



Governing Schools Towards Excellence

THE SECRETARY

WHO DOES WHAT








We are committed to provide functional and modern schools that enable quality teaching and learning to protect and promote the right of every learner to quality, equitable and relevant education.

"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world".

Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela

Icons (or symbols)

The following icons or symbols have been used to help you move through the material:

	Bright spark ideas icon	Anything out of the ordinary or special
	Do's icon	These are actions / tasks / activities that MUST be done. These are not 'nice-to-haves' but 'must haves'
	Don'ts icon	These are actions / tasks / activities that MUST NOT take place. Failure to not comply could lead to problems or issues.
	Hear this icon	Stories, scenarios and / or cases
	Think About icon	This is asking you, the SGB member, to think about an issue. It helps you think about issues in a new way.
	Tips icon	These are practical tips to be used
	Tools & Templates icon	This is to alert you to a tool or template that is available that will assist you in performing your duties.

Copyright © Matthew Goniwe School of Leadership and Governance (MGSLG)
Second edition 2018, first impression 2012

© All rights reserved. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of research, criticism or review as permitted under the Copyright Act, no part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying and recording, without permission in writing from the GDE.

THE CHAIRMAN

THE TRESURER

THE SECRETARY

THE PRINCIPAL

THE PARENT

THE LEARNER

THE EDUCATOR

THE NON EDUCATOR

THE CO-OPTED MEMBER

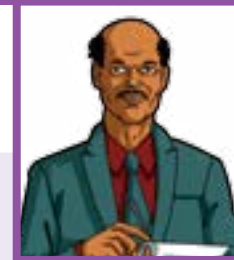
THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR



THE SECRETARY

The Secretary is the most important of the SGB. He/she must ensure that every member is informed about all meetings, the agenda for the meetings, and that all members have the information they require to make decisions at meetings.

Unit 4: The Secretary



Learning Outcomes

By the end of the Unit you should be able to:

- Know what can be expected from you as the Secretary
- Know what tools are available to help you
- Take minutes, draw up agendas, long-term schedule for meetings etc.



All Office-bearers cannot serve for more than 1 year without re-election.

The law says ...

A secretary:

- should be elected
- should be an office bearer
- can be an educator, non-educator, or parent / guardian
- cannot be a co-opted member

The following are responsibilities of the SGB that are taken on by the secretary:

- Ensure the SGB meets with parents, learners, educators and other staff at least once a year
- Record and keep minutes of governing body meetings
- Make minutes available for inspection by Head of Department

What can we expect from secretaries?

- To show commitment to help the SGB work effectively
- To keep the records of the SGB – minutes, documents, correspondence in and out, handover file etc.
- To work closely with, and report to the chairperson
- To communicate and share information with others (meetings, minutes, reports etc.)
- To prepare agendas, documents, minutes etc.

Skills of a Secretary

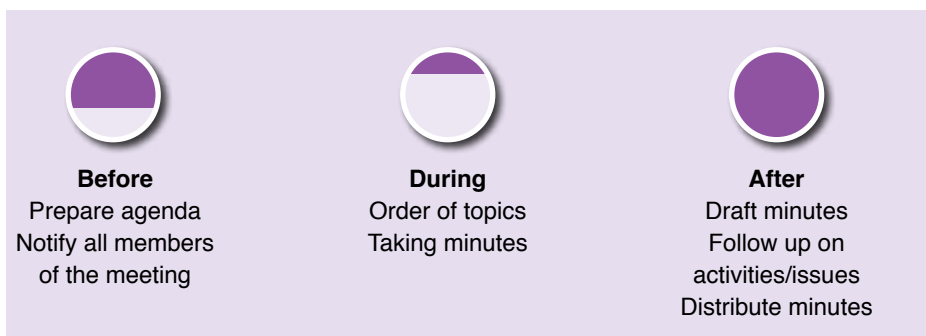
The following are skills a secretary needs:

- attention to detail
- knowledge of policies and procedures
- the ability to take notes (minutes) and write them up in a clear way
- the ability to maintain clear communication with all SGB members

What types of meetings do we have?

