



Board Governance By-law¹

¹ As amended by Motion M26-028, April 7, 2026. Original document signed by the Chair and Vice Chair.

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INTRODUCTION

The Halton District School Board's (HDSB) Board of Trustees intends that this By-law shall govern the manner in which it considers and disposes of the matters that come before the Board of Trustees.

PART I: INTERPRETATION

1.1 AUTHORITY AND REVIEW

- 1.1.1. If there is a conflict between any legislation, government policies or guidelines and this By-law, the legislation shall take precedence over the By-law.
- 1.1.2. This By-law shall be reviewed every four years and may be amended periodically as needed.

1.2 DEFINITIONS

- 1.2.1. In this By-law the definitions appended to the [Policy and Procedure Framework Policy](#) will be used.

PART II: MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

2.1 ROLE OF INDIVIDUAL TRUSTEES

- 2.1.1. The Board shall have the number of Trustees determined by Ontario Regulation 412/00 and described in the Trustee Determination and Distribution Report that is approved by the Board every four years, prior to municipal elections.
- 2.1.2. Individual Trustees or groups of Trustees shall not undertake any action, communication or negotiation that may be construed as acting on behalf of the Board of Trustees, except by explicit direction of the Board of Trustees.
- 2.1.3. A Trustee may nevertheless act individually as an elected official, providing they do not indicate in any way that they are acting on behalf of the Board of Trustees.
- 2.1.4. Trustees may participate in Professional Development opportunities, including the annual Governance Professional Development which is provided to all Trustees.

2.2 TRUSTEE COMMUNICATIONS

- 2.2.1. Correspondence directed by Board motion shall be shared publicly in the Chair's Report in the Board agenda package, and shared on the HDSB website.
- 2.2.2. The Chair shall speak on behalf of the Board of Trustees at system-wide public events (e.g. Student Excellence, Celebrating Service, etc). In the absence of the Chair, the Vice-Chair shall speak. If neither the Chair nor Vice-Chair are able to attend, another Trustee shall be invited to speak at the discretion of the Chair in consultation with the Vice-Chair.
- 2.2.3. The local Trustee shall speak at special events that occur at the schools in their ward, such as anniversary celebrations, commencements, grand openings, etc. In the absence of the local Trustee, the Chair may speak. If neither the local Trustee nor the Chair are able to attend, the Vice-Chair may speak. In the absence of the

local Trustee, Chair and Vice-Chair, another Trustee may be invited to speak at the discretion of the local Trustee.

- 2.2.4. Trustees shall make all Trustees aware of school-based milestones (e.g. 50th anniversary, school grand opening, etc.) so individual Trustees may attend in order to show their support and interest. Trustees in attendance shall be recognized but not invited to speak.
- 2.2.5. Trustees are encouraged to liaise with local provincial and federal politicians to assist them in understanding local issues and needs, and to encourage them to make education a high priority.

2.3 VACATED POSITIONS

- 2.3.1. In the event a Trustee resigns, is no longer qualified to act as a member of the board as outlined in Section 219 (4) of the [Education Act \(“the Act”\)](#), or has vacated their seat for the reasons listed in Section 228 (1) of the Act, the process outlined in the [Filling a Trustee Vacancy Governance Procedure](#) will be followed.
- 2.3.2. In accordance with section 228(1) of [the Act](#) “A member of a board vacates his or her seat if he or she: (a) is convicted of an indictable offence; (b) absents himself or herself without being authorized by resolution entered in the minutes, from three consecutive regular meetings of the board; (c) ceases to hold the qualifications required to act as a member of the board; (d) becomes disqualified under subsection 219 (4); or (e) fails to be physically present as required by the regulations made under clause 208.1 (1) (b)”.
- 2.3.3. Exception: In accordance with section 228 (2) of the Act, where a Trustee is convicted of an indictable offence, the vacancy shall not be filled until the time for taking any appeal that may be taken from the conviction has elapsed, or until the final determination of any appeal so taken, and in the event of the quashing of the conviction the seat shall be deemed not to have been vacated.
- 2.3.4. Exception: In accordance with section 228 (2.1) of the Act, a Trustee is not required to vacate their seat if the absence is for 20 consecutive weeks or less and is a result of the member’s pregnancy, the birth of the member’s child or the adoption of a child by the member

PART III: OFFICERS OF THE BOARD

3.1 OFFICERS

- 3.1.1 The Officers of the Halton District School Board are:
 - Director; and
 - the Superintendent of Business Services shall be the Treasurer of the HDSB.
- 3.1.2 The Signing Officers are one of the:
 - Chair;
 - Vice-Chair,And one of the:
 - Director;
 - Treasurer; or

- Controller of Financial Services.

