



Halton District School Board

III. POLICY TYPE: GOVERNANCE PROCESS

GENERAL GOVERNANCE COMMITMENT

The Halton District School Board, on behalf of the people of Halton, will ensure it:

- achieves desired results at an acceptable cost, and
- governs the public education system of Halton with a strategic perspective, continually improving its process and capability to express the values and visions of the Board's Mission Statement and Guiding Principles.



The Halton District School Board is committed to providing the highest quality education which prepares our students for success as responsible, participating citizens of the global community.



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III. POLICY TYPE: GOVERNANCE PROCESS

A. POLICY TITLE: GOVERNING STYLE

The governing style of the Halton District School Board will proactively emphasize:

- outward vision rather than internal preoccupation
- encouragement of diverse viewpoints,
- strategic leadership
- clear distinction of Board and Director of Education roles
- collective rather than individual decisions, and
- learning from the past with a focus on the future

More specifically, the Board will:

- deliberate in many voices, and govern in one.
- operate in all ways mindful of its obligation to the people of Halton, allowing no officer, individual, or committee of the board to hinder or be an excuse for not fulfilling this commitment.
- enforce upon itself whatever discipline is needed to govern with excellence. Discipline will apply to matters such as attendance, adherence to its policies, respect of roles, speaking with one voice, and ensuring the continual improvement of board processes and capabilities.
- provide orientation to new members about the Board’s governance process
- provide opportunities for periodic Board discussion of process improvement.
- direct and inspire the organization through thoughtful establishment of the broadest, written policies reflecting the Board’s values and perspectives about ENDS to be achieved and means to be avoided. The Board will focus on the STRATEGIC OUTCOMES, not on the administrative means of attaining those AIMS/ENDS.
- cultivate a sense of group responsibility. The Board of trustees will be responsible for:
 - excellence in governing
 - establishment of policy
 - utilization of individual members’ expertise to enhance the knowledge and ability of the Board as a whole.
- monitor and discuss the Board’s process and performance at each meeting. Self-monitoring will compare board activity and discipline to policies in the “Governance Process” and “Board:Director Relationship” categories.
- review all governance policies as necessary, but no less frequently than according to the following schedule:

Policy	Frequency of Review
ENDS	Annually
GOVERNANCE PROCESS	Annually
BOARD:DIRECTOR RELATIONSHIP	Annually
EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS	Annually

The Board shall examine each policy by posing and responding to the following questions:

- Did we adhere to the policy?
- What, if any, revisions are necessary?

MONITORING:

Methods / Tools: Direct Board Inspection (evaluation/survey)
Frequency: Periodic (November, February, May)



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B. *POLICY TITLE:* BOARD JOB DESCRIPTION

Within legislative and financial parameters established by the Province of Ontario, the job of the Board of Trustees of the Halton District School Board is to serve as stewards for the people of Halton in determining and demanding appropriate organizational performance to ensure the highest quality of education for students.

To distinguish the Board's own unique work from the work of its staff, the Board will concentrate its efforts on the following:

- Providing the link between the organization and the people of Halton who have ownership of the public education system.
- Ensuring clarity of values and vision in written governing policies which, at the broadest levels, address:
 - *Governance Process:* These policies describe how the board conceives, carries out and monitors its own task.
Accountability: Board of Trustees
 - *Board:Director Relationship:* These policies describe how power is delegated, and its proper use monitored; and outline the authority and accountability of the Director of Education.
Accountability: Board of Trustees
 - *Strategic Outcomes:* These policies describe the benefits to be produced, the people to be served and the cost of meeting these goals.
Accountability: Director of Education
 - *Executive Limitations:* These policies place constraints on executive authority which establish the prudence and ethics boundaries within which all executive activity and decisions must take place.
Accountability: Director of Education





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POLICY TYPE: GOVERNANCE PROCESS

C. POLICY TITLE: CHAIRPERSON'S ROLE

The chairperson safeguards the integrity of the Board's process and represents the Board of Trustees to outside parties.

