

**TITLE: BOARD MEMBER AND STUDENT TRUSTEE EXPENSES AND
SUPPORT SERVICES**

Date Authorized: 30 January 1998

Last Revised: 24 June 2024

Last Reviewed: 24 June 2024

COMMITMENT TO INDIGENOUS RIGHTS, HUMAN RIGHTS, AND EQUITY

The Board recognizes its responsibility to ensure that OCDSB policies and procedures promote and protect Indigenous, equity, and human rights and to seek to address and eliminate racism and structural and systemic barriers for students, staff, and community.

1.0 RATIONALE

This policy was developed in support of legislative requirements under subsection 191.2 of the *Education Act* which authorizes the Board to develop policies:

- 1.1 To provide Board members and student trustees with resources to enable them to fulfill their corporate and constituency responsibilities.
- 1.2 To enable Board members and student trustees to claim reasonable expenses they incurred while carrying out their duties as a member of the Board for such items as professional development, communications, office supplies and services, hospitality and business travel.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

Please refer to Appendix A for a list of definitions of terms used in this policy.

3.0 POLICY

- 3.1 Board members and student trustees shall be provided with reasonable levels of staff support through Board Services for handling correspondence; preparing notices of motions or recommendations to the Board and/or its committees; research into previous Board discussions, positions or resolutions; making arrangements for travel on Board business or for purposes of professional development; small-scale photocopying and postal services; and any other reasonable support to enable them to carry out their normal duties and responsibilities as Board members and student trustees.
 - a) Staff research in support of proposed notices of motions or recommendations is

limited to materials already on file, except as the Board may otherwise direct.

- b) Surveys or communications to be distributed via students or staff shall only be undertaken under approved procedures, and not on behalf of individual Board members or student trustees.
- 3.2 The Board shall set aside annually a budget allocation for each Board member position and student trustee position to cover expenses incurred by the incumbent while carrying out their duties as a Board member or student trustee. This amount shall be equal for each member position and student trustee position.
 - 3.3 Each Board member and student trustee shall have the discretion to use these funds to cover the reasonable costs of professional development directly related to their role as elected officials, constituency communications, business travel, office supplies, business services and hospitality expenses incurred by the member while carrying out their duties as an elected representative.
 - 3.4 Costs incurred by a Board member or student trustee for mileage, taxi, parking, and public transit, within Ottawa shall be charged against a central account and not against the individual Board member allocation.
 - 3.5 Board members and student trustees who attend conferences, annual general meetings, meetings of other organizations, etc., as appointed representatives on behalf of the Board or representing the Board Chair shall have their expenses reimbursed centrally and not charged against individual Board members or student trustees expense allocations.
 - 3.6 Where a trustee sits as a Director of the Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) or where a student trustee sits as a Director of the Ontario Student Trustees' Association (OSTA-AECO), travel to a Director's meeting or to the Annual General Meeting of OPSBA or OSTA-AECO will be considered as travel on official Board business and not charged to the individual Board member or student trustee account.
 - 3.7 Board members and student trustees must submit an expense claim or original invoice in order to be reimbursed for any expenses incurred. Expense claims and original invoices must be submitted in the budget year the expense was incurred in accordance with the financial reporting requirements of the Board.
 - 3.8 Expense claims of individual board members and student trustees, directly related to their roles as elected officials, shall be authorized for payment by the Chair of the Board or designate. The General Manager of Board Services shall certify that the expense claims meet the requirements of Board policy and authorize the payment of the claim.

- 3.9 If there is a dispute about the eligibility of an expense, a member may appeal the decision in writing to the Audit Committee, outlining the issue, reasons for the expense, and the basis for the appeal. A trustee member of the Audit Committee who makes such an appeal shall not participate in the committee's deliberations on the appeal and shall not vote on the appeal. The decision of the Audit Committee shall be final.
- 3.10 The Associate Director of Business Operations shall certify the Chair of the Board's expense claim meets the requirements of Board policy and is directly related to their role as an elected official, to the Director of Education, and the Director of Education shall recommend for payment.
- 3.11 The Chair of the Board, or designate and the Director of Education, or designate shall certify all expenses incurred under the Board Development Fund.
- 3.12 With the approval of the Board, any deficits resulting from expenditures which exceed individual Board member allocation under this policy may be carried forward and deducted from the individual trustee budget of the following school year. Notwithstanding the above, in the last year of the term of office, the Board member shall repay any deficit that remains.
- 3.13 The District shall provide budgets to board members to meet in-year expenses in support of their elected responsibilities to the Board. Such budgets shall be utilized in the year they are provided. In exceptional circumstances, Trustees may request to carry forward unspent funds. Requests to carry forward unspent funds shall be submitted to the Associate Director of Business Operations before 31 August in any year and
- a) not exceed \$2,500;
 - b) in writing, outline the exceptional rationale for the request; and
 - c) in an election year, be used before the end of the board member's term of office.
- Student Trustees are not allowed to incur a deficit or to carry forward budget funds.
- 3.14 The Associate Director of Business Operations shall review and decide on appropriate justification for carry forward requests and submit these requests to the first Board meeting in the school year for Board approval.
- 3.15 In the fall of each year, a report detailing the expenses charged against Board member and student trustee accounts in the preceding fiscal year shall be filed with the Board in open public session for each member of the Board, and for the Board Development Fund. Such reports shall clearly identify the nature of the expenses and the total amount spent.

