DDSB Ignite Learning

POLICY

Finance (FIN)

P FIN 10

Title: **Trustee Expense Policy**
Adopted: April 18, 2005
Effective: April 18, 2005
Amended/Reviewed: November 12, 2026

1.0 RATIONALE

As elected officials, school board Trustees are guardians of the public trust. The establishment of a Trustee expense policy promotes financial integrity, accountability and transparency all of which improve public confidence in Ontario's public education system.

2.0 OBJECTIVE

The objective of this policy is to establish the parameters for reimbursement of eligible expenses incurred by Trustees in the course of their duties.

3.0 DEFINITIONS

In this Policy,

3.1 Board refers to the Board of Trustees for Durham District School Board.

3.2 Trustees refer to all members of the Board either elected or appointed, including student trustees for the purposes of this policy.

3.3 District refers to the corporate entity of Durham District School Board.

3.4 Staff refer to any individual who is employed by Durham District School Board

4.0 RESPONSIBILITY

4.1 **Trustees**: Trustees are responsible for setting the strategic direction of the Board and developing and maintaining policies. They are also responsible for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of policies developed by the Board in supporting the Multi-Year Strategic Plan.

4.2 **Chief Executive Officer (CEO)**: The operations of the District are the responsibility of the Chief Executive Officer (and designates) and include measures to operationalize and ensure compliance with Board policies by adopting and implementing appropriate procedures and by providing professional learning and training to staff to support implementation. A focus on enhancing understanding of Indigenous rights, human rights, anti-oppression, anti-racism and anti-discrimination, and addressing discriminatory assumptions, stereotypes, biases, barriers, experiences and outcomes is required. The CEO may delegate operational responsibilities to appropriate staff as required.

5.0 APPLICATION AND SCOPE

This policy applies to Trustees and establishes parameters for expenditures that are eligible for reimbursement when incurred in their role as Trustee as defined under section 218.1 of the Education Act.

6.0 POLICY STATEMENT

6.1 On an annual basis, Trustees shall establish and approve an appropriate budget for Trustee expenses as part of the established budget process for the District.

6.2 For the duration of a Trustee's term in office, their expenses shall be posted publicly on the Durham District School Board website on a quarterly basis, based on approved expense claims.

6.3 Reimbursable expenses are those that are directly related to Board business and may be claimed for reimbursement in accordance with applicable legislation, Ministry directives and the Procedure adopted under this Policy, as may be amended from time to time. The Procedure shall align with procedures for District staff, with appropriate modification to apply to Trustees. All claims for reimbursement of expenses must be submitted within three weeks of the fiscal year end to be eligible for reimbursement.

6.4 The following rules apply to define expenses related to Board business:

6.4.1 Community Expenses

i. Donations to political or community activities or charitable/fundraising events are not eligible for reimbursement;

ii. Attendance at community activities or other similar events as a representative of the Board are eligible for reimbursement when approved in advance by the Board;

6.4.2 Where it is not practical to obtain pre-approval to attend community events or other similar events as a representative of the Board, mileage may still be eligible for reimbursement if approved by the Board at the first public meeting of the Board following the event.

6.4.3 Gifts

i. Gifts are generally not provided by individual Trustees.

6.4.4 Communications, Technology, Office

i. A cell phone shall be provided to any Trustee that requests it. Costs associated with the provided cell phone, replacement, and refresh cycle will be subject to the same terms as for District staff;

ii. For those Trustees that do not request that a cell phone be provided by the District, the monthly cost of a cell phone shall be eligible for reimbursement, up to $100 per month, excluding taxes. If appropriate cellular coverage is not available at the Trustee's primary residence, the cost of one dedicated telephone line to the

primary residence (including call answering and call display services) for the purpose of Board business is eligible for reimbursement;

iii. Long distance calls related to Board business are eligible for reimbursement. The cost of personal long distance and fax calls are not eligible;

iv. The cost of a high-speed internet connection to the Trustee's primary residence is eligible for reimbursement;

v. To facilitate communication with the Board, its schools and the community through access to the Board's network and e-mail system and the Internet, a board-standard laptop computer and related computer equipment/supplies (printer, paper, replacement printer cartridges, and Office suite of software) shall be provided by the District to each Trustee for use during their term. Personal purchases of such items are not eligible for reimbursement;

vi. At the end of the Trustees' term, all District issued equipment shall be returned,;

vii. Other supplies related to the role of Trustee (i.e. business cards, office supplies) shall be provided by the District on the same terms as for District staff. Personal purchases of such items are not eligible for reimbursement;

6.4.5 Professional Memberships, Conferences and Workshops

i. The board will not incur or reimburse expenses for Board members to pay membership fees in a Trustee Association or similar professional association.

ii. The board will not incur or reimburse expenses for Board members to attend or participate in a discretionary event or activity. This includes registration fees and travel, meal, accommodation and hospitality expenses.

iii. A discretionary event or activity is one where a Board member's attendance or participation is not essential to the Board's core business operations and expenses are incurred by choice rather than operational necessity. This includes:

a. professional development activities provided by external organizations

b. professional associations' or sector organizations' events or activities

c. education-related symposiums, conferences and conventions

6.5 Approved Trustee expenses shall be paid in accordance with regular practices for District staff and the Procedure adopted under this Policy.

7.0 POLICY DIRECTIVES

7.1 Only the Board of Trustees may adopt, revise or rescind a policy.

7.2 In addition to the evaluation timeline included in section 8.0 below, when applicable provincial legislation, regulation, or Ministry directives change, this policy and related procedures must be reviewed and updated accordingly.

7.3 Policy implementation will be a shared responsibility between Trustees and staff, as highlighted in section 4.0 above.

7.4 This policy must be interpreted, applied, and implemented in ways that uphold Indigenous and human rights and responsibilities, promote accessibility, and prevent and address (and do not reinforce) discrimination/discriminatory barriers.

a. All policies must undergo an equity and accessibility review using the DDSB Human Rights Impact Assessment Tool (HRIA) prior to approval.
b. Policy implementation responsibilities shall be clearly assigned to departments or roles to ensure accountability and transparency.
c. Policies must include a process for monitoring implementation and outcomes to ensure effectiveness and inform future review.
d. When provincial legislation, regulation, or Ministry directives change, related policies and procedures must be reviewed and updated accordingly.
e. Archived or rescinded policies shall be retained for public record and reference in accordance with DDSB's records management standards.

8.0 EVALUATION

This policy shall be monitored on an ongoing basis and formally evaluated every five years to ensure continued relevance, effectiveness, and alignment with DDSB's strategic priorities and legislative requirements.

9.0 COMMUNICATION

This policy will be published on the DDSB public website in an accessible format and shared with relevant DDSB community members and education partners.

10.0 APPENDICES

None.

11.0 REFERENCES

- Trustee Expense Procedure (PR FIN 10-01)
- Education Act 191.2