Accordingly,

- The Chair's role is to assure that the Board's behaviour is in compliance with its own rules and those legitimately imposed upon it from outside the organization.
 - Meeting discussion content will be only those issues which, according to Board policy, clearly belong to the Board to decide, not to the Director of Education.
 - Deliberation will be fair, open, and thorough but also timely, orderly, and kept to the point.
- The Chair has authority to make decisions that fall within Board policies on *GOVERNANCE PROCESS* and *BOARD:DIRECTOR RELATIONSHIP*, except where the Board specifically delegates portions of this authority to another individual or committee(s). The Chair is authorized to use any reasonable interpretation of the provisions in these policies.
 - The Chair is empowered to chair Board meetings, with all the commonly accepted responsibility of that position, and in accordance with the procedural by-laws of the Halton District School Board.
 - The Chair has no individual authority to make decisions about policies created by the Board within *STRATEGIC OUTCOMES* and *EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS* policy areas. Therefore, the Chair may not supervise or direct the Director of Education, or staff.
 - The Chair is the designated spokesperson and shall represent the Board to outside parties in announcing Board-stated positions and in stating Chair decisions and interpretations within the area delegated to the Chair.
 - The Chair may delegate this authority but remains accountable for its use.
 - The Chair and/or Vice Chair, in consultation with the Director of Education, shall be responsible for the preparation of the meeting-by-meeting agendas which will be based on the Agenda Planning Cycle created by the Board, and may include other items identified by the Board. (*see Communication Guidelines, Appendix A*).
 - The Chair and Vice-Chair acting together may consult legal counsel concerning Board business.

MONITORING:

Methods: Direct Board Inspection (external survey)

Frequency: Periodic (November, February, May)



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III. POLICY TYPE: GOVERNANCE PROCESS

D. *POLICY TITLE:* BOARD COMMITTEE PRINCIPLES

Board committees, from time to time, may be used to complete certain tasks – particularly the task of gathering information and generating options. Board committees exist only to assist the Board in its work, and never to involve itself in the responsibilities of staff.

This policy applies to committees which are formed by Board action, whether or not it is called a committee and regardless whether the group includes non-Board members. It does not apply to committees formed under the authority of the Director of Education.

Accordingly:

- The scope of the committee's mandate, context, and budget limitations must be clear.
- No committee will be created for the purpose of helping, advising, instructing, or exercising authority over any aspect of organization that has been delegated to the Director of Education.
- Board committees cannot exercise authority over staff. Because the Director of Education works for the entire Board of Trustees, the Director will not be required to obtain approval of a Board committee before an executive action. In keeping with the Board's broader focus, Board committees will normally not have direct dealings with current staff operations.
- Committees, other than those legislated, should last only as long as the job the committee has to do, but no longer.

MONITORING:

Methods: *Direct Board Inspection (Governance & By-law Committee)*

Frequency: *Annually (January)*



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III. POLICY TYPE: GOVERNANCE PROCESS

E. POLICY TITLE: COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

A committee is a board committee only if its existence and charge come from the Board, regardless whether board members sit on the committee. The only standing board committees are those which are set forth in this policy and appropriately chartered with clear product, authorities, timelines, and staff considerations.

Legislated committees:

- **Special Education Advisory Committee**

Standing committees:

- **Director's Performance Review Committee**
- **Policy, By-law and Governance Committee**
- **Public Education Awareness and Communication Committee**
- **Suspension Appeals Committee**
- **Transportation Appeals Committee**
- **Accommodation Committee**

The mandate for these committees are appended to this policy.

MONITORING

Methods: Direct Board Inspection (Striking Committee)

Frequency: Annually (January)



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III. POLICY TYPE: GOVERNANCE PROCESS

F. POLICY TITLE: AGENDA PLANNING CYCLE

To accomplish its work with a governance style consistent with its policies, the Board will develop and follow an annual agenda plan which:

- includes an exploration of *Strategic Outcomes* policies, and
- continually improves Board performance through trustee professional development, as well as through consideration of input, earnest deliberation, while practising effective dialogue.

- The cycle will conclude each year in June to coincide with the school year calendar, so that administrative planning and budgeting can be based on accomplishing a one-year segment of the Board's most recent statement of *Strategic Outcomes*.