3.2 SECRETARY OF THE BOARD

- 3.2.1 The Director or their designate shall act as Secretary of the Board, in accordance with [the Act](#).
- 3.2.2 The Secretary of the Board shall ensure meeting records of the Board of Trustees and its Committees are maintained and made available for public inspection upon request, as required by [the Act](#) and subject to limitations prescribed by the [Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#).

3.3 ROLE OF THE CHAIR

- 3.3.1 The Chair acts as spokesperson to the public on behalf of the Board of Trustees about matters regarding:
- governance;
 - the Board's role;
 - Trustee Code of Conduct;
 - individual Trustees; and
 - the Director.

3.4 PRESIDING OFFICER AT BOARD MEETINGS

- 3.4.1 Except for the Inaugural and Organizational meetings of the Board of Trustees, as further described below, the Chair or in the Chair's absence the Vice-Chair shall preside at all meetings of the Board of Trustees.
- 3.4.2 At the time appointed, the Presiding Officer shall call the meeting to order. The Presiding Officer shall preserve decorum and preside in accordance with the Rules of Procedure as described in PART V of this By-law.
- 3.4.3 In the event that neither the Chair nor the Vice-Chair are present at five minutes after the hour appointed for the start of a meeting, the Director shall call the meeting to order, provided there is a quorum present, and the Board of Trustees shall choose a Trustee as a Presiding Officer pro-tempore, until such time as either the Chair or Vice-Chair arrives.

3.5 PRESIDING OFFICER AT INAUGURAL AND ANNUAL ORGANIZATIONAL BOARD MEETINGS

- 3.5.1 The Director or their designate shall preside at the Inaugural and annual Organizational meetings of the Board of Trustees until a Chair is elected in accordance with the [Election of the Chair and Vice-Chair Governance Procedure](#).

3.6 VACATED CHAIR OR VICE-CHAIR POSITION

- 3.6.1 In the event that the position of Chair or Vice-Chair becomes vacant for any reason throughout the year, a new Chair or Vice-Chair shall be elected in accordance with the [Election of the Chair and Vice-Chair Governance Procedure](#).
- 3.6.2 The election shall be held at the first meeting after the vacancy occurs.

PART IV: MEETINGS

4.1 REGULAR MEETINGS

- 4.1.1 All meetings of the Board and its committees shall be open to the public, in accordance with [the Act](#), s.207(1), except for under limited circumstances provided in the *Act* and described in section *Private Session as Committee of the Whole Board* of this By-law.
- 4.1.2 The location of regular Board or Committee of the Whole meetings shall be the head office of the HDSB.
- 4.1.3 The regular meeting schedule of the Board and Committee of the Whole shall be determined by the Board of Trustees after the approval of the School Year Calendar.
 - 4.1.3.1. The Board shall not schedule regular Board or Committee of the Whole meetings during statutory holidays or a school vacation period for students (e.g. Summer Break, Winter Break, Spring Break, PA/PD days, etc.).
 - 4.1.3.2. The first regular Board meeting shall occur after Labour Day.
 - 4.1.3.3. The Board shall determine necessary accommodations for regular Board or Committee of the Whole meetings that conflict with observed days of faith-based significance during approval of the regular meeting schedule.
- 4.1.4 The Director or their designate, shall publish the regular Board and Committee of the Whole agendas with all available supporting materials and reports for all items on the HDSB's website and public Board calendar, and deliver to Trustees no less than 120 hours before the time of the meeting.

4.2 INAUGURAL AND ANNUAL ORGANIZATIONAL MEETINGS

- 4.2.1 After a regular election of Trustees under the [Municipal Elections Act](#), 1996, the inaugural meeting shall be held at the HDSB's head office within seven days after the day on which the term of office of the Board commences, as specified by the [Municipal Elections Act](#), 1996.
- 4.2.2 The Director shall call the meeting to order, and shall proceed to read the names and wards of the duly elected Trustees, as certified by the Clerks of the four municipalities of Halton.
- 4.2.3 All elected or appointed Trustees shall make and subscribe the declarations in S.209(1) of [the Act](#) and may swear or affirm allegiance in s.209 (3) before a Judge or Justice of the Peace, or in the absence of a Judge or Justice of the Peace, before the Director.
- 4.2.4 In each year that is not a municipal election year, an annual organizational meeting shall be held at the head office of the HDSB within seven days after the anniversary of the start of the Trustees' term of office, as per section 6(1) of the [Municipal Elections Act](#), 1996.

