter Board in official meetings and that the individual Member has no authority to commit the Charter board outside of such meetings.
 - 3.2 Recognizing the integrity of their predecessors and associates and the merit of their work.
 - 3.3 Refusing to make promises on voting on any matter which should properly come before the Charter Board as a whole.
 - 3.4 Making decisions only after relevant facts bearing on the subject are made known.
4. Charter Board Member Relationship with Administrative Officers and Staff
- Charter Board Members should maintain effective relationships with the administrative officers of the school and their staffs by:
- 4.1 Striving to procure, when the vacancies exist, the best professional leaders available.
 - 4.2 Giving the administrative officers full administrative authority for properly discharging their professional duties and holding them responsible for the achievement of desired results within established parameters.
 - 4.3 Refusing to act on matters relating to the employment or dismissal of teachers without reference to the administrative officers.
 - 4.4 Respecting the confidentiality of privileged Charter Board business.

Legal Reference:
Cross Reference:
Date of Approval: November 17, 2008
Date of Revision:
Due for Review: November 2011



Role of the Charter Board Chairperson

In accordance with the *School Act* and Society Bylaws, the Charter Board, at its Organizational Meeting, or at any time determined by the Charter Board, shall select one of its members to serve as Chairperson, to hold office during the pleasure of the Charter Board.

The primary responsibility of the Charter Board Chairperson is to provide leadership and guidance to assist Charter Board members to operate effectively as a group, in order to achieve the goals established for Westmount Charter School in a competent manner.

The Chairperson shall:

1. Ensure that the Charter Board operates in accordance with its own policies, Society bylaws, and requirements imposed upon it by legislation.
2. Call and preside over all meetings of the Charter Board.
 - 2.1 Collaborate with the Superintendent to develop the Board meeting agendas.
 - 2.2 Ensure that Charter Board discussions are timely, fair, orderly and thorough, but also the efficient, limited to time and to the point.
 - 2.3 Ensure good meeting practices which support the thoughtful discussion of issues are observed.
3. Act as official spokesperson for the Charter Board with the media and the public.
4. Be an ex-officio member, with voting privileges, to all Charter Board committees.
5. Work collaboratively with the Superintendent and support appropriate management of the school in accordance with the policies of the Board and the applicable bylaws and legislation.
 - 5.1 Provide advice and confer with the Superintendent when circumstances require.
6. Ensure that the Charter Board engages in regular assessments of its own effectiveness.

Legal Reference: *School Act*, section 65
Cross Reference: Charter Agreement, section 5(3)
Society Bylaws, Clauses 5(28 to 35 & 46)
Date of Approval: April 21, 2008
Date of Revision:
Due for Review: April 2011



Role of the Charter Board Vice Chairperson

In accordance with the *School Act* and Society Bylaws, the Charter Board, at its Organizational Meeting, or at any time determined by the Charter Board, shall select one of its members to serve as Vice Chairperson, to hold office during the pleasure of the Charter Board.

The Vice Chairperson shall act on behalf of the Chairperson, in the latter's absence and shall have all the powers, duties and responsibilities of the Chairperson.

The Vice Chairperson shall:

1. Assist the Chairperson in ensuring that the Charter Board operates in accordance with its own policies and procedures and in providing leadership and guidance to the Charter Board.
2. The Vice Chairperson may be assigned other duties and responsibilities by the Chairperson.

Legal Reference: *School Act*, section 65
Cross Reference: Society Bylaws, Clause 5(47)
Date of Approval: April 21, 2008
Date of Revision:
Due for Review: April 2011

Charter Board Operations

In order to discharge its responsibilities to the Minister of Education and to the members of the School Society, the members of the Charter Board shall hold meetings as often as necessary. A quorum, which is a simple majority of the number of members, must be present for every duly constituted meeting. The Charter Board has adopted policies so that the business of the Charter Board can be conducted in an orderly and efficient manner.

1. Organizational Meeting

An organizational meeting of the members of the Charter Board shall be held annually, and no later than four weeks following the date of the Society Annual General Meeting. The Secretary-Treasurer will give notice of the organizational meeting to each member as if it were a special meeting.

The Superintendent shall act as Chairperson of the meeting for the purpose of the election of the Chairperson. Upon election the Chairperson shall preside over the remainder of the organizational meeting. The election of the Chairperson shall be for a period of one year.

The organizational meeting shall, in addition:

- 1.1 Elect a Vice-Chairperson;
- 1.2 Establish a schedule (date, time and place) for regular meetings, and any additional required meetings including the next organizational meeting;
- 1.3 Provide a primary and emergency contact for all Charter Board Members for the purpose of receiving notice;
- 1.4 Create such standing committees of the Charter Board as are deemed appropriate, and appoint members, who shall then select the Committee Chairperson;
- 1.5 Appoint Charter Board representatives to the various Boards or committees of organizations or agencies where the Charter Board has regular representation, as appropriate;
- 1.6 Review Charter Board member conflict of interest stipulations and determine any disclosure of information requirements; and
- 1.7 Appoint signing officers for the School Authority.

