



Trustee Expense

Date Approved: 2017

Projected Review Date: 2021

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PURPOSE:

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

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

The Board is committed to:

- ensuring sound business practices are employed;
- ensuring accountability for the use of public funds are maintained;
- its reputation and integrity as a public employer is protected;
- being 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 Trustee duties, support the program objectives of the organization and maximize the benefits to the Board.

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

INTENDED OUTCOMES:

- Trustees that incur expenses while performing their duties on behalf of the Board are reimbursed in a fair, consistent and transparent manner.
- Ensure compliance with the 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.

Hospitality: This refers to the provision of food, beverage, accommodation, transportation, token gifts of appreciation and other amenities paid out of public funds.



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Trustee: Trustees are responsible for the operation of the public school system. They are elected in accordance with the Education Act at each municipal election, by the electoral group the board represents. A trustee is responsible, as a member of the board:

- to govern and set policy for the board
- to govern for the provision of curriculum, facilities, human and financial resources for the board
- to advocate for the needs of their communities
- as a constituency representative, to explain the policies and decisions of the board to residents

Trustees are available to help taxpayers, parents and others to address any issues they may have about the public school system.

The term trustee refers to both Ward Trustee and Student Trustee within this policy.

Ministry of Education School Board Expenditure Guidelines: The purpose of the guidelines are 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

ACTION REQUIRED:

Trustees are eligible for reimbursement of the following expenses on an on-going basis:

- Monthly costs associated with a home phone if a Board issued mobile device is not used
- Long distance telephone costs related to Board business
- Basic office supplies
- Home internet service
- Hospitality
- Travel

Trustees will not be reimbursed for the following equipment, as they are provided by HWDSB for use throughout the Trustee's term of office:

- Computer or tablet with software
- Printer
- Mobile device/phone (including associated service costs)

All equipment will be provided in accordance with current Board standards and is to be returned to the Board at the end of the Trustee's term of office or can be purchased by the departing Trustee at the fair market value of the equipment at that time.



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Reporting Trustee Expenses

Trustee expenses will be posted quarterly (every three months) on the Board's website. These expenses are reported through the following categories:

- Mileage
- Internet
- Mobile device/phone
- Professional Development
- Other

Conference or Professional Development Activity

Trustee reimbursement for conferences or professional development activities shall not exceed \$1,000 per annum per Trustee, except for reimbursement for in-province conferences or professional development held by the Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA), the Canadian School Boards' Association (CSBA) and the Ontario Student Trustees' Association (OSTA).

When the CSBA holds its annual conference out of the province, the following Trustees shall have the first option to attend:

- Trustee designated as HWDSB's OPSBA liaison
- The Chair
- The Vice-Chair

Openings to the above allotment will be filled by drawing lots from those Trustees interested in attending.

In addition, in the situation that a Trustee feels a need to exceed the above noted \$1,000 individual limitation, or to attend an out-of-province professional development event (other than CSBA as noted above), with accompanying costs not subject to the \$1,000 limit, application may be submitted to the Chair of the Board for permission to exceed the limitation on an exception basis or to attend the out-of-province event. If the Chair, wishes to exceed the \$1,000 limit, it would require the approval of the Board of Trustees. Any Trustee who wishes to dispute a decision by the Chair, may bring the item forward to the full Board of Trustees.

Advance discounts should be realized on registration fees where possible.

Travel

Trustee travel to and from his or her residence to attend a meeting of the Board, a committee of the Board or carrying out the responsibilities of a board member, will be reimbursed for kilometres travelled based on the Canada Revenue Agency non-taxable mileage rate.



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Trustees are encouraged to travel by the most economical mode and share transportation whenever feasible. For distances more than 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.

Meals

Trustee reimbursement for meals shall not 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 trustee can 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 will be made for dietary restrictions.

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

- Alcohol consumed at a meal, event, conference, etc.
- 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 such items on Board purchasing cards and Board credit cards are not permitted.

Accommodation

Trustee reimbursement for overnight accommodation will be recognized when it is required and shall include: a reasonable room, parking, telephone and internet costs.

Hospitality

Trustee 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.

Trustees may only accept infrequent and reasonable hospitality and may only accept infrequent and reasonable business gifts with a value of \$30 or less, including taxes and delivery. 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 because of accepting such gift or hospitality.

Discretionary Expenses

Expenses incurred must be directly connected with carrying out the responsibilities of a Trustee. There will be no reimbursement for expenses of a personal or political nature. Reimbursement for discretionary expenses shall not exceed \$1,000 per annum per Trustee.

Expenses allowed for reimbursement through discretionary expenses include:

- hospitality expenses to hold school or ward-based meetings



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- admission fees to attend community-related presentations and events
- consumable supplies for the home-based office such as paper and toner

Trustees may not submit the following discretionary expenses for reimbursement:

- costs incurred to independently attend a fundraising event
- independent donations and/or contributions made to community-related presentations and events (includes those made in addition to, or instead of, admission fees)
- independent donations to a fundraising event or charity
- independent payment to a school or program

If a Trustee receives a donation slip for any expenses reimbursed by the Board, the Trustee is asked to submit the donation slip.

Unallowable Expenditures

The Board will not reimburse Trustees for the following expenditures:

- 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 as stipulated in the *Education Act S 217*;
- Charges for use of recreational/fitness facilities;
- 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;
- Expenses for re-furnishing or redecorating offices;
- Supporting a fundraiser for a specific political party;
- Supporting an event for a specific political party;
- Purchase of travel gift certificates;
- Gifts

Claims

Claims for the reimbursement of Trustees' expenses require the approval of the Chair of the Board. For the Chair of the Board, approval of the Executive Superintendent of Board Operations and Treasurer is required.



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PROGRESS INDICATORS:

Intended Outcome	Assessment
Trustees 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, transparent manner and are consistent with the Trustee Code of Conduct.
Ensure compliance with Ministry of Education School Board Expenditure Guidelines (2006: B15)	This policy will be assessed against the Ministry Expenditure Guidelines through the annual external audit.
Ensure compliance with the Broader Public Sector Expenses Directive	This policy will be assessed against the Broader Public Sector Expenses Directive through the annual external audit.

REFERENCES:

Government Documents

Ministry of Education Expenditure Guidelines
Broader Public Sector Expenses Directive

HWDSB Policies

Finance and Administration Pillar

Other Documents

Trustee Code of Conduct