4.3 SPECIAL BOARD MEETINGS

- 4.3.1 Special Board meetings may be called to address:
 - 4.3.1.1. specific non-urgent matter(s) that cannot be accommodated within the time available in regular meetings; or
 - 4.3.1.2. an urgent matter that cannot wait until the next regular meeting
- 4.3.2 Special Board meetings may be called by: (a) the Chair; (b) the Vice-Chair, in consultation with the Director, where reasonable efforts have been made to contact the Chair and the Chair cannot be reached; or (c) the Director, upon the written request of a majority of the Trustees.
- 4.3.3 Notice of Special Board Meetings
 - 4.3.3.1. If a special Board meeting is called to address non-urgent matters, per section 4.3.1.1, the Director shall notify Trustees of the date and time of the meeting at least two weeks prior to the meeting. Formal notice of the meeting shall be provided as in section 4.1.4.
 - 4.3.3.2. If a special Board meeting is called to address an urgent matter, per section 4.3.1.2, the Director shall attempt to notify all Trustees of the meeting both in writing and verbally and shall provide the reason for the meeting's urgency in writing. The Director shall publish the agenda on the HDSB's website and public Board calendar, and deliver the agenda with all available supporting materials and reports to Trustees no less than 48 hours before the time of the meeting. In extraordinary circumstances, where there is a matter that requires immediate action, the Chair (or Vice-Chair if the Chair cannot be reached) in consultation with the Director may provide less than 48 hours notice.
- 4.3.4 The only business that can be transacted at a special Board meeting is that which has been specified in the call of the meeting, as outlined in the agenda. This does not preclude the consideration of privileged motions, or of any subsidiary, incidental, or other motions that may arise in connection with the specified business or the conduct of the meeting. An action taken relating to business not listed on the special meeting agenda must be ratified at the next regular meeting or at a special meeting properly called for that purpose.

4.4 QUORUM

- 4.4.1 The presence of a majority of all Members of the Board of Trustees (regardless of vacancies) is necessary to form a quorum. Subject to the Ontario [Municipal Conflict of Interest Act](#), a quorum must remain throughout an entire Board meeting.
- 4.4.2 Should there be no quorum present for 30 minutes after the start time of the meeting, or at any time during the meeting and not reconstituted within 30 minutes, the Recording Secretary shall take a roll call of those Trustees present and the Board of Trustees shall forthwith stand adjourned until the next regular meeting.

4.5 ATTENDANCE

4.5.1 *Electronic Meetings and Meeting Attendance*

- 4.5.1.1. The following persons must be present in the meeting room for any regular meeting of the Board or Committee of the Whole Board²:
 - a. The Chair or their designate
 - b. At least one additional member of the Board
 - c. The Director or their designate.
- 4.5.1.2. 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. Despite this, a Trustee may request to participate electronically in any of the following circumstances³:
 - a. Weather conditions do not allow the member to travel to the meeting location safely.
 - b. The member cannot be physically present at a meeting due to health-related issues.
 - c. The member has a disability that makes it challenging to be physically present at a meeting.
 - d. The member cannot be physically present due to family responsibilities..
- 4.5.1.3. 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.
- 4.5.1.4. The Chair (or Vice-Chair, as appropriate) shall grant the request if there will still be at least two Trustees, including the Chair or their designate, physically present in the meeting room and if they are satisfied that the circumstances outlined in section 4.5.1.2 exist. Otherwise, the Chair shall not grant the request.
- 4.5.1.5. A Trustee who has been approved to participate 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.
- 4.5.1.6. Trustees may participate in special meetings of the Board or special meetings of the Committee of the Whole Board by electronic means, in accordance with O.Reg. 463/97 of the Act.
- 4.5.1.7. 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.
- 4.5.1.8. 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. All other committee members may participate by electronic means.

² O. Reg. 463/97: ELECTRONIC MEETINGS AND MEETING ATTENDANCE

³ S. 7(5) 5 of Ontario Regulation 463/97

- 4.5.1.9. 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.
- 4.5.1.10. 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.
- 4.5.1.11. The Board shall provide electronic means for members of the public to observe meetings of the Board and its committees.
- 4.5.1.12. The Board shall provide electronic means for members of the public making delegations to the Board to participate during their delegation.
- 4.5.1.13. 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.
- 4.5.1.14. 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.
- 4.5.2 If a Trustee will not be in attendance at a meeting, the Trustee shall advise all Trustees in writing in advance of the meeting. If deemed reasonable and appropriate, the Board shall authorize by resolution a Trustee's absence from a Board meeting, in keeping with the attendance requirements of the Act.