2. Regular Meetings

- 2.1 Regular meetings are normally held once monthly on dates determined at the organizing meeting, commencing at 6:00 pm. There are no meetings in July or August. Such meetings will ordinarily be held in Westmount's Board Room in Calgary.
- 2.2 Notwithstanding this schedule, the Charter Board may, by resolution, alter the schedule in such manner as it deems appropriate.
- 2.3 Regular meetings of the Charter Board will not normally be held without the Superintendent and Secretary-Treasurer or their designates in attendance.

3. Special Meetings

Occasionally, unanticipated or emergent issues require immediate Charter Board attention and /or action.

Special meetings of the Charter Board may be held from time to time as provided for under section 67 of the School Act. Special meetings of the Charter Board will only be called when the Chairperson, the majority of members or the Minister is of the opinion that an issue must be dealt with before the next regular meeting.

A written notice of the special meeting, including date, time, place and nature of business, shall be issued to all members by registered (at least 7 days prior to the date of the meeting) or in person (at least 2 days prior to the date of the meeting), unless every member agrees to waive the requirements for notice.

The nature of the business to be transacted must be clearly specified in the notice of the meeting. Unless all members are present at the special meeting, no other business may be transacted.

Special meetings of the Charter Board will not normally be held without the Superintendent and Secretary-Treasurer or their designates in attendance.

4. Extraordinary Meetings

Under exceptional circumstances, the Chairperson or a majority of Charter Board Members may call for an extraordinary meeting of the Charter Board.

Notice of such meeting shall be given at least four hours in advance and shall be given in person or by phone. Notice of an extraordinary meeting must include the date, time and place of the meeting and the nature of the business to be transacted. If a Charter Board Member cannot be contacted by these means, one further notice shall be given to his or her emergency contact, which will be considered adequate notice.

An extraordinary meeting may be held without notice if every Charter Board Member agrees to waive notice provisions. Unless all Charter Board Members are present at the extraordinary meeting, no business other than that in the notice of the extraordinary meeting shall be transacted at the meeting.

5. Committee of the Whole (In-Camera) Sessions

The preservation and enhancement of the public's trust in the educational system is an important priority of the Charter Board. The Charter Board believes that public trust is preserved by conducting open Board meetings. Notwithstanding this belief, occasionally matters of unusual sensitivity do require the Charter Board to hold closed meetings.

The Charter Board may hold a meeting or part of a meeting in-camera to discuss sensitive issues where the majority of the members are of the opinion that it is in the public interest to do so.

In-camera sessions will generally be held to discuss sensitive matters pertaining to:

- Individual students.
- Individual Charter Board members.
- Bargaining/contract negotiations.
- Personnel matters.
- Acquisitions or disposal of real property.
- Litigation brought before or against the Charter Board.
- Other matters that the majority of Charter Board Members feel would not be in the public interest to discuss in open meeting.

The Charter Board may convene in-camera only by proper resolution of the Charter Board. Such resolution shall be recorded in the minutes of the Charter Board.

The Charter Board shall, during the in-camera session:

- 5.1 Discuss only the matter which gave rise to the closed session.

- 5.2 The Charter Board shall convene or re-convene a regular or special meeting to take action on any matters discussed.

In-camera sessions shall be closed to the public and the press.

Charter Board members and other persons attending the in-camera sessions are not permitted to discuss the details outside of the sessions.

6. Agenda for Regular Meetings

The Chairperson, in consultation with the Superintendent, is responsible for establishing the agenda for Charter Board meetings

Items may be placed on the agenda in one of the following ways:

- 6.1 By notifying the Superintendent or Chairperson at least six days prior to the Charter Board meeting.
- 6.2 By notice of motion at the previous meeting of the Charter Board.
- 6.3 Request from a committee of the Charter Board.
- 6.4 A quorum of the Charter Board, prior to the approval of the agenda, may request that the Chairperson add an item.

The Charter Board supports the use of a standard agenda format for all regular Charter Board meetings.

Items on the agenda will generally be given preference in the following order:

- Items requiring Charter Board decisions (action items).
- Receiving delegations or presentations.
- Information items.

The Superintendent shall ensure that the agenda package, containing the agenda and supporting information, is distributed to each Charter Board Member at least 48 hours prior to the regular Charter Board meetings. The Superintendent will normally include an administrative recommendation for all items included on the agenda.

The agenda and supporting documentation (excluding confidential material) shall be made available by the Superintendent to school administration and Society members.

The list of agenda items shall be posted in the Board office, in a place readily accessible to the Society members. Any Society member may inspect the agenda and request a copy.

