



POLICY

FINANCE (FIN)

P FIN 10

Title: **Trustee Expense Policy**

Adopted: 2005-04-18

Effective: 2005-04-19

Amended/Reviewed:

2006-08-08

2009-11-16

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2017-11-29

2021-05-17

2026-01-19

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

3.3 Staff refers 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 Director of Education: The operations of the District are the responsibility of the Director of Education (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 Director 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 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;
 - iii. 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.
 - 6.4.2 Gifts
 - i. Gifts are generally not provided by individual Trustees.

6.4.3 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. Cell phone costs incurred for Board business above \$100 per month are eligible for reimbursement as a discretionary expense (under clause 6.4.5 below);
- iii. 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;
- iv. Long distance calls related to Board business are eligible for reimbursement. The cost of personal long distance and fax calls are not eligible;
- v. The cost of a high-speed internet connection to the Trustee's primary residence is eligible for reimbursement;
- vi. 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;
- vii. At the end of the Trustees' term, all District issued equipment shall be returned, or may be purchased by the Trustee for fair value;
- viii. 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;

6.4.4 Conferences and Workshops

- i. Trustees are entitled to claim reimbursement for reasonable expenses incurred in attending Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) events, including the Annual General meeting, the Provincial Education Symposium, the Labour Relations Symposium, the Mental Health Symposium, and Regional Meetings;

- ii. Trustees who choose not to attend OPSBA events in a fiscal year may instead be entitled to reimbursement of up to a total of \$1,000 per year to attend alternate professional development sessions relevant to the role of Trustee, when pre-approved by resolution of the Board in public session. Reimbursement under this section is in addition to any reimbursement claimed under section 6.4.5 Discretionary.
- iii. Student Trustees are entitled to claim reimbursement for reasonable expenses incurred in attending four annual Ontario Student Trustees' Association – l'Association des Eleves conseillers et conseillieres de l'Ontario (OSTA-AECO) conferences;

6.4.5 Discretionary

A Trustee is entitled to reimbursement of up to a total of \$1,000 per year for:

- i. Expenses incurred for attendance at Professional Development sessions or Conferences, provided the attendance has been pre-approved by resolution of the Board in public session; and;
- ii. Childcare expenses incurred in order to attend Board or committee meetings; and
- iii. Cellphone expenses as stipulated in clause 6.4.3 ii. above.

6.5 Approved Trustee expenses shall be paid in accordance with regular practices for District staff and the Procedure adopted under this Policy. A Trustee has the right to submit a request for reimbursement of any disallowed expense directly to the Board for re-consideration and potential approval under this Policy at any public meeting of the Board.

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.

8.0 EVALUATION

This policy shall be evaluated every five years to ensure relevance, effectiveness, and alignment with DDSB's strategic priorities and legislative requirements.

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

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

10. APPENDICES

None

11. REFERENCES

- 11.1 Trustee Expense Procedure
- 11.2 Education Act 191.2