- In the first one or two months of the new cycle, the Board will develop its agenda for the ensuing one-year period.
 - Consultations with selected community groups, or other methods of gaining public input, will be determined and arranged where necessary or advisable
 - Trustee professional development related to policy governance, and/or *Strategic Outcomes* determination will be arranged in the first quarter, to be held during the balance of the year.

- Throughout the year, the Board will attend to agenda items as expeditiously as possible.

- Monitoring reports will be regularly included on the agenda, to ensure compliance with Board policies, or if policy criteria are to be debated.

MONITORING

Methods: Direct Board Inspection (Governance & By-law Committee)

Frequency: Annually (September)



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Halton District School Board

III. POLICY TYPE: GOVERNANCE PROCESS

G. POLICY TITLE: BOARD MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT

The Board expects of itself and its members ethical and businesslike conduct. This commitment includes proper use of authority and respect in group and individual behaviour when acting as board members.

- Board members shall represent loyalty to the interests of the Halton District School Board. As elected officials, the trustees of the Halton District School Board are required to develop and monitor policy, to demonstrate leadership within the community, to ensure that the Board maintains integrity in providing education.
- Board members shall avoid any conflict of interest with respect to their fiduciary responsibility.
 - Trustees shall comply with the provisions of the Education Act, Municipal Conflict of Interest Act, Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, and any other relevant legislation.
- Board members shall not attempt to exercise individual authority over the organization.
 - Trustee interaction with the Director of Education and staff is encouraged; however individual Board members or groups of Board members shall recognize authority over the Director or staff is only through the corporate body.
 - Board members' interaction with the public, media or other entities shall recognize the same limitation and the similar inability of any Board member or Board members to speak for the Board.
 - Board members will voice no judgments of the Director of Education or staff performance except as that performance is assessed against explicit Board policies by the official process.
 - Members will follow the system "Process for Public Concerns" guidelines as outlined in Appendix A.
 - Members shall respect the confidentiality appropriate to the issues of a sensitive nature, and/or discussions that take place in In-Camera/Private Session sessions.
- Members shall adhere to the Halton District School Board "*Principles and Practices*" as outlined in Appendix B.
- Members shall adhere to the Rules of the Road developed by the Board which will be amended from time to time, as outlined in Appendix C.
- Trustees shall at all times act with decorum and shall be respectful of other trustees and members of staff, as well as the public.
 - A trustee may comment on, or disagree with, a decision taken by the Board. In expressing such comment or disagreement, a trustee may not make disparaging remarks about a trustee(s), or staff, nor speculate on the motives of a trustee or staff.
 - Any member who resists the rules of the Board, uses offensive language, disobeys the decision of the Chair/Acting Chair or the Board on points of order, or makes any disorderly noise or disturbance may be ordered by the Chair/Acting Chair to leave for the remainder of the meeting. (Such removal is to be recorded in the minutes of the meeting).

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Halton District School Board

G. POLICY TITLE: BOARD MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT -- continued

- When appropriate, the Board may exercise its corporate authority over individual members. Accordingly:
 - The Board may, by special motion duly passed, declare the office of the Chair and/or Vice Chair to be vacant effective as of the date of passage of the resolution, where such person:
 - becomes disqualified as a trustee;
 - deliberately breaches any relevant legislation or Board policy; and/or
 - acts in such a manner as to lose the confidence of the Board.If such a resolution is passed, the Board shall, at the same meeting, elect a new Chair and/or Vice Chair respectively as the case may be.

- The Board may, by special motion duly passed, remove a trustee from a Board committee. If such resolution is passed, the Board shall, at the same meeting, elect a new trustee to fill the vacancy on that committee.
- The Board may, by special motion duly passed either in an open session or a committee of the whole, in-camera session, censure a trustee for:
 - breach of Board policy; and/or
 - breach of any relevant legislation.
- The Board may, by special motion duly passed, either in an open session or a committee of the whole, in-camera session, direct that a trustee be prohibited from receiving specified materials of in-camera Board or committee meetings.