Emergent issues that require Charter Board action may arise after the agenda has been prepared. Such items shall be brought to the attention of the Chairperson, who may bring items before the Board. The Superintendent, with the permission of the Chairperson, may also bring forth emergent items.

The Chairperson, at the beginning of the meeting, shall ask for additions to and/or deletions from the agenda prior to agenda approval. Changes to the agenda may be made by a majority of those present.

The Chairperson may change the order of items on the agenda in order to meet deadlines or accommodate delegations. In such cases, a member may challenge the Chairperson in accordance with the procedures adopted by the Charter Board. (Robert's Rules of Order)

During the Course of the Charter Board meeting, the majority of members present may request that the Charter Board Chairperson place items before the Board for discussion.

7. Minutes

The Minutes shall record:

- 7.1 A brief summary of the circumstances which gave rise to the matter being placed before the Charter Board;

- 7.2 All resolutions, including the Charter Board's disposition of same, placed before the charter Board; and
- 7.3 The votes, when and as requested, by a member, as per section 72 of the School Act.

The Minutes shall:

- 7.4 Be prepared by the recording secretary;
- 7.5 Be reviewed by the Superintendent prior to submission to the Charter Board;
- 7.6 Be considered unofficial record of proceedings until such time as adopted by a resolution of the Charter Board; and
- 7.7 Upon adoption by the Charter Board, be deemed to be the official and sole record of the Charter Board's business.

The Secretary-Treasurer shall:

- 7.8 Establish a codification system for resolutions placed before the Charter Board which will provide for ready identification of the resolution as to the meeting at which it was considered.
- 7.9 Establish and maintain a file of all Charter Board minutes.

The Chairperson and Secretary-Treasurer shall, upon adoption by the Charter Board, initial each page of the minutes. It is the responsibility of all Charter Board Members present at the meeting to check the minutes for errors or omissions.

When required by the Charter Board, its committees shall prepare and submit notes of the meetings to the Charter Board.

8. Motions

- 8.1 The majority of any quorum may pass any motion or resolution within the authority of the Charter Board as stated in the School Act, the Charter or the Bylaws.
- 8.2 Each Charter Board Member present shall have one (1) vote. Voting shall be by a show of hands. The Chairperson shall vote only in the event of a tie.
- 8.3 A decision by the Chairperson that a motion or resolution has been carried or not carried and an entry to that effect in the minutes of the meeting shall be sufficient evidence of the fact without proof of the number or proportion of votes recorded in favour or against such motion or resolution.
- 8.4 Charter Board Members may abstain from voting on any motion and must abstain from voting on any matter in which they have a conflict of interest.
- 8.5 Any Charter Board Member may request a recorded vote in which case, the Secretary-Treasurer shall record in the minutes the name of the Charter Board Member and whether that individual voted for or against the matter or abstained.
- 8.6 Robert's Rules of Order shall govern all proceedings of the Charter Board unless otherwise provided in these policies or varied from time to time by resolution of the Charter Board.

9. Delegations to Charter Board Meetings

The Charter Board believes that it has the responsibility to encourage members of the school community to bring concerns relating to educational matters to regular meetings of the Charter Board. The Charter Board also believes it has a responsibility to conduct regular public meetings of the Charter Board in an orderly and efficient fashion. The Charter Board will receive representations and delegations on any subject pertinent to Charter Board business provided the item has been placed on the agenda.

The Superintendent will inform the representative(s) making the presentation with regard to time, place and Charter Board policy and procedures regarding presentations and delegations.

If a decision on the issue by the Charter Board is required subsequent to the presentation, the Superintendent will inform the individual or group of the Charter Board meeting at which the issue will be debated and a decision made.

The following procedures will normally be followed:

- 9.1 Groups or individuals wishing to make presentations to the Charter Board will normally do so at regular public meetings of the Charter Board. Groups shall appoint one spokesperson to make the presentation and respond to questions. Other speakers may be recognized by the Chairperson. On matters where the public interest may be compromised by presenting the issue in public, the Charter Board may move to an in-camera session.
- 9.2 Normally, a presentation or delegation will not be received at a public meeting of the Charter Board unless the matter has been placed on the agenda.
- 9.3 A written request for an item to be placed on the agenda must be received by the Chairperson or Superintendent seven days prior to the meeting date. The request should be accompanied by the terms of reference for the presentation to be made. The Chairperson or Superintendent will determine if the matter is pertinent to Charter Board business. In an emergent situation where the timeline cannot be met, the Chairperson shall rule whether or not the delegation shall be heard.
- 9.4 The Charter Board will not normally debate the matter presented to it at the meeting during which the issue is raised. Questions of clarification directed through the Chairperson may be asked.
- 9.5 The Charter Board will normally refer a decision on a matter presented by a delegation to the next regular meeting of the Charter Board.
- 9.6 Administration will normally review the issue and prepare a recommendation for the Charter Board's consideration at a subsequent meeting of the Charter Board.
- 9.7 The Chairperson has the authority to exclude a person guilty of improper conduct or to limit participation in order to maintain order and complete the business of the meeting.