SGB Meetings	AGM	Special meetings
Executive meetings Sub-committee meetings One-on-one with chair and principal	Involves parents Once a year	Issue related/Urgent meetings Sub-committee meetings

Tasks before, during and after meetings



What must I do?



The organised secretary needs to know what documents need to be prepared for different stakeholders.

Documents			
Time span	Document contents	Purpose	Responsibility
Quarterly (This is the minimum depending on when meetings take place)	Minutes of SGB meetings	Record of discussions and decisions	Secretary
	Reports	Report on activities Present recommendations to SGB	Secretary Office-bearer / Sub-committee (if applicable)
Annually	SIP	Sets the annual improvement targets	SGB / SMT
	Annual report	Reports on school achievements	Principal
	Budget	Presented to SGB	Treasurer
	Audited financial statements	By June of the following year, to the DBE	SGB/Treasurer
Every three years	School Development Plan	Sets the vision, mission and plans for the 3 year term	Incoming SGB
	Handover file	Provides all information necessary for the incoming SGB	Outgoing SGB

What tools are available to help the secretary?

There are four templates that have been provided to help you perform the secretarial work, they are:

- Meeting Schedule
- Notice and Agenda
- Minutes of meetings
- AGM resolution (CD only)

1. Meeting Schedule

The template (hard copy and electronic) is to be used to develop a long-term schedule for meetings that can be circulated to all members

Term		Sub-Committee e.g. Property Admin		Sub-Committee e.g. Finance		Sub-Committee e.g. Another one		Sub-Committee e.g. Another one		Sub-Committee e.g. Another one		Sub-Committee e.g. Another one		Annual General Meeting with Parents		School Governing Body		First / Last Day of Term 2012	
		Date	Day	Date	Day	Date	Day	Date	Day	Date	Day	Date	Day	Date	Day	Date	Day		

intra school holidays

Term	Term	Term	Term	Term	Eir Sgoil Home
2012	1 Jan 21 Mar	1 Jul 1 0 Sep	1 Oct 1 0 Dec	1 0 Apr 10 Aug	
2011	0 Jan 20 Mar	0 Apr 21 Jun	0 0 Oct 1 0 Dec	1 0 1 0 Dec	
2011 DAFT	1 Jan 21 Mar	1 0 Apr 21 Jun	1 0 Jul -2 Sep	0 0 Oct 1 0 Dec	02 May



1. The schedule provided is for all governing body meetings, including meetings of sub-committees, with parents and with the governing body for a year.
2. Set up the governing body meetings (and sub-committee meetings) and Annual General Meeting (AGM) for the year by completing the templates. Indicate the Date and Day of meetings.
3. Insert sub-committee names into the spaces provided.
4. Indicate the first and last day of term in the space provided and the extra school holidays.
5. Let everyone know when the meetings will be at the beginning of the year (and the beginning and end of each term).
6. Remind SGB members of the meeting a week before when you send out the agenda and the day before.