4.6 AGENDAS

- 4.6.1 The Public Session Agenda for each meeting shall be established by the Chair in consultation with the Vice-Chair and the Director or their designate.
- 4.6.2 The Public Session Agenda for regular meetings shall use, as a guideline, the form provided in *Appendix A*.
- 4.6.3 The Public Session Agenda contains a Consent Agenda section for regular items that are reviewed by the Board but do not usually require debate. Any item may be extracted from the Consent Agenda at the request of a Trustee for clarification prior to a vote to adopt the Consent Agenda. Any extracted items not resolved will be considered immediately following the adoption of the Consent Agenda.
- 4.6.4 If a matter that requires action as a matter of urgency arises between the publication of an agenda and a meeting, the Director may request that the Chair add such matter to the agenda. The Chair, at their discretion, may add this item to the agenda.
- 4.6.5 Other items may be added to the agenda at the Chair's discretion.
- 4.6.6 Any amendments to the agenda package shall be noted in a revised package posted to the website as "revised".
- 4.6.7 Inaugural meeting agendas shall include the oath of office, election of the Chair and Vice-Chair, address of the Chair and Vice-Chair, and motion to destroy the ballots (if applicable).

- 4.6.8 Annual organizational meeting agendas shall include the election of the Chair and Vice-Chair, address of the Chair and Vice-Chair, and motion to destroy the ballots (if applicable).

4.7 COMMUNICATIONS

- 4.7.1 All meetings of the Board of Trustees in Public Session
- 4.7.1.1. shall be live-streamed;
 - 4.7.1.2. shall be video-voice recorded; and
 - 4.7.1.3. may be transmitted electronically.
- 4.7.2 No person may speak at a meeting, except as recognized by the Chair.
- 4.7.3 Decorum at meetings shall be strictly upheld. All persons attending meetings shall show respect for others in their language and conduct. The Chair shall expel any person who interrupts or disrupts a meeting, as per s.207(3) of [the Act](#).

4.8 MOTIONS

- 4.8.1 A Trustee wishing to make a motion shall do so in accordance with the following procedure:
- 4.8.1.1 The motion along with an explanatory rationale shall be delivered to the Director in writing by no later than noon one business day before the agenda is published. Motions submitted in writing after the deadline will be placed under Notice(s) of Motion on the agenda.
 - 4.8.1.2 Notwithstanding a) above, a Trustee may make a motion related to any action item on the agenda without prior notice.
 - 4.8.1.3 Where prior notice is not possible to deal with an urgent matter that cannot be dealt with at the next regular meeting, or a non-material matter, a Trustee may make a motion to suspend the notice requirement, which if passed by a two-thirds majority of Trustees present, or quorum, whichever is greater, will allow the motion to proceed for a decision.
 - 4.8.1.4 A Trustee wishing to publicly announce their intention to submit a future motion may do so during Trustee Questions of Clarification
- 4.8.2 A Student Trustee is not entitled to move a motion, but is entitled to suggest a motion on any matter at a meeting of the board or of one of its committees on which the Student Trustee sits, and if no member of the board or committee, as the case may be, moves the suggested motion, the record shall show the suggested motion, in accordance with the [the Act](#), s.55(4).

4.9 MINUTES

- 4.9.1 Minutes shall be kept in accordance with the provisions s.198(1)(a) of [the Act](#), and shall be received for approval by Trustees at the next regular meeting.
- 4.9.2 Minutes shall include:
- 4.9.2.1. the type of meeting, date, time of commencement and adjournment, and place of the meeting;
 - 4.9.2.2. the signatures of the Director or their designate and the Chair;
 - 4.9.2.3. all motions moved and seconded and results of votes;

- 4.9.2.4. all notices of motions;
 - 4.9.2.5. all points of order and appeals, and their dispositions;
 - 4.9.2.6. the results of all recorded votes, with the exception of the process for the election of Chair and Vice-Chair;
 - 4.9.2.7. attendance of Trustees for each public and private session, including results of motions to authorize a Trustee's absence;
 - 4.9.2.8. the time of arrival and departure of Trustees not in attendance for the entire duration of a meeting; and
 - 4.9.2.9. attendance of the Student Trustees.
- 4.9.3 A copy of the draft minutes shall be included in the agenda package.