10. Charter Board Member Honoraria and Expenses

- 10.1 No member of the Charter Board is entitled to remuneration for acting as member of the Charter Board.

The Charter Board will reimburse its members for any expenses they incur in the course of performing their duties at board members.
- 10.2 The Charter Board believes that attendance of Charter Board members at conferences or conventions designed to promote the interchange of ideas and information on the issues of charter schools, gifted education or professional development of board members generally is of value to the Charter Board.

The Charter Board will provide funds in its annual budget for the purpose of defraying the expenses incurred by Charter Board members who attend approved conferences and conventions.

It is expected that any person wishing to have his/her expenses defrayed will provide the Charter Board with information regarding the nature and costs associated with a particular conference or convention in a timely manner.

The Charter Board shall, at its discretion, agree to provide for the expenses incurred by delegates to attend any conference or convention.

Delegates are expected to report on the conference or convention upon their return.

- 10.3 The Division shall pay or reimburse Directors for the following expenses related to:
 - 10.3.1 Registration fees
 - 10.3.2 Transportation and parking
 - 10.3.3 Meals
 - 10.3.4 Accommodation
 - 10.3.5 At-home internet connections
- 10.4 The Division shall pay or reimburse members for travel when it is determined that the purpose for travel cannot be adequately met through telephone, correspondence or facsimile.
- 10.5 Members shall submit expense reimbursement claims on the appropriate form to the Secretary-Treasurer at least once a month.
- 10.6 All claims for expense reimbursement shall be supported by receipts whenever possible.

11. Charter Board Member Conflict of Interest

Each Charter Board member is directly responsible to the Westmount Charter School Society membership and to the Charter Board. Upon election to office Charter Board members assume a position of public trust and are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that will not impair the trust accorded them or the Charter Board.

The Charter Board expects:

- 11.1 Each Charter Board member will be conversant with sections 80 to 83 of the *School Act*.
- 11.2 The Charter Board member to be solely responsible for declaring a position in conflict of interest and to disclose the nature of the pecuniary interest in which she/he may profit personally or in other ways.
- 11.3 The conflict of interest shall be limited to the provisions of sections 80 and 81 of the *School Act*.
- 11.4 The Charter Board member will make a declaration of conflict of interest in open meeting prior to Board discussions of the subject matter that may place the Charter Board member in conflict of interest.
- 11.5 The Secretary-Treasurer shall record the declaration in the minutes.
- 11.6 Upon declaring the conflict of interest, the Chairperson shall excuse the Charter Board member from participation in the discussion and the vote on the issue. The Charter Board member will leave the room in which the meeting is being held until discussion and voting on the matter is concluded.

Legal Reference: *School Act*, sections 60, 75, 80, 81 & 83
Cross Reference: Society By-laws, sections 5.22 to 5.41
Date of Approval: November 17, 2008
Date of Revision:
Due for Review: November 2011

Charter Board Committees

In order to facilitate the work of the Charter Board, internal advisory committees shall be established. The Charter Board may also name representatives to various external committees or agencies.

Under appropriate circumstances, the Charter Board may also name parents and/or staff members to various committees.

1. General

- 1.1 Membership to the various internal advisory committees shall be named by the Charter Board, either through election or appointment at the annual organizational meeting.
- 1.2 Whenever deemed necessary, the Charter Board will appoint an advisory committee(s) on areas of general concern. Membership on such committees will be as provided by Charter Board policy or, in the absence of policy, as determined by the Charter Board.
- 1.3 The Charter Board will give consideration to appointing a Charter Board member(s) to sit on external committees or boards.
- 1.4 Except as otherwise provided by policy, it is understood that each committee established by the Charter Board or representative appointed by the Charter Board will be acting in an advisory capacity to the Charter Board.
- 1.5 The Chairperson and Superintendent shall be an ex-officio member of all committees.
- 1.6 It remains the Charter Board's ultimate responsibility to provide each advisory committee with reasonable and workable terms of reference.
- 1.7 Each committee shall perform other duties as assigned from time to time by the Charter Board and as accepted by the committee.
- 1.8 Internal committee meetings shall be held at the call of the committee chair.
- 1.9 Matters which are beyond the jurisdiction of the administrative staff shall be referred to the appropriate committee chair for further action.