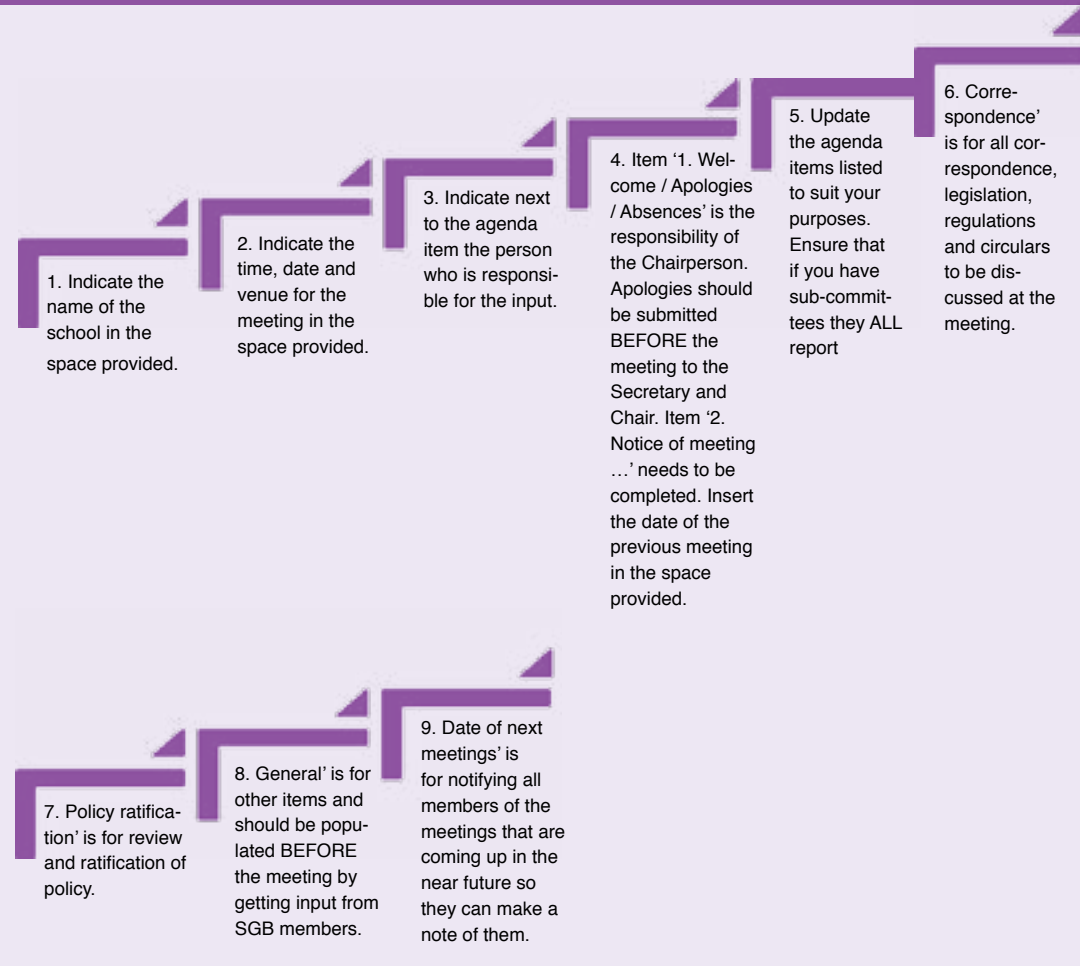
Tips

- Have at least two (2) SGB meetings a term (legislated that there must be one per term)
- To assist, schedule the meeting for the same week/date in a month (This will help people remember)
- Ensure that the time of the meeting is convenient to governing body members
- Send reminders (sms works well) to members a week before the meeting and then again on the day.
- This template is available in hard copy and electronically (on CD) – change it to suit your purposes

2. Notice and agenda. Drawing up an Agenda

The standard agenda that is offered in the Tools & Templates can be used as-is or adapted by the Secretary (or any sub-committee) to suit their purposes.

School				
NOTICE OF MEETING				
Notice is hereby given of the Governing Body meeting at				
Time				
Date				
Venue				
AGENDA				
				Person
1	Welcome / Apologies / Absences			
2	Notice of meeting and confirmation of minutes of the Governing Body meeting on _____			
3	Principals Report			
4	Sub-Committee Reports			
4.1				
4.2				
4.3				
4.4				
4.5				
4.6				
4.7				
4.8				
5	Correspondence			
6	Policy Ratification (with or without amendment) and Other Documents (see minutes for list)			
7	General			
8	Date of next meetings			
	Sub-committee	Day and Date	Time	Venue
9	Closure			



Tips

- Have a standard agenda format. This helps members to know what to expect and what they will need to prepare.
- Send out the agenda at least one week before the meeting.
- Collect agenda items. Add them in and discuss with the Principal and the Chairperson before the meeting.
- Make sure reports are submitted and sent to people before the meeting.
- Collect apologies and notify the Chair before the meeting. This allows the Chair to establish whether a quorum will be present or not for decision making purposes.