4.10 RECESS AND ADJOURNMENT

- 4.10.1 At any time during a meeting, the Chair may declare a time-limited recess.
- 4.10.2 The Chair shall declare a Board meeting adjourned when the business of the agenda has been completed.
- 4.10.3 In the event that the business of an agenda of a regular board meeting has not been completed by 10 p.m., the Chair shall call for a motion to extend the meeting for a specified number of minutes, not to exceed 60 minutes. Should the business of the agenda still not be completed when the extension expires or at 11 p.m., the Chair shall adjourn the meeting to another day to complete the remainder of the unfinished agenda items.

4.11 CANCELLATION

- 4.11.1 Where the business at hand is insufficient to warrant a regular meeting or in the event of inclement weather or emergency, the Chair, in consultation with the Vice-Chair and the Director, may cancel a meeting. If after reasonable efforts the Chair cannot be reached, the Vice-Chair, in consultation with the Director may cancel a meeting.
- 4.11.2 In the event a meeting is cancelled, the Director shall notify Trustees in writing and a Notice of the cancellation shall be posted on the HDSB website. If practical, a notice shall also be posted at the meeting place. If the cancellation is within 48 hours of the originally scheduled date of the meeting, then notice will also occur verbally.
- 4.11.3 In the event of a cancellation of a regular meeting, agenda items from the cancelled meeting shall be brought forward to the next regular meeting.

4.12 PRIVATE SESSION AS COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE BOARD

- 4.12.1 During any meeting of the Board of Trustees, the Board of Trustees may resolve to meet as Committee of the Whole Board in Private Session to deliberate the following matters, as described in the [the Act](#) s.207(2) and 207(2.1):
 - a. the security of the property of the board;
 - b. the disclosure of intimate, personal or financial information in respect of a member of the board or committee (e.g., to consider a breach of the Trustee Code of Conduct), an employee or prospective employee of the board or a pupil or their parent or guardian;
 - c. the acquisition or disposal of a school site;

- d. decisions in respect of negotiations with employees of the board; and/or
 - e. litigation affecting the board.
 - f. an ongoing investigation under the Ombudsman Act respecting the Board.
- 4.12.2 Private Session of the Committee of the Whole Board shall comply with procedures provided in the [Appointments to Committees and Other Roles Governance Procedure](#), as may be amended from time to time.

PART V: PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

5.1 RULES OF ORDER

- 5.1.1 Subject to the provisions of PART I, Section 1.1, in all cases not provided for by these special rules of order below or where the special rules of order render a situation absurd, the rules and practice of latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised ("Robert's Rules of Order") shall govern as far as applicable.
- 5.1.2 No Trustee shall speak longer than three minutes at any one time. That time shall include one follow-up question if required. For Action Items, Trustees shall speak no more than three times and no more than twice to any other item. Should debate need to continue, a motion to extend debate may be made.

5.2 DEBATE

- 5.2.1 Debate of a motion shall only take place after it has been moved, and where required, seconded and after the Presiding Officer states the motion.
- 5.2.2 The mover of a motion may alter the wording, or withdraw the motion, up until such time as the motion is stated by the Presiding Officer. Once stated by the Presiding Officer, and thereby recorded in the minutes, the motion is in control of the Board of Trustees and cannot be withdrawn or amended without passing a motion to do so.
- 5.2.3 Where a Trustee is the author of a report, that Trustee shall be given the opportunity to move any recommendations in that report and/or immediately respond to any questions of clarification directed to the Trustee.
- 5.2.4 Student Trustees may participate in the debate of a motion in the same manner as Trustees.
- 5.2.5 If a motion is debatable, the Trustee moving the motion may be the first to speak to the motion.
- 5.2.6 Any other Trustee desiring to speak shall so indicate and await recognition by the Presiding Officer, except when Robert's Rules of Order permit the interruption of a speaker.
- 5.2.7 First time speakers shall be given priority over second time speakers.
- 5.2.8 Trustees shall at all times during debate:

- 5.2.8.1. maintain a courteous tone;
- 5.2.8.2. avoid reference to the personalities or motives of other Trustees or staff;
- 5.2.8.3. respectfully avoid comment while another speaker has the floor;
- 5.2.8.4. address all remarks and questions to the Presiding Officer;
- 5.2.8.5. confine all remarks and questions to the motion which is the subject of discussion; and
- 5.2.8.6. recognize the Presiding Officer controls the floor.
- 5.2.9. When the question under consideration contains two or more unrelated items, a Trustee alone may demand a division of the question and the items shall be voted on separately. A Trustee may also move a motion to divide a question that is a single-subject motion but has two or more parts. The motion to divide the question must pass first before the individual part motions are considered.
- 5.2.10. A Trustee may move to amend a motion on the floor, or to amend an amendment.
- 5.2.11. Any Trustee may request the motion under discussion to be read at any time in the course of the debate, provided that no such request is made so as to interrupt a Trustee who is speaking to the question.
- 5.2.12. No Trustee shall be interrupted while speaking, except by a Trustee to move a motion that permits interruption in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order, including a privileged motion and point of order. In such a case, the Trustee speaking shall remain silent until the motion is decided or ruled on by the Presiding Officer. A Trustee so interrupting shall speak to the motion, point of order, etc. that is the subject for the interruption.
- 5.2.13. At any point prior to the vote being called on a motion, a Trustee may move that the matter be referred to a committee, postponed to a certain time, or postponed indefinitely.
- 5.2.14. A motion to extend debate must pass by a two-thirds majority of those Trustees present and voting, or a quorum of the Board of Trustees, whichever is greater, to pass.

5.3 VOTING

- 5.3.1. Unless this By-law or Robert's Rules of Order provide otherwise, the voting threshold to pass a motion shall be a majority of the Trustees present and voting.
- 5.3.2. The Presiding Officer shall put a question to a vote when the Presiding Officer is satisfied that all of the Trustees permitted to speak have done so.
- 5.3.3. A Trustee may move to call the question while some speakers still remain to be heard, but such a motion must be seconded and requires a two-thirds majority of those Trustees present and voting, or a quorum of the Board, whichever is greater, to pass.
- 5.3.4. After the Presiding Officer has put a question to a vote, there shall be no further debate and no Trustee shall cross or leave the room. The decision of the Presiding Officer as to whether the question has been finally put shall be conclusive.
- 5.3.5. Every Trustee present, including the Chair, but excluding those Trustees who have declared a conflict of interest, shall vote on all questions put to a vote. Trustees who have declared a conflict of interest during any in-camera meeting must leave the

room during the debate and not return until after the vote. It is recommended that a Trustee who has a conflict of interest during a public meeting leave the meeting room during the debate and not return until after the vote.

- 5.3.6 Voting on certain Board Report topics shall be done in accordance with Appendix C.
- 5.3.7 Student Trustee votes shall be requested but are not required and do not affect the Board's final decision, though they may be recorded. Student Trustees may abstain from any vote.
- 5.3.8 Where the number of votes for and against is tied, the question shall be declared defeated.
- 5.3.9 The result of a vote shall be tabulated and declared by the Presiding Officer and recorded in the minutes. Unanimous votes shall be declared and recorded as such.
- 5.3.10 Any motion that is lost may not be reintroduced at a subsequent meeting during the current term of the Board of Trustees or within a period of four months, whichever is less.

5.4 PASSING THE GAVEL

- 5.4.1 The Chair shall pass the gavel to the Vice-Chair and allow the Vice-Chair to preside under the following circumstances:
 - 5.4.1.1 in order to speak to a motion;
 - 5.4.1.2 while a motion that the Chair has moved is being debated; or
 - 5.4.1.3 when a ruling of the Chair has been challenged.
- 5.4.2 The Vice-Chair shall pass the gavel back to the Chair as soon as the circumstances listed above no longer exist.

5.5 SUSPENDING THE RULES OF ORDER

- 5.5.1 A Trustee may bring a motion to suspend a rule of order contained in this By-law or in Robert's Rules of Order, to apply only to the meeting at which the motion has been brought, and such a motion must receive at least a two-thirds majority of those present and voting, or a quorum of the Board, whichever is greater, to pass.

PART VI: AMENDMENTS

- 6.1 This By-law may be amended at any regular meeting provided the motion passes by at least a two-thirds vote of the Trustees present and voting.
- 6.2 A motion to amend this By-law shall include the precise written amendment; the rationale for the amendment; a copy of the current form of By-law and the By-law as it shall be read if the amendment is adopted.
- 6.3 Upon approving the amendment(s) to this By-law, the Chair and Vice-Chair shall sign and date the amended By-law and all previous versions of the By-law shall be revoked.

APPENDIX A -- REGULAR BOARD MEETINGS - PUBLIC SESSION AGENDA



Board Meeting Agenda

Public Session Agenda

Day Month, Year

J.W. Singleton Education Centre, 2050 Guelph Line, Burlington, ON
6 p.m.