2. Standing Committees

Standing committees are established to assist the Charter Board with work of an on-going or recurring nature. The various standing committees of the Charter Board, their terms of reference and membership are as follows:

- 2.1 Policy Advisory Committee
 - 2.1.1 Purpose
 - Ensure that policies are current, relevant, and are having the desired effect.
 - 2.1.2 Powers and Duties
 - Assess the impact policies have had in terms of the outcomes anticipated at the time of adoption.

- Assess the congruency of the policy with the current philosophy of the Charter Board.
 - Recommend revisions of policy, as appropriate, to facilitate the effective and efficient operation of the School.
- 2.1.3 Membership
- Two or more Charter Board Members.
 - Superintendent
 - Secretary-Treasurer
- 2.2 Human Resources Committee
- 2.2.1 Purpose
- Ensure that compensation and working conditions are reviewed on an annual basis and to provide a forum for exchange between staff and the Charter Board.
- 2.2.2 Powers and Duties of Charter Board Members
- Review policies affecting contract terms or working conditions of staff.
 - Recommend changes to any component of the total compensation package (in consultation with the Superintendent).
 - Meet with the Staff Members and represent the Charter Board on matters relating to any component of the total compensation package.
 - Meet with and recommend a contract for the Superintendent.
- 2.2.3 Powers and Duties of Staff Members
- Review policies affecting contract terms or working conditions of staff.
 - Meet with the Charter Board Members and represent all employees on matters relating to any component of the total compensation package.
 - Provide other assistance on Human Resource issues, as requested by the Charter Board Representatives.
- 2.2.4 Membership
- Two or more Charter Board Members.
 - Three teachers appointed by the teaching staff (preferably one at each of Elementary, Middle and High School levels).
 - One member of the support staff appointed by the support staff.
 - Secretary-Treasurer
 - Superintendent
- 2.3 Facilities Committee
- 2.3.1 Purpose
- To review and make recommendations to the Charter Board regarding the facility needs of the School.
- 2.3.2 Powers and Duties
- Review long range facility needs.
 - Review major capital modernization or new facility projects.

- Review capital budget proposals regarding facilities.
 - Review other building needs as required.
 - Represent the Charter Board on matters relating to facilities with Alberta Education and/or Infrastructure.
 - Provide assistance to the Chairperson with the negotiation of lease agreements, amendments or renewals.
- 2.3.3 Membership
- Two or more Charter Board Members.
 - Secretary-Treasurer
 - Superintendent
- 2.4 Audit Committee
- 2.4.1 Purpose
- To provide direction in matters relating to the financial management of the School.
- 2.4.2 Powers and Duties
- Reviewing investment policy and banking practices as required.
 - Reviewing capital project funding.
 - Review Audited Financial Statements and auditor's recommendations.
 - Recommend appointment of auditor.
 - Review annual budget.
- 2.4.3 Membership
- Two or more Charter Board Members.
 - Secretary-Treasurer
 - Superintendent
- 2.5 Finance Committee
- 2.5.1 Purpose
- To provide direction in matters relating to the financial management of the School.
- 2.5.2 Powers and Duties
- Provide direction on budget development.
 - Provide direction on budget application when significant adjustments are required.
- 2.5.3 Membership
- Two or more Charter Board Members.
 - Secretary-Treasurer
 - Superintendent
- 2.6 External Relations Committee
- 2.6.1 Purpose

- To engage with and establish relationships with elected officials and the broader educational and business communities.

2.6.2 Powers and Duties

- Communication with media and/or community-at-large.
- Development of government relations plan.
- Preparation of news releases.
- Development and coordination of formal partnership program.

2.6.3 Membership

- Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson (who shall also serve as official spokesperson on board level matters).
- Superintendent (who shall also serve as official spokesperson on sensitive or controversial matters).
- Principal (who shall also serve as official spokesperson on school level matters).
- One or more Charter Board members, parents and/or staff as required to achieve specific outcomes.

2.7 Nominating Committee

2.7.1 Purpose

- To ensure the continuity and renewal of the Charter Board.

2.7.2 Powers and Duties

- Recruit potential Charter Board members in accordance with Society Bylaws.
- Plan and manage the nomination and election process in accordance with Society Bylaws.

2.7.3 Membership

- Two Charter Board members.
- Two School Council members.

3. Ad Hoc Committees

The terms of reference and membership of certain ad hoc committees are provided by Charter Board policy, or may be established by resolution as the Charter Board may determine from time to time.

Legal Reference: *School Act*, section 65
 Cross Reference: Society Bylaws, Article 5
 Date of Approval: November 1, 2001
 Date of Revision: November 17, 2008
 Due for Review: November 2011

Policy Making

Westmount's Charter Board is responsible for the development of policies in keeping with the requirements of government legislation and the values of the Charter. In order to meet its responsibility, the Charter Board shall establish written policies that express its philosophical beliefs in support of public education and provide effective direction and guidelines for the action of the Charter Board, the Superintendent, staff, students, parents and other agencies. Charter Board policies constitute the will of the Charter Board in determining how Westmount Charter School will be operated.

