



Employee Expense

Date Approved: 2017

Projected Review Date: 2021

Page 1 of 10

PURPOSE:

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB) believes in reimbursing personnel for reasonable expenses incurred while on Board business.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

The Board is committed to:

- ensuring sound business practices are employed;
- accountability for the use of public funds is maintained;
- the Board's reputation and integrity as a public employer is protected;
- are compliant with Ministry of Education School Board Expenditure Guidelines (2006: B15) and the Broader Public-Sector Expenses Directive (2011); and
- ensuring expenses are associated with employee's duties, support the program objectives of the organization, and maximize the benefits to the Board.

The overriding principle is that personnel shall be reimbursed for reasonable expenses incurred on authorized Board business in accordance with this policy.

INTENDED OUTCOMES:

- Staff who incur expenses while performing their duties on behalf of the Board are reimbursed in a fair, consistent and transparent manner.
- Board or School Generated Funds are used to obtain maximum value for each dollar spent consistent with the educational goals of the Board and fair business principles.
- That all expenses paid by cheque or petty cash funds are consistent with the educational goals of the Board and fair business principles.
- Ensure compliance with Ministry of Education School Board Expenditure Guidelines (2006: B15).
- Ensure compliance with the Broader Public-Sector Expenses Directive.

RESPONSIBILITY:

Director of Education
Members of Executive Council

TERMINOLOGY:

Broader Public Sector Expenses: Sets out the requirement for the designated Broader Public Sector organizations to establish expense rules where expenses are reimbursed from public funds.



Employee Expense

Date Approved: 2017

Projected Review Date: 2021

Page 2 of 10

Employee: All individuals who agree to work on a full-time or part-time basis for HWDSB for a specified or indeterminate period of time. Salary or wages are paid to this individual and from this payment, deductions are taken for Canada Pension Plan, Income Taxes and Employment Insurance.

Ministry of Education School Board Expenditure Guidelines: The purpose of the guidelines is to define a province-wide standard intended for both trustees and school board staff that addresses the following areas of school board expenditure:

- use of corporate credit cards
- travel, meals and hospitality,
- advertising
- advocacy

School Council Expenditures: School councils are established under the authority of the *Education Act*. Section 22 of Ontario Regulation 612/00 provides for school councils to engage in fundraising activities. All expenditures must be conducted in accordance with Board policies, Ministry guidelines and municipal regulations. School Council activities must also align with the Annual School Fundraising Plan, prepared by the Principal. Section 24 requires that the school council prepare and submit to the board an annual report on its activities, including fundraising activities.

School Generated Funds: Funds that are raised and collected in the school or broader community in the name of the school, by school councils or other school or parent administered groups (with the exception of funds raised by the Ontario Home and School Associations).

School generated funds are administered by the school principal and are raised or collected from sources other than HWDSB's operating and capital budgets. These sources include proceeds from fundraising activities, fees for supplementary learning materials and activities, athletics/clubs, educational excursions, and donations for initiatives such as a school nutrition program.

School generated funds is a broad category which includes not only fundraising for school purposes, but also all funds that are collected and paid out through school accounts to support a variety of programs such as payments to charities or other third parties.

ACTION REQUIRED:

Appropriate Approvals

Reimbursement of expenses to an employee requires, among other conditions, the expense to have the proper approval.

For payments made from School Generated Funds, the procedures outlined in the Procedures for School Generated Funds must be followed.



Employee Expense

Date Approved: 2017

Projected Review Date: 2021

Page 3 of 10

For School Council Expenditures, the Chair or Treasurer of the School Council must approve the expense as well as the Principal.

Role of the Approver

The role of the approver is to provide approval and be accountable only for expenses that:

- meet all Board policies and procedures;
- are incurred on behalf of Board business;
- are properly supported by appropriate documentation, including original, itemized receipts;
- can be paid within existing available budgets.

In addition, employees cannot approve their own expenses, even if they are the one responsible for their budget.

Prior Approval

Approval must be obtained from the employee's supervisor or principal, prior to incurring costs (including mileage and travel costs) which require reimbursement back to the employee.

For out-of-province travel, written approval must be obtained from the Director or designate prior to arrangements being made for the travel. Included in this approval must be an estimated total cost of the travel, along with outlining the reason for the travel and its anticipated benefits.

Conference or Professional Development Activity

Conferences, conventions, seminars, workshops or other professional development activity occurring over the course of more than one day, are subject to prior approval by the employee's Supervisory or Executive Officer, and budget availability.

Conferences, conventions, seminars, workshops or other professional development activity occurring over the course of one day or less, are subject to prior approval by the employee's Principal or Manager and budget availability.

All costs associated with a conference, etc. or professional development activity are to be charged against the appropriate staff development budget: registration, replacement coverage, meals, accommodation, travel and other.

Employees are encouraged to travel by the most economical mode whenever feasible. For distances in excess of a radius of 150 km, the Board will reimburse the lesser of the cost for a private automobile or the economy rate for air, train or bus fare.



Employee Expense

Date Approved: 2017

Projected Review Date: 2021

Page 4 of 10

Transfer fees to and from transportation terminals at points of departure and arrival by the most economically feasible method, including parking, are eligible costs.

Shared transportation is encouraged when appropriate.

Registration Fees

Advance discounts should be realized on registration fees where possible.

Accommodation

Where overnight accommodation is required, reimbursement will be made for the employee's accommodation in a standard room, reasonable parking and telephone costs will be recognized for reimbursement. Reimbursements will not be made for personal or recreational items (e.g., rented movies, mini-bar).

Travel Outside of the Province

For authorized travel outside of the Province, the procedures noted in this policy are to be followed. However, it is recognized that the costs of meals and hospitality outside of the Province may differ from those in the Province. The employee is to ensure the costs incurred for meals and hospitality are reasonable and appropriate. Itemized, detailed receipts are required. Alcoholic purchases will not be reimbursed.

Mileage

Travel distance by private automobile shall be measured between the employee's regular place of employment and the location to which the employee travelled. If the employee travels to various locations during the day, travel shall be calculated from the last location to the next location.

Travel costs by private automobiles will be reimbursed for kilometres travelled based on the Canada Revenue Agency non-taxable mileage rate. Mileage rates will be reviewed annually in September and will be updated in the Employee Expense Policy Procedure as well as displayed on the Business Services' web-portal.

Shared transportation is encouraged when appropriate.

Reimbursement for travel is not eligible for attendance at the following Board organized activities:

- School sponsored activities: field trips, athletic events, etc.;
- School department head meetings;



Employee Expense

Date Approved: 2017

Projected Review Date: 2021

Page 5 of 10

- Professional development activities on teacher P.D. days as identified in the school year calendar;
- Participation in School and Department meetings and activities;
- Unauthorized travel;
- Travel between home and regular place of employment.

Reimbursement will not be provided (nor will payment be made) for traffic or parking violations.

It is expected that authorized travel and mileage claims are submitted to Accounting on a monthly basis, and must be submitted to Accounting within 90 days of their occurrence. Claims for travel and mileage older than 90 days will not be paid unless there is a written explanation for the delay which has been approved by the supervisor. (see Year-End Exception in section 4.15 Claim Procedures).

Meals

The reimbursement rate for meals will be reviewed annually in September and will be updated in the Employee Expense Policy Procedure as well as displayed on the Business Services' web-portal. The posted rates include taxes and gratuities and are in Canadian dollars.

Meal rates are not to be combined; the sole exception is for lunch and dinner meals on the same day. If both lunch and dinner meals are claimed on the same day, the employee is allowed to add the two rates together to cover the two meals.

Where a meal is included as part of a professional event (e.g., conference, workshop, etc.), the meal entitlement will not apply. Exceptions, such as for a dietary restriction, may be reviewed with the approver.

The original, detailed receipt(s) must accompany the reimbursement request, along with the completion of the hospitality section of the Board's Expense Form.

Alcohol cannot be claimed and will not be reimbursed.

It is expected that authorized claims for meals are submitted to Accounting on a monthly basis, and must be submitted to Accounting within 90 days of their occurrence. Claims for expenses older than 90 days will not be paid unless there is a written explanation for the delay which has been approved by the supervisor. (See Year-End Exception in section 4.15 Claim Procedures).

Alcohol

Reimbursement for purchases of alcohol is not allowed. This includes:

- Alcohol consumed at a meal, event, conference, etc.



Employee Expense

Date Approved: 2017

Projected Review Date: 2021

Page 6 of 10

- Bottles of wine or other spirits, given as a gift or honorarium
- LCBO, Beer Store, wine store etc. gift certificates or gift cards, given as a gift or honorarium

In addition, the purchase of these items on Board purchasing cards or Board credit cards is not permitted.

Hospitality

Hospitality is the provision of food, beverages, accommodation, transportation, token gifts of appreciation or other amenities at Board expense to persons outside of the Board.

- Hospitality should be extended in an economical, consistent and appropriate way when it will facilitate Board business or is considered desirable as a matter of courtesy. The guidelines for meals and gifts listed herein are to be followed.
- An employee of the Board may only accept infrequent and reasonable hospitality and may only accept infrequent and reasonable business gifts with a value of \$30 or less, (excluding taxes and local delivery costs). The frequency and nature of gifts or hospitality shall not be allowed to be such that the recipient might be, or might be deemed by others, to have been influenced in making a business decision as a consequence of accepting such gift or hospitality.

Gifts of Appreciation

Token gifts of appreciation, valued at up to \$30 (excluding taxes and local delivery charges) may be extended to non-Board staff in exchange for pro bono services, including those provided at professional development events and must be approved by the employee's supervisor. Gift valued above \$30 must be justified and approved by the Superintendent of Business or designate; at the school level, by the Principal.

- "Gifts" include flowers, cards, gift certificates, gift cards, etc. but may not include cash or cheques.
- Alcohol may not be given as a gift (i.e. bottles of wine or other spirits, gift certificates for the LCBO, Beer Store or wine stores, etc.).

For gift certificates and gift cards, refer to the Board's procedures on Gift Cards and Gift Certificates.

External Consultants and Contractors

Contracts for external consultants or contractors hired by the Board must provide direction on claiming for reimbursement of expenditures incurred. Under no circumstances can hospitality, food or incidental expenses be considered allowable expenses.



Employee Expense

Date Approved: 2017

Projected Review Date: 2021

Page 7 of 10

Unallowable Expenditures for Board, School Generated and School Council Funds

The Board will not reimburse staff for the following expenditures:

- Personal expenses
- Alcoholic purchases including:
 - alcohol consumed at a meal, event, conference, etc.;
 - bottles of wine or other spirits as a gift/honorarium;
 - LCBO, Beer Store, wine store, etc. gift certificates as a gift/honorarium.
- Goods and services purchased from Board employees;
- Charges for use of, or memberships in, recreational/fitness facilities;
- Season tickets to cultural or sporting events
- In-room movie rentals and mini-bar charges;
- Charges incurred by spouse or other family members;
- Parking or traffic violations;
- Automobile expenses, since these are reimbursed on a per kilometre basis;
- Expenses for hospitality, unless specifically allowed by this Policy;
- Supporting a fundraiser or event for a specific political party;
- Purchase of travel gift certificates;
- Lavish gifts (i.e. expenditures over \$30).

Board Funds cannot be used to fund:

- Gifts (including cards and/or flowers) for secretary's day, boss' day, etc.;
- Gifts (including cards and/or flowers), for staff members or their immediate families due to births, adoption, illness, retirements, marriage, birthdays, or other life events. These are considered personal and are not reimbursable. A staff fund or collection from personal funds should pay for these types of expenditures. The exception is the death of a staff member or a member of their immediate family; the gift of condolence cannot exceed \$75, including taxes, delivery charges, etc. (for gift certificates and gift cards, refer to the Board's procedures on Gift Certificates and Gift Cards.);
- Cultural events such as holiday lunches or parties; retirement parties; year-end celebrations; school start up celebrations or other festive occasions (the exception is if specific funds have been provided through the Board's Budget for events such as school openings, anniversary celebrations, or other events);
- Gifts to staff (including cards and/or flowers) for birthday, holiday or other cultural events



Employee Expense

Date Approved: 2017

Projected Review Date: 2021

Page 8 of 10

Cash Advances for Expenses

Cash advances are not permitted. In unusual circumstances, the approval of the Superintendent of Business or designate is required for cash advances for the payment of what would be authorized expenditures incurred while on Board business. At the school level, the approval of the Principal is required prior to issuing school generated funds for cash advances for the payment of authorized expenditures. For School Council funds, the authorization of the Chair or Treasurer of the School Council is also required.

Credit Card or Reward Card Advantages

The use of a personal credit card or reward card is prohibited in cases where it is for more than normal business or conveys undue benefit to the employee.

Claim Procedures

Claims for expense reimbursement, including supporting documentation, are to be submitted for approval to the employee's supervisor, using the Board's Expense Claim Form. This form must be signed by the employee and supervisor before submission to Accounting for payment.

Along with the required original, detailed receipt (a debit/credit card receipt is not acceptable as it does not give sufficient detail to authorize the payment nor meet audit requirements), supporting documentation is also required as follows:

- For meeting or hospitality expenses that include meals, the names of the individuals and the business purpose for the expense
- For P.D. events run by the Board, the number of individuals attending the event and the name and date of the event
- For P.D. events not run by the Board, if there is more than one meal on the receipt, the names of the individuals and the business purpose for the additional expense
- For hospitality or gifts, include the event, and reason for the hospitality or gift
- Other documentation may be requested

It is expected that authorized expense claims are submitted to Accounting on a monthly basis, and must be submitted to Accounting within 90 days of their occurrence. Claims for expenses older than 90 days will not be paid unless there is a written explanation for the delay which has been approved by the supervisor. (see Year-End exception below).

Claims covering more than one month can be submitted however may not be paid in a timely manner.



Employee Expense

Date Approved: 2017

Projected Review Date: 2021

Page 9 of 10

Year-End Exception

Expense claims (including mileage) must be received by Accounting by the cut-off date indicated in the Year-End Procedures Memo. If the claim is received after that date, the claim may not be processed for that budget year and may be charged to the next budget year. In addition, the claim may not be paid in a timely manner and may be paid after completion of the year-end audit.

Exceptional Circumstances

It is noted that there may be exceptional circumstances that fall outside of this policy. For those exceptions to the policy, written authorization by the Chair, Director of Education, or Superintendent of Business is required.

PROGRESS INDICATORS:

Intended Outcomes	Assessment
Staff who incur expenses while performing their duties on behalf of the Board are reimbursed in a fair, consistent and transparent manner.	Reimbursements are made in a fair, consistent and transparent manner.
Board or School Generated Funds are used to obtain maximum value for each dollar spent consistent with the educational goals of the Board and fair business principles.	An annual external audit is conducted to ensure maximum value is obtained and the spending of funds are consistent with the goals of the Board and fair business principles through this and the Procurement Policy.
That all expenses paid by cheque or petty cash funds are consistent with the educational goals of the Board and fair business principles.	An annual external audit is conducted to ensure reimbursed expenses are properly supported and meet the educational goals of the Board and fair business principles.
Ensure compliance with Ministry of Education School Board Expenditure Guidelines (2006: B15).	This policy be assessed against the Ministry Expenditure Guidelines.
Ensure compliance with the Broader Public-Sector Expenses Directive.	This policy will be assessed against the Broader Public-Sector Expenses Directive.

REFERENCES:

Government Documents

Ministry of Education Expenditure Guidelines

Broader Public Sector Expenses Directive (2011)

Travel, Meal and Hospitality Expenses Directive, Province of Ontario



Employee Expense

Date Approved: 2017

Projected Review Date: 2021

Page 10 of 10

HWDSB Policies

Finance and Administration Pillar

Trustee Expense

Procurement