1. Opening

- 1.1. Call to Order and Attendance
 - 1.1.1. Motion to authorize Trustee absence (if required)
- 1.2. Acknowledgement of Traditional Lands
- 1.3. Approval of the Agenda

2. Declarations of Possible Conflict of Interest

3. Delegations / Presentations to the Board

- 3.1. Inspire Award Presentations (list names)
- 3.2. Student Trustee Report
- 3.3. Delegations
- 3.4. Presentations

4. Consent Agenda

- 4.1. Approval of Minutes
 - 4.1.1. Halton District School Board Minutes, [date]
- 4.2. Receipt of Periodic Information items on consent
 - 4.2.1. Approved Minutes of Committee of the Whole Board [date]
 - 4.2.2. Outstanding Action Items
 - 4.2.3. Board Report Schedule
 - 4.2.4. Policy and Governance Procedures Review Report
 - 4.2.5. Approved Minutes of Standing Committees [date]
 - 4.2.6. Items as needed
- 4.3. Correspondence

5. Ratification / Action

- 5.1. Action Items [current meeting date]
- 5.2. For Future Action

6. Communication to the Board

- 6.1. For Information
- 6.2. Notice(s) of Motion
- 6.3. Director's Report
- 6.4. Communications from the Chair
- 6.5. Committee Updates
- 6.6. OPSBA Update
- 6.7. Trustee Questions of Clarification
- 6.8. Trustee News

7. Private Session

- 7.1. Committee of the Whole Private Session (date + items include matters as listed in the Education Act subsection 207(2))

8. Approval of Business Transacted at Committee of the Whole Private Session

9. Adjournment

APPENDIX B -- SPECIAL BOARD MEETING - PUBLIC SESSION AGENDA



Special Board Meeting Agenda

Public Session Agenda

Day Month, Year

J.W. Singleton Education Centre, 2050 Guelph Line, Burlington, ON

TIME

1. Opening

- 1.1. Call to Order and Attendance
- 1.2. Acknowledgement of Traditional Lands
- 1.3. Reason for meeting
- 1.4. Approval of Agenda

2. Declarations of Possible Conflict of Interest

3. Delegations / Presentations

- 3.1. Delegations
- 3.2. Presentations

4. Ratification / Action

- 4.1. Action Items
 - 4.1.1. (designated topic for Special Meeting)

5. Communication to the Board

- 5.1. Items for Information
- 5.2. Trustee Questions of Clarification

6. Private Session

- 6.1. Committee of the Whole Private Session (date + items include matters as listed in the Education Act subsection 207(2))

7. Approval of Business Transacted at Committee of the Whole Private Session

8. Adjournment

APPENDIX C - REPORTS REQUIRING TWO PRESENTATIONS

The following reports shall be presented at a Committee of the Whole Meeting or at a Board Meeting prior to being presented for decision. Wherever possible, preference is to have reports appear at Committee of the Whole first.

1. Boundary Reviews
2. Budget
3. Education Development Charge (EDC) By-law
 - 3.1. Must appear at two public Board Meetings per *the Act 257.63 (1)*
4. Governance By-law
5. Multi-Year Strategic Plan
6. Policies and Governance Procedures
 - 6.1. Advance presentation is not required in the following cases:
 - 6.1.1. Appendices
 - 6.1.2. Changes required by legislation
 - 6.1.3. Changes approved by prior Board motion
 - 6.1.4. Housekeeping
7. School Naming
8. Special Education Plan per the Act, R.R.O. 1990, Reg. 306.

APPENDIX D - TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

Board Chair

The Chair has a wide range of roles and responsibilities as outlined below. The most publicly visible aspect of the Chair's duties is to chair Board meetings; however there is considerable work done in-between Board meetings, and this work is actually the essence of the role.

Duties

[Education Act Section 218.4 Duties of Board Chair](#) outlines the legislative framework of the Chair's duties.