The Westmount Charter Board shall be guided in its approach to policy making by ensuring adherence to the requirements necessary to provide public education in accordance with the charter and in compliance with the *School Act* and provincial legislation.

Westmount Charter Board policies provide overall direction and broad guidelines for the school, and delegate policy implementation and school management and administration responsibilities to the Superintendent.

The Charter Board shall have the right to unilaterally establish policy which addresses monetary or payment matters.

The Board policy-making process includes the following phases:

1. Planning

- 1.1 The Charter Board, in consultation with the Superintendent, determines the need for a policy, through its own monitoring activities or in response to a suggestion from another stakeholder, and identifies the critical attributes of each policy to be developed.
- 1.2 Any charter board member, employee, parent or student of Westmount Charter School may make suggestions regarding the possible development of a policy on any matter, by presenting a proposal for a policy in writing to the Charter Board through the Superintendent. The proposal shall contain a brief statement of purpose or rationale.
- 1.3 Policy may also be initiated by the results of a public consultation or survey, needs assessment, or policy evaluation.

2. Development

- 2.1 Draft policies may be developed by the Charter Board, a committee or the Superintendent.
- 2.2 Draft policies are presented to the Charter Board as 'information items' and with the approval of the Charter Board will be circulated for stakeholder input for 15 to 30 days.

3. Circulation for stakeholder input

- 3.1 Draft policies which are 'accepted as information' by the Charter Board shall be circulated to all school staff and to stakeholder groups for consideration and input. School administration shall post policies that are under review in the staff rooms.
- 3.2 Stakeholders may provide input by written comment on the draft policy to the Superintendent.
- 3.3 If no comments are received, the policy will be presented to the Charter Board for final approval.

- 3.4 If there is stakeholder input, policies will be reconsidered, and if appropriate, redrafted and submitted to the Charter Board for consideration and approval in principle.
 - 3.5 The Charter Board may also table the draft policy without proceeding with further review.
 - 3.6 The redrafted policy, approved in principle, will be circulated for a second fifteen to thirty day period.
4. Minor policy amendments
- 4.1 Where the policy has been drafted or redrafted as the result of legal agreements or where the modifications are minor and do not affect the intent of the policy, or where the matter is urgent, draft policies will not be circulated for stakeholder comments.
5. Approval
- 5.1 All policies will be presented to the Charter Board at a regular meeting for final reading and decision.
 - 5.2 The approval of a policy statement suspends any previously adopted policy relating to the issues covered in the approved policy statement.
6. Implementation
- 6.1 The implementation of the policy is an administrative responsibility, under the direction of the Superintendent.
 - 6.2 The Superintendent may develop administrative procedures in accordance with Charter Board policies.
 - 6.3 The Superintendent may suspend a policy, but at the first opportunity shall report to the Charter Board the reasons for suspension and the recommended amendments. The Charter Board may ratify the suspension or it may reinstate the policy. When it is expedient the Superintendent may make the decision in consultation with the Charter Board Chairperson.
 - 6.4 The Superintendent is responsible for communicating policies within the school; for monitoring school policies on an ongoing basis; for reporting the outcomes of policy decisions to the Charter Board; and for making recommendations to the Charter Board for revision.
7. Evaluation
- 7.1 The Charter Board, in conjunction with the Superintendent, shall evaluate each policy in a on a three year cycle in order to determine whether or not it is meeting its intended purpose.

Legal Reference: *School Act, Section 60*
 Cross Reference: AP-120 Policy Dissemination
 AP-121 Development and Review of Administrative Procedures
 Date of Approval: April 12, 1999
 Date of Revision: April 21, 2008
 Due for Review: April 2011

Charter Board Authority/Superintendent Responsibilities

The Charter Board reserves to itself the authority to make decisions on matters requiring Charter Board approval in accordance with Charter Board policies, practices and legislation; and further, the Charter Board requires that any new provincial, regional or local initiatives must be initially brought to the Charter Board for discussion and determination of decision-making authority.

Specifically:

1. The Charter Board is authorized to suspend a teacher from the performance of the teacher's duties without prior notice if the Superintendent is of the opinion that the welfare of the students is threatened by the presence of the teacher. The suspension shall be conducted in accordance with the requirements of the *School Act*.
2. The Superintendent is assigned responsibility to develop Administrative Procedures that are consistent with provincial policies and procedures for the following program areas:
 - 2.1 Special Education
 - 2.2 Guidance and Counseling
 - 2.3 Services for Students and Children
 - 2.4 School-Based Decision Making
 - 2.5 Student Evaluation
 - 2.6 Teacher Growth, Supervision and Evaluation
 - 2.7 Early Childhood Services
 - 2.8 Locally Developed/Acquired and Authorized Junior and Senior High School
Complementary Courses
 - 2.9 Off-Campus Education
 - 2.10 English as a Second Language