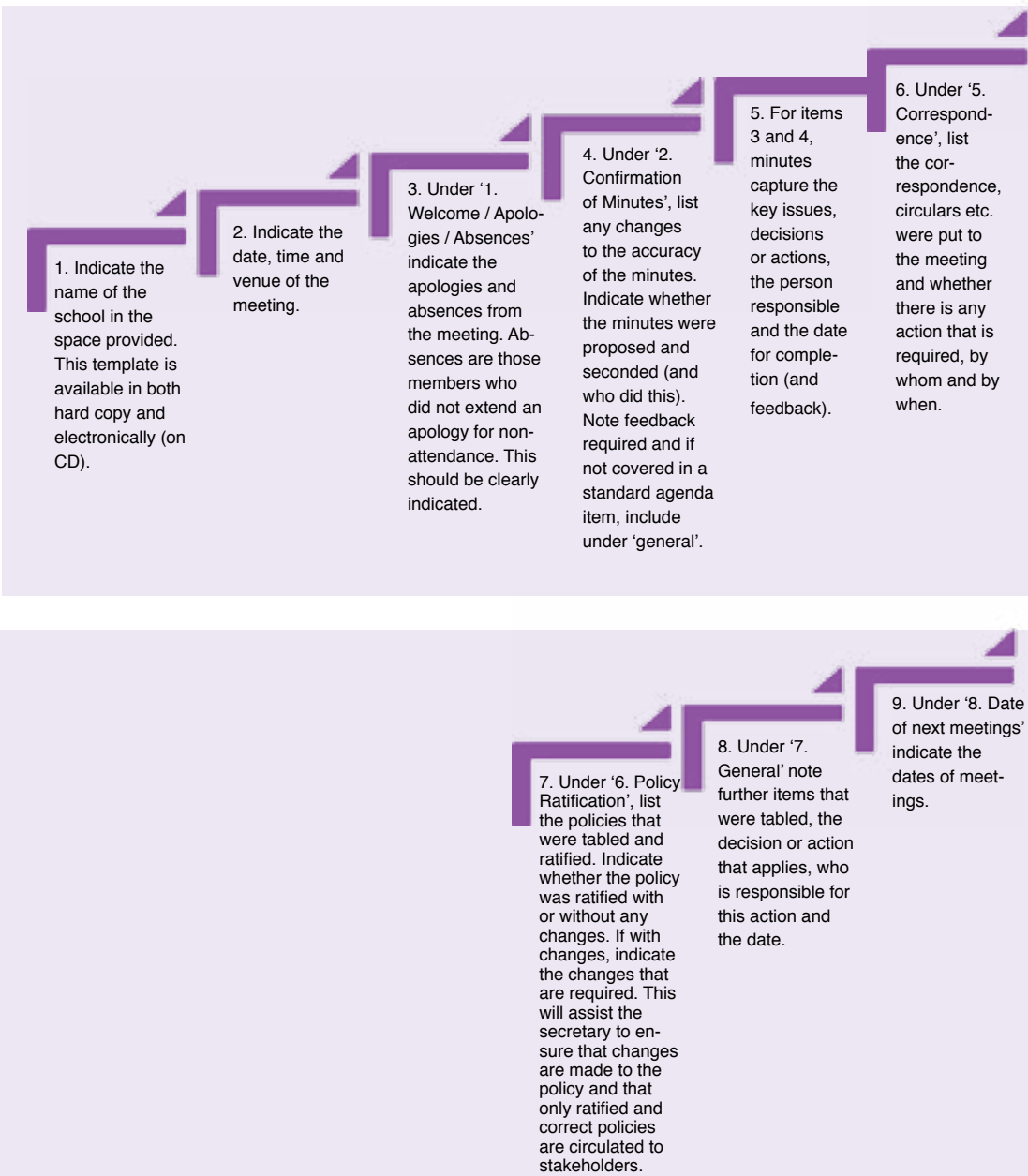
3. Minutes of Meeting

The Secretary needs to make sure that they keep accurate records of meetings because:

- They are a reminder of issues that must be followed up;
- They sort out arguments about previous decisions;
- They are a guide for the secretary and chairperson when drawing up the agenda for the next meeting;
- They help the governing body to learn from its past failures and successes, for example, when the secretary reflects on the minutes of the past year when drawing up an annual report.

School				
MINUTES OF MEETING				
Date		Time		Venue
1	Welcome / Apologies / Absences			
2	Confirmation of Minutes			
			Decision / Action	Responsible
3	Principals Report			
	If formal report presented, attach to minutes. Only capture key points around decisions			
4	Office Bearer / Sub-Committee Reports			
4.1	Sub-Committee Name			
	If formal report presented, attach to minutes. Only capture key points around decision			
4.2	Sub-Committee Name / office-bearer's name			
5	Correspondence			
6	Policy Ratification (with or without amendment / changes) and Other Documents (list)			
	Indicate policy, whether with or without changes			
7	General			
8	Date of next meetings			
	Sub-committee	Day and Date	Time	Venue
9	Closure			

The template (available in hard copy or from the CD) can be used by the Secretary to draft action minutes of the SGB meetings (or by sub-committees).





Tips

Difference between minutes of meetings and reports:

- The minutes of meetings **record decisions** at meetings and **actions** to be taken.
- **Reports** provide an **account of progress** on a project, recommendations on an investigation, or accountability for expenditure.

Some hints about taking minutes

- **Listening:** This is an important skill to develop. You must not only listen to what is being said, you must also make sure that you understand as well.
- **Taking notes:** Write down only the main points and the decisions taken. It is impossible to write down everything that is said.
- **Always try to identify the main points:**
 - What is **the** main aim of the discussion?
 - What information is important?
- **Use your own words.** If you do this you will find that your minutes are more accurate and complete than if you try to jot down everything a speaker says.
- **Pay special attention to decisions.** If necessary, ask for the decisions to be repeated.
- **Ask if you are not sure.** Do not hesitate to stop the meeting if you are not clear about any decisions or issues being discussed.
- **Prepare the minutes soon after the meeting.** People only act when they see their name in the minutes!
- **The following information should be included:**
 - Nature of meeting, date, time, venue
 - Names of those present
 - Names of visitors
 - Apologies
 - Summaries of decisions and discussions, including work to be followed up and people who have taken responsibility for certain tasks.
- The minutes should be written neatly in a special minute book or file, which should be kept safely and always available for reference at any time.
- Keep a register of attendance – get people to sign at the meeting
- Ensure that the minutes and the supporting documentation are filed in a safe place. This information must be kept for five (5) years.



Do's

- Circulate agendas at least one week before meetings (with reports) to allow people to read through and prepare
- Send out reminders of meetings to members – a week before and the day before
- During the meeting take notes that captures key decisions, actions, who is responsible, and due dates
- Present the draft minutes to the chairperson before distributing them to members
- Write all tasks in the minutes and note the person(s) responsible. Also note the due date for the task.
- Check a week before the next meeting that members have done their tasks – help those who have not been able to.
- Keep files and copies of all letters, documents and policies



Physical Address:

40 Hull Street
Vrededorp
Johannesburg
South Africa

Tel: +27 (11) 830 2200

Fax: +27 (11) 830 2201

Postal Address:

Postnet Suite 161
Private Bag X9
Melville
2109
South Africa



Matthew Goniwe
SCHOOL OF LEADERSHIP & GOVERNANCE

www.mgslg.co.za