The [Board's Governance By-law](#) establishes how the duties of the Chair are carried out in the HDSB with respect to:

- Trustee Communications
- Speaking on behalf of the Board
- Board Meetings
- Special Board Meetings
- Agendas
- Communications
- Recess and Adjournment
- Cancellation
- Debate
- Voting
- Passing the Gavel

The [Appointments to Committees and Other Roles Governance Procedure](#) outlines the Chair's role with respect to:

- Striking Committee
- Committee of the Whole

Other Responsibilities

- Attend Halton Union Coalition meetings;
- Attend Minister's Conference Calls with Chairs;
- Check-in with Director weekly;
- Check-in with the Vice-Chair weekly;
- Check-in with Trustees periodically;
- Provide Trustees and Director with summary of activities weekly;

- Be available to every Trustee, as needed;
- Review the status of motions with the Director and Vice-Chair monthly to ensure they are up-to-date;
- Attend special events as Chair of the Board;
- Attend committee meetings in an ex-officio member capacity periodically;
- Ensure the Board is focussed on the Multi-Year Plan (section 169.1 of the Act);
- Maintain Trustees' focus on the governance of the board;
- Support Trustee participation in Professional Development opportunities; and
- Review and approve Trustees' expenses according to the Trustee Expenses Governance Procedure

Board Vice-Chair

The Vice-Chair's primary responsibility is chairing the Committee of the Whole meetings, public and private, and following up on any questions or concerns raised during the meeting. The Vice-Chair also supports the Chair in fulfilling their role.

Duties

The [Board's Governance By-law](#) establishes how the duties of the Vice-Chair are carried out in the HDSB with respect to:

- Board Meetings
- Special Board Meetings
- Agendas
- Cancellation
- Passing the Gavel

The [Appointments to Committees and Other Roles Governance Procedure](#) outlines the Vice-Chair's role with respect to:

- Striking Committee
- Committee of the Whole

Other Responsibilities

- Check-in with the Chair weekly;
- Chair Board meetings in the absence of the Chair;
- Review the status of motions with the Director and Chair monthly to ensure they are up-to-date;
- Work with the Chair to identify professional development needs and opportunities for Trustees;

- Support the Chair in ensuring the Board is focussed on the Multi-Year Plan (section 169.1 of the Act);
- Support the Chair in maintaining Trustees' focus on the governance of the board;
- Attend special events as invited; and
- Fill in for the Chair as needed.

APPENDIX E - REVISION HISTORY

Executive Summary of Changes to the By-law effective April 7, 2026

1. Aligned reasons for vacating a seat with the Act (Vacated Positions, section 2.3)
2. Added requirement that all supporting materials be provided with the agenda (Regular Meetings, section 4.1.4) and updated notice required for special board meetings (Notice of Special Board Meetings, section 4.3.3.2)
3. Incorporated the contents of the Electronic Meetings and Meeting Attendance Policy and deletion of that policy, and additional notice requirements for Trustee who will be absent from a meeting (Attendance, section 4.5)
4. Limited extensions of regular meetings to one hour / 11 p.m. (Recess and Adjournment, section 4.10.3)
5. Removed the requirement for verbal notice if a meeting is cancelled with more than 48 hours' notice (Cancellation, section 4.11.2)
6. Providing for matters related to investigations by the Ombudsman to be reviewed in private session (Private Session as Committee of the Whole Board, section 4.12.1)
7. Applying speaking limits to all items, not only information and action items (Rules of Order, section 5.1.2)
8. Updating agenda templates (Appendix A & B)
9. Removing the requirement for the Long-Term Accommodation Plan (LTAP) and School Year Calendar to appear twice before approval by the Board (Appendix C)
10. Housekeeping changes

Executive Summary of Changes to the By-law effective June 5, 2024

1. Part II Title updated
2. Section 2.1.3 - a reference to Trustee Professional Development has been added;
3. Sections 4.2.1 and 4.2.4 - Timing of Inaugural and Annual Organizational Meetings has been updated to align with the Municipal Elections Act and reflect changes to our meeting schedule;
4. Section 4.5.1 - changes the publication of regular Board Meeting Agendas from 96 hours to 120 hours;
5. Section 4.5.3 - clarifies that the Agenda template is a guideline;
6. Appendix A - reflects changes to the timing of Public and Private Session of regular Board Meetings, and the change of the name of the Order Paper to Status of Motions;
7. Appendix B - reflects changes to the timing of Public and Private Session for Special Board Meetings;
8. Appendix C - removes the Operational Plan from the list of items required to appear at two meetings prior to approval; and
9. Housekeeping changes

Executive Summary of Changes to the By-law effective March 6, 2024

1. Add Terms of Reference for the Chair and Vice-Chair (Appendix D).

Executive Summary of Changes to the By-law effective November 1, 2023

1. Rename the appendix to accurately reflect the content.
2. Remove all reports that are acted on immediately as. Trustees and staff only need to
3. know which reports require multiple appearances.
4. Removed three reports (Capital Plans, Special Education Review Report with
5. Recommendations, and Trustee Honoraria (Appendix A Schedule 1