NOTE: For the purposes of this Policy, a “special motion” is interpreted as a motion duly moved, seconded, and adopted by a two-thirds majority of the entire members present.

MONITORING

Methods: Direct Board Inspection (evaluation)

Frequency: Quarterly (January, April and September)



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III. POLICY TYPE: GOVERNANCE PROCESS

H. POLICY TITLE: TRUSTEE EXPENSES

The Halton District School Board is committed to an organizational culture that is consistent with the guiding principles which frame our strategic plan. The Board recognizes the need to reimburse trustees for expenses reasonably incurred in carrying out their role as trustee. In addition, the Board recognizes that trustees must be equipped properly so they may consult with and contact their constituents.

Therefore, it is the policy of the Halton District School Board that trustees, upon their election shall be equipped as follows:

- a personal computer including peripherals (printer/fax);
- software in accordance with the Board standard for administrators (Office Suite, CHATT, email etc.);
- high speed home internet access;
- a home phone (land line); and
- a mobile communication device (i.e. Blackberry, iPhone etc.)

All equipment that is purchased will be purchased in accordance with the Board's purchasing standards. Given the rate at which technology currently depreciates, equipment purchased at the start of the trustee's term will not need to be returned to the Board at the end of the trustee's term. However, all service contracts will end commensurate with the end of the trustee's term. The residual value will be determined by the Chief Information Officer. The residual value will be reported on the trustee's T4 if it exceeds the minimum threshold.

In addition, each trustee, on an annual basis, will have access to a \$5,000.00 travel, personal professional development and office supplies account. This account may be used to reimburse the trustee for expenses reasonably incurred in carrying out their role as trustee.

The following expenses are those which are recognized by the Board as appropriate trustee expenses:

- transportation - including mileage at the current Board rate (see exception below);
- professional development / conferences;
- per diem for meals at the current Board rate;
- office supplies (filing cabinet, stationery, technology etc.);
- constituent meeting expenses (coffee, refreshments);
- mailings, photocopying;
- child care costs for dependent children which would allow trustees to attend scheduled meetings, events and/or functions of the Halton District School Board; and
- other expenses:
- any other extraordinary or unusual expenses that a trustee feels should be paid by the School Board must be pre-approved by the Board of Trustees





Halton District School Board

Trustee Expense Policy (page 2)

Should transportation claims for a trustee exceed \$1,000.00 in a fiscal year (\$750 in the first nine months of the term and \$250 in the final three months of the term), any approved transportation expenditure above the \$1,000.00 threshold will not be charged against the trustee account, but rather the Board's account.

In addition, where a trustee incurs approved expenditures as a representative of the Board (e.g. Ontario Public School Board Association meetings, Student Trustee mentoring, Audit Committee training) these costs will not be charged against the trustee account, but rather the Board's Leadership budget.

Trustees will make best efforts to submit claims for expenses within 6 months of their occurrence and in the fiscal year in which the expense occurred.

A monthly statement of an individual trustee's detailed expenses (conferences, transportation, meals etc.) shall be provided to that trustee electronically.

Trustee expenses that are in excess of, or not allowed by, HDSB policy may be claimable on individual trustee personal tax returns using the Board provided T2200 form.

Unused portions of an individual trustee's expense budget, on an annual basis, shall roll-over to the next year. At the end of the term of the Board, unused portions of the trustee expense budget shall be allocated to a Reserve Account for the purpose of future trustee professional development. The use of these Reserve Account funds will be decided by the incoming Board of Trustees by Board motion. Trustees will receive an annual statement of the Reserve Account within 60 days of the start of the next fiscal year.

Payment of a trustee's claims exceeding the total amount budgeted per trustee over the term of the Board, will be decided on a case-by-case basis by the Board of Trustees.

An annual summary of trustee expenses will be reported as an information item by the Superintendent of Business.

Trustee Expenses fall under the Broader Public Sector Accountability Act, 2010 (BPSAA) and must meet the Expenses and Procurement Standards detailed therein.

MONITORING:

Methods: Internal Report

Frequency: Annually (October)

Revised: December 2011