- 3.16 Board members and student trustees shall be provided on request with such additional office equipment (computer, printer) and office furnishings in accordance with Board standards as may reasonably be required to enable them to carry out their normal duties and responsibilities from a home office.
- 3.17 The costs of office equipment shall be funded centrally and not from the individual Board member account, except that where the equipment exceeds the standard board issue, the cost differential between the standard board issue and the equipment requested will be funded through the individual budget allocation.
- 3.18 Board members and student trustees shall be reimbursed at the approved rate of kilometrage for travel within the area of jurisdiction of the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board to attend meetings of the Board or its committees or related activities, to visit schools and/or to attend meetings with school councils, or to attend to similar constituency affairs. Additional expenses associated with such travel shall also be reimbursed within approved levels and in accordance with the relevant Board policies.
- 3.19 For the fiscal year in which a municipal election occurs, during the period from 1 September to the end of the Board's term of office (14 November), permissible expenditures by an incumbent Board member and permissible expenditures from the Board Development Fund shall not exceed twenty percent (20%) of the annual budget allocation plus one hundred percent (100%) of any carryforward from the previous fiscal year.
- 3.20 Any furnishings and equipment provided under this policy remain the property of the Board, to be returned at the end of the member's or student trustee's term or terms of office. Board members may request to purchase such furnishings and/or equipment. If their request is approved by the Director of Education they would be charged the fair market value costs as determined by the Director of Education.
- 3.21 Board members and student trustees shall not use their individual budget allocations to cover expenses such as legal fees, accounting fees, insurance premiums or other administrative or professional fees or expenses for personal or business services related to the business of the Board.
- 3.22 Any Board member or student trustee having specific accommodation needs to carry out their duties may request to charge associated costs to meet those needs to the Board's central account.
- 3.23 No expenses related to a municipal or student election campaign or any electoral costs shall be charged to any Board account.

- 3.24 Board members and student trustees shall not use their member budget to purchase, donate, or gift items or services donate funds or gifts to any organizations or individuals, including community groups, charities, schools, school councils, students, student organizations, political campaigns or political parties.
- 3.25 Board members and student trustees shall not use their budget allocation for self-promotion. Self-promotion includes:
- a) advertising for personal financial gain;
 - b) the production and distribution of novelty items which contain the Board member's name (e.g., personalized pens, pencils, magnets, keychains, banners, signs, plaques, balloons, etc.); and
 - c) public communications that contain only Board member identifiers or contact information without any substantive information (e.g., details about the operations of the OCDSB, its programs, upcoming special events, new OCDSB initiatives).

Business cards and newsletters are not considered to be self-promotion.

- 3.26 The Director of Education is authorized to issue such procedures as may be necessary to implement this policy.

4.0 APPENDICES

Appendix A: Policy Definitions

5.0 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

[Education Act](#), R.S.O. 1998, § 191.2

[Ontario Regulation 7/07](#), § 4

[Broader Public Sector Expenses Directive](#)

OCDSB Policy [P.017.GOV Student Trustees](#)

OCDSB Policy [P.003.GOV Board Member And Student Trustee Professional Development And Constituency Communications](#)

OCDSB Policy [P.039.FIN: Expense Policy](#)

OCDSB Policy [P.122.GOV Election Activities](#)

OCDSB Procedure [PR.529.FIN: Expense Procedure](#)

OCDSB Procedure [PR.503.GOV: Trustee Expenses for Professional Development, Constituency Communications and Support Services](#)

APPENDIX A: POLICY DEFINITIONS

In this policy,

Board means the Board of Trustees of the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board.

Board Member means a member of the Board elected or appointed in accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act* and the *Education Act*.

District means the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (OCDSB).

Student Trustees means the three elected student representatives to the Board, including one Indigenous Student Trustee and two Student Trustees who represent all pupils of the District.

Trustee means a member of the Board elected or appointed in accordance with the *Ontario Municipal Elections Act* and the *Ontario Education Act*.