Legal Reference: *School Act*, sections 61, 105
Cross Reference:
Date of Approval: November 17, 2008
Date of Revision:
Due for Review: November 2011

Role of the Superintendent

The Superintendent is the Chief Executive Officer of the Charter Board and the Chief Education Officer of Westmount Charter School, reporting directly to the Charter Board, and is accountable to the Charter Board for the conduct and operation of the school. The Superintendent's duties and responsibilities listed below are assigned by the Charter Board in accordance with regulations and the *School Act*. All Charter Board authority delegated to the staff of the School is delegated through the Superintendent to the extent authorized by legislation.

Specific Areas of Responsibility:

1. Student Welfare

The Superintendent shall ensure the accommodation and transportation of Westmount students; ensure a safe, caring and respectful environment for students while participating in school programs or while being transported to or from school programs on transportation provided by Westmount; and shall act as, or designate, an attendance officer for Westmount.

2. Educational Leadership

The Superintendent shall provide leadership in all matters relating to education at Westmount; ensure students in Westmount have the opportunity to meet the standards of education set by the Minister and the Charter Board; and implement education policies established by the Minister.

3. Fiscal Responsibility

The Superintendent shall ensure the fiscal management of Westmount by the Secretary-Treasurer is in accordance with the terms or conditions of any funding received by the Charter Board under the *School Act* or any other applicable Act or regulation. The Superintendent shall ensure the School operates in a fiscally responsible manner, including adherence to generally accepted accounting procedures, and shall control and report on the expenditure of all funds in accordance with Westmount goals (including school-based management) and statutory requirements. The Superintendent shall ensure the acceptable condition of Westmount's physical assets, including the neatness and cleanliness of buildings and grounds, and the safety, security and state of maintenance and repair of buildings, grounds, furnishings and equipment.

4. Personnel Management

The Superintendent shall have overall authority and responsibility for all personnel-related matters, save and except those personnel matters precluded by Charter Board policy and legislation, and shall provide leadership in the supervision and evaluation of principals, administrators, teachers and other staff.

The Superintendent shall ensure that the highest possible quality staff are recruited and selected; that staff are compensated fairly; and that regular performance evaluations are undertaken.

5. Policy

The Superintendent shall provide leadership in the planning, development, implementation and evaluation of Charter Board policies.

6. Superintendent/Board Relations

The Superintendent shall establish and maintain positive professional working relations with the Charter Board; respect and honour the Charter Board's role and responsibilities, and facilitate the implementation of that role as defined in Charter Board policy; and shall keep

the Charter Board informed on all school jurisdiction matters, especially controversial and/or highly sensitive issues, in a timely and appropriate manner.

7. Three-Year Education Planning and Reporting

The Superintendent shall lead the Three-Year Education Planning process including the development of goals, budget, facilities and transportation plans and implement plans as approved. The Superintendent shall involve the Charter Board appropriately (Charter Board approval of process and timelines, opportunity for Charter Board establishment of strategic priorities and key results early in the process, final Charter Board approval) and report regularly on results achieved.

8. Organizational Management

The Superintendent shall demonstrate effective organizational skills resulting in Westmount compliance with all legal, Ministerial and Charter Board mandates and timelines, and shall report to the Minister with respect to matters identified in and required by the School Act.

9. Communications and Community Relations

The Superintendent shall take appropriate actions to ensure positive external and internal communications are developed and maintained; participate actively in community affairs in order to enhance and support the School's mission; promote the Westmount Charter School and its programs to the parents and community; and facilitate the establishment and operation of a school council.

10. Leadership Practices

The Superintendent shall practice leadership in a manner that is viewed positively and has the support of those with whom he works most directly in carrying out the directives of the Charter Board and the Minister; maintain professional working relationships with staff, students, parents and other affiliated individuals, groups or organizations; and shall develop and maintain positive and effective relations with provincial and regional government departments and agencies.

Legal Reference: *School Act*, sections 14, 113, 114, 115
Cross Reference:
Date of Approval: November 17, 2008
Date of Revision:
Due for Review: November 2011

Appeals of Student Matters

The Charter Board is committed to designing fair and orderly processes in which to resolve disputes or concerns arising from its Student policies and the decisions made thereunder.

Parents and the student, if 16 years of age or older, have the right to appeal decisions which significantly affect the education of the student.

The Charter Board expects that this policy will come into effect after the parent and/or student has followed the School's stated protocol for relating concerns, namely addressing concerns first with the teacher, where appropriate, then the Principal and ultimately the Superintendent.

Those practices which affect students must be ethical, fair, just and based on processes which are known to parents and students. The professional and administrative practices used to implement this policy must respect procedural fairness.

