

SUPERIOR-GREENSTONE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Section BOARD AND ADMINISTRATION

Policy Name ELECTRONIC MEETINGS and MEETING ATTENDANCE

211

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POLICY

In compliance with Ontario Regulation 313/24-Electronic Meetings and Meeting Attendance, all trustees will be required to be physically present for every regular meeting of the board and every meeting of the committee of the whole in each year of the term of office. Student Trustees are exempt from the requirement to attend meetings in person. Failure to attend in person as required would result in the trustee's seat being vacated pursuant to clause 228(1)(e) of the Education Act.

The Superior-Greenstone District School Board will make provision for participation in meetings of the Board electronically. Members who participate electronically shall be deemed to be present at the meeting.

RATIONALE

The Superior-Greenstone District School Board is a large geographic area where, under certain circumstances, Board members are unable to physically attend Board meetings. Therefore, electronic access to regular meetings of the Board are provided.

PROCEDURES

1.0 Definitions

1.1 Electronic Attendance

Electronic attendance shall imply participation through tele-conferencing and/or video-conferencing.

1.2 Member

When the reference herein is "member" it is understood to include elected and appointed Trustees and the Student Representatives.

1.3 Meeting Room

When this policy makes reference to a "meeting room" it is understood to imply the usual and designated meeting locations of the Board ~~and its committees~~. The following persons shall be physically present in the meeting room of the board:

- a) The Chair of the board or their designate
- b) At least one additional member of the board,
- c) The Director of Education or their designate.

2.0 Requirements

Under provincial regulation the following shall apply:

2.1 Physical Attendance

2.1.1 Board Meetings

It is required that at meetings of the Board and the Committee of the Whole Board that the following persons be physically present in the meeting room:

the Chair of the Board or designate, 1 Person

and,

at least one additional Member of the Board, and 1 Person

the Director of Education or designate 1 Person

3 Persons

2.2 Exception to the Above

Members of the board may participate in a board meeting by electronic means if the member receives written approval before the meeting begins. The member may make a request to the Chair or designate based only on the following circumstances:

2.2.1 The distance from the member's current residence to the meeting location is 125 km or greater (one way);

2.2.2 Weather conditions do not allow the member to travel to the meeting location safely;

2.2.3 The member cannot be physically present at a meeting due to health related issues.

2.2.4 The member has a disability that makes it challenging to be physically present at a meeting.

2.2.5 The member cannot be physically present due to family responsibilities in respect of,

i. The member's spouse

ii. A parent, stepparent or foster parent of the member or member's spouse.

iii. A child, stepchild, foster child or child who is under legal guardianship of the member or member's spouse.

iv. A relative of the member who is dependent on the member for care or assistance, or

v. A person who is dependent on the member for care or assistance and who considers the member to be like a family member.

2.3 The Chair shall not approve a request under Section 2.2 if approving the request would result in fewer than one member of the board, in addition to the Chair or their delegate, being physically present in the meeting room.

2.3 No more than half of Board Meetings in a 12-month period can be chaired electronically.

2.4 Minimum Attendance

A board member is automatically removed from the Board if he or she fails to be physically present in the meeting room of the Board for at least three (3) regular meetings of the Board in each twelve (12)-month period beginning November 15, 2022. If a board member is elected to fill a vacancy after November 15, 2022, the member shall be physically present in the meeting room of the board for at least one regular meeting of the board for each period of four full calendar months that occurs during the period beginning on the day the member is elected or appointed and ending the following November 14.

2.5 Closures

If all schools of the board are closed under an order made in accordance with Ontario Regulation 463/97 then the requirement for the physical attendance at any meetings by a trustee or the Director of Education is not required in accordance with that Regulation and all trustees and student trustees may participate electronically as of right and without complying with 2.2 above. In those circumstances, the meeting room of the board or a committee of the board will not be open to permit physical attendance by members of the public.

2.6 Effectiveness

Electronic meetings must be designed and deemed to make positive contributions to the work of the Board. Their design must conform to the requirements of Reg.313/24, including the ability for all persons who are participating in the meeting to communicate with each other simultaneously and instantaneously.

2.7 Conditions for Access

Conditions for access to meeting electronically are to be governed by:

- a) the purpose and nature of the meeting, and,
- b) the composition of participants in the meeting.

2.8 Accessibility

All scheduled Regular Board meetings, including meetings of the Committee of the Whole, are accessible, upon request, via electronic means for all members and the general public at designated sites.

2.9 Conflict of Interest

At all meetings at which a trustee, including a student trustee, participates by electronic means, it is the responsibility of those trustees to comply with the requirements of the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act, and Board Policies* including, in the case of a meeting that is closed to the public, to disconnect from the electronic participation for so long as is necessary in order to so comply.

The Board shall ensure that appropriate processes are put in place to ensure the security and confidentiality of electronic participation in proceedings held during meetings that are closed to the public, including ensuring student trustees who participate through electronic means do not participate in any proceedings that are closed to the public under clause 207(2)(b) of the *Education Act (subject matter under consideration involves the disclosure of intimate, personal or financial information in respect of a trustee of the board or member of a committee, an employee or prospective employee of the board or a pupil or their parent or guardian)*.

3.0 Attendance

3.1 Deemed Present

A member who participates in any meeting through electronic means as defined and described herein shall be deemed to be present at the meeting for the purpose of the Education Act and regulations.

3.2 Verbal Roll Call

When one or more members are in attendance electronically, the Roll Call shall be verbally taken and duly recorded.

3.3 Ensuring a Quorum

Members participating electronically shall notify the Chair of their departures, either temporary or permanent, from the meeting before absenting themselves in order that the Chair may ensure a quorum is maintained.