

Electronic Meetings and Meeting Attendance

Board Policy

Policy Adopted: 2001 (M01-0257)
Revision Date: May 2025
Responsibility: Board of Trustees

1. Objective

- This policy provides the requirements for Halton District School Board (HDSB) Trustees and Student Trustees to participate in board meetings and committee meetings in compliance with Ontario Regulation 463/97 and the Board Governance By-law.

2. Policy Statement

1. As required by Ontario Regulation 463/97, the following persons must be present in the Board meeting room for any regular meeting of the Board or Committee of the Whole Board:
 - The Chair of the Board or their designate
 - At least one additional member of the Board
 - The Director of Education or their designate
2. To participate in regular meetings of the Board or regular meetings of a Committee of the Whole Board, Trustees shall be physically present in the meeting room.
 - 2.1. Despite this, a Trustee may request to participate electronically in any of the following circumstances:
 - 2.1.1. Weather conditions do not allow the member to travel to the meeting location safely.
 - 2.1.2. The member cannot be physically present at a meeting due to health-related issues.

Electronic Meetings and Meeting Attendance

Board Policy

- 2.1.3. The member has a disability that makes it challenging to be physically present at a meeting.
 - 2.1.4. The member cannot be physically present due to family responsibilities, as specified in section 7(5) 5 of Ontario Regulation 463/97.
 - 2.2. If a Trustee proposes to participate in a regular meeting by electronic means, the Trustee shall submit a request and the reasons for the request in writing to the Chair before the meeting begins. If the Trustee making the request is the Chair, the request shall be submitted to the Vice-Chair.
 - 2.2.1. The Chair (or Vice-Chair, as appropriate) shall grant the request if there will still be at least two Trustees, including the Chair or designate, physically present in the meeting room and if they are satisfied that the circumstances outlined in section 2.1 exist. Otherwise, the Chair shall not grant the request.
 - 2.3. Trustees may participate in special meetings of the Board or special meetings of the Committee of the Whole Board by electronic means.
- 3. The Director of Education or their designate shall be physically present in the meeting room for each meeting of the Board and each meeting of a committee of the Board, including Committee of the Whole Board.
 - 4. For all meetings of a committee of the Board, the committee's Chair shall be physically present in the committee meeting room unless the Chair has arranged for another Trustee, who is a committee member, to be physically present in the room.
 - 4.1. All other committee members may participate by electronic means.

Electronic Meetings and Meeting Attendance

Board Policy

5. Student Trustees may participate in any public Board or committee meeting by electronic means. Student Trustees shall provide notice of participation by electronic means to the Chair or their designate in advance of the meeting.
6. The Board shall provide electronic means for Trustees to participate in meetings of the Board and its committees, subject to having received permission to participate electronically.
7. The Board shall provide electronic means for members of the public to observe meetings of the Board and its committees.
 - 7.1. The Board shall provide electronic means for members of the public making delegations to the Board to participate during their delegation.
8. Requirements for Trustees to be physically present at meetings do not apply if all HDSB schools are closed pursuant to an order made by the Minister of Education, a Medical Officer of Health, or the Lieutenant Governor in Council. Requirements to be physically present resume 60 days after the order ceases to apply.
9. A Trustee who participates in a meeting by electronic means is considered to be present at the meeting and will be recorded as being in attendance in the minutes.
10. All provisions in the legislation with regard to in-camera meetings and conflict of interest will apply for participation via electronic means in meetings of the Board or its committees.

Electronic Meetings and Meeting Attendance

Board Policy

3. Scope

This policy applies to Trustees, Student Trustees, and the Director of Education.

4. Guiding Principles

1. Electronic participation in meetings of the Board and its committees is recognized as being a legitimate means for the Board to conduct its business.
2. The provision of electronic means for participation in regular meetings of the Board is intended to allow for the participation of Trustees in meetings where extenuating circumstances make it impossible for the Trustee to physically attend.
3. Providing means for electronic participation in or observation of Board and committee meetings is intended to provide for more efficient use of time and facilitate access for members of the public, staff members, Student Trustees, or Trustees who would not otherwise be able to attend a meeting of the Board or its committees.

Electronic Meetings and Meeting Attendance

Board Policy

Related Board Policies and Governance Procedures

Board Governance By-law

Appointments to Committees and Other Roles

Related Legislation and Industry Documents

[Ontario Regulation 463/97: Electronic Meetings and Meeting Attendance](#)

Policy Due for Review: May 2029

Revision History

- May 2025 (M25-047 & M25-051) - Type of Review: Comprehensive
 - To align with the O. Reg. 463/97 Electronic Meetings and Meeting Attendance and set the effective date of the policy as June 18, 2025.
- October 2020 (M20-0134)