The Chairperson and Superintendent are jointly responsible for the administration of this policy.

1. The failure of a person to make a decision shall be considered a decision that may be appealed under this policy.
2. Where a decision made by an employee of the Charter Board significantly affects the education of a student, the parent of the student and/or the student, if 16 years of age or older, may appeal that decision to the Charter Board.
3. For the purposes of this policy, a decision of an employee authorized to do so by the Charter Board is deemed to be a decision made by the Charter Board.
4. An appeal under this policy must be made, in writing, to the Superintendent, must set out the nature of the appeal and, when applicable, would be made after attempts to resolve the dispute have been made in accordance with School protocol or other Charter Board policies.
5. An appeal under this policy must be made within two (2) weeks after the receipt of the disputed decision.
6. If the Superintendent is of the opinion that the education of the student has been significantly affected, the Superintendent will bring the appeal before the next meeting of the Charter Board. Under extraordinary circumstances, the Superintendent may request that the Chairperson call a special meeting of the Charter Board.
7. The Charter Board shall, by resolution, appoint an ad hoc Appeal Committee to make investigations and decisions with respect to the appeal on behalf of the Charter Board.
8. The committee shall be comprised of all Charter Board members. In consultation with the Superintendent, the Charter Board may choose to contract an advisor to assist the Appeal Committee.
9. The Superintendent shall be a non-voting member of the Appeal Committee and shall be responsible to ensure the appeal process respects procedural fairness.
10. The Superintendent shall:
 - 10.1 convene a hearing of the Appeal Committee within ten (10) working days of being constituted;
 - 10.2 advise the parent, the student, where appropriate, and the Principal of the date, time and location of the hearing; and
 - 10.3 provide all parties with documentation relevant to the appeal in advance of the date of the appeal.

11. Prior to the date of the Appeal Committee hearing, the Superintendent shall meet with the appellant to review the School's documentation and to discuss the matter of the appeal. The appellant shall provide, in writing, information relative to the appeal and this information will be passed along to the Appeal Committee.
12. The following guidelines apply to a hearing of the Appeal Committee:
 - 12.1 The parties attending the hearing are the Appeal Committee members and advisor, if any, the Superintendent, the Principal, the appellant and any representative of the appellant.
 - 12.2 The Chairperson will chair the hearing.
 - 12.3 The Superintendent shall provide introductory comments as to the cause for the hearing and shall make reference to relevant sections of the School Act and Charter Board policy.
 - 12.4 The Principal shall speak to the subject matter of the appeal.
 - 12.5 The appellant and/or his/her representative shall be given the opportunity to speak to the subject matter of the appeal.
 - 12.6 The committee members, the Superintendent, the appellant and/or any representative may ask questions and discuss the matter with the parties in attendance.
 - 12.7 The committee shall adjourn and hold an in-camera meeting in order to reach its decision.
13. The Appeal Committee may:
 - 13.1 confirm, vary or quash the original decision, order or action of the Charter Board;
 - 13.2 direct that an additional investigation be undertaken, in which case, a similar time frame will apply;
 - 13.3 make any other finding it deems appropriate; or
 - 13.4 refer the matter to legal counsel.
14. The decision of the Appeal Committee shall be final. The Superintendent shall immediately communicate the decision and the committee's rationale, in writing, to the appellant and the Principal.
15. If the Charter Board makes a decision on appeal or otherwise, the student or parent may be entitled to request a review of the decision by the Minister pursuant to section 124 of the School Act.

Legal Reference: *School Act*, sections 123 and 124
Cross Reference: Charter Agreement, Clause 12(1.1)
Date of Approval: November 6, 2000
Date of Revision: December 5, 2003, November 17, 2008
Due for Review: November 2011



Hearings on Teacher Matters

The Superintendent may make a recommendation to the Charter Board to terminate a contract of employment with a teacher or to terminate a designation of a teacher. In terminating a contract of employment or a designation, the Charter Board shall act reasonably, which shall include providing an opportunity for the teacher to be heard.

The Charter Board or the Superintendent may suspend a teacher from the performance of the teacher's duties in accordance with section 105 of the *School Act*. The teacher may appeal such suspension to a Board of Reference. The Charter Board may make an investigation of the circumstances and may reinstate the teacher pursuant to sections 105(8) – 105(11) of the *School Act*, or it may terminate the contract of employment in accordance with section 107 of the *School Act*.

All actions taken by the Superintendent or the Charter Board under this policy shall be in accordance with applicable provisions of the *School Act*.

The Superintendent and the Charter Board shall at all times act reasonably with processes and procedures that respect the principles of natural justice.

Legal Reference: *School Act*, sections 104, 105, 107 & 109
Cross Reference:
Date of Approval: November 17, 2008
Date of Revision:
Due for Review: November 2011