

GENERAL INFORMATION

Student Trustees

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board supports the election of Student Trustees, as per the provisions for the position set out in the *Education Act*, subsection 55 (1) which states: “*The Minister may make regulations providing for elected student trustees to represent, on district school boards and on boards established under section 67, the interests of pupils in the last two years of the intermediate division and in the senior division.*”

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board is committed to hearing the voices of the student population through the elected student trustees on an annual basis and appreciates that the student perspective is considered in the decisions of the members of the Board of Trustees, and provides our students with valuable learning opportunities and experiences.

This document shall be in accordance with Ontario Regulation 7/07, made under the *Education Act*, and with any policies and guidelines established by the Minister under paragraph 3.5 of subsection 8 (1) of the *Act*.

1. Number of Students

Two student trustees will be elected to represent the interests and voices of all students across the district.

2. Eligibility

A student is qualified to act as a student trustee if he or she is enrolled in a senior division with HWDSB and is,

- a) a full-time pupil or
- b) an exceptional pupil in a special education program for whom the board has reduced the length of the instructional program on each school day under subsection 3 (3) of Regulation 298 of the revised Regulations of Ontario, 1990 (Operation of Schools – General) made under the Act
- c) if under the age of 18, provide written confirmation of support and acknowledgement of their responsibilities from their parent/guardian/caregiver
- d) commit the necessary time to attend meetings and perform the duties and responsibilities of a student trustee
- e) sign a Declaration (Appendix A) agreeing to follow the rules of the Board of Trustees, represent the voices of the entire student population to the best of their

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ability and to maintain confidentiality with respect to board business dealt with in closed sessions of the board and/or committee meetings

3. Disqualification

A student trustee who ceases to be qualified, must resign from the position. The Officer of Trustee Services and Superintendent responsible for student trustees will monitor the student trustees' qualifications and advise the Chair of the Board should any concerns arise during the student's term of office.

A student Trustee will not be qualified to act as a Student Trustee if he or she,

- a) is not a full-time pupil of the board
- b) is suspended or expelled
- c) is serving a sentence of imprisonment in a penal or correctional institution
- d) is absent from three consecutive regular Board meetings without approval
- e) if confidentiality requirements are breached

4. Honorarium and Term of Office

- a) Student Trustees shall receive an honorarium of \$2,500 per annum, prorated as necessary when required
- b) The term of office for student trustees shall be one year commencing August 1 to and including July 31 of the following year

5. Responsibilities

- a) To regularly attend Board and Standing Committee meetings including closed sessions. Student trustees are excused from discussions in which the subject matter includes intimate, personal or financial information of a member of the Board or committee, an employee or prospective employee of the board or a pupil or his or her parent(s), guardian(s) or caregiver(s)
- b) Will participate with other trustees in discussion, and represent students' positions during such discussions at the Board table
- c) To be knowledgeable about, and comply with the statements, procedures, etc. contained in the Governance Handbook, including the Trustee Code of Conduct

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- d) To maintain standing in or be co-chair of Student Senate
- e) To serve as a student liaison on behalf of the Board at events such as community events, provincial student conferences, and other Board activities, as appropriate
- f) Will report the work of the student trustees both from a local level and from a provincial level through oral reports at monthly Board meetings

6. Conferences and Expenses

- a) Student trustees may attend all Ontario School Trustees' Association (OSTA) conferences, when possible
- b) When travel is required outside the jurisdiction of the Board when carrying out the responsibilities of a student trustee, and when under the age of 18, parental consent is required
- c) Any expenses incurred for conferences or otherwise reasonably incurred in connection with carrying out the duties of student trustee will be reimbursed

7. Mentors and Orientation

- a) HWDSB Board of Trustees will appoint one Trustee to act as mentor to coach and guide student trustees in their general activities related to the school board.
- b) Table mentors will be assigned to student trustees to sit with and advise during Board meetings
- c) Orientation for the newly-elected student trustees* shall be provided by the Trustee Mentor, outgoing student trustees, Officer of Trustee Services and Superintendent responsible for student trustees. Orientation sessions will take place prior to the end of the term of the outgoing student trustees and throughout the school year. During their term, student trustees may request additional information or assistance, as required.

**if the incoming student trustee(s) are under the age of 18, the parent/guardian/caregiver will be invited to attend the initial meeting*

8. Access to Board Resources

Student trustees have the same access to professional development opportunities, conference, etc., as provided to Board members. The student trustees shall have the same

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access to material and information as Trustees to allow for participation at meetings of the Board and at meetings of committees of the Board.

9. Conflict of Interest

Since student trustees are not members of the board, the conflict of interest provisions in the *Municipal Conflict of Interest act* does not apply to them. However, they are bound by the Attendance and Conflict of Interest Guidelines (Appendix B) which state that they must declare their conflict and excuse themselves from discussions that would lead to a conflict of interest, as set out in the Guidelines.

10. Election Process and Vacancy

- a) Student trustees for HWDSB will be elected indirectly, by student representatives, with an election being held no later than April 30 in each year (see Appendix C)
- b) If the Board determines that a vacancy shall be filled, it shall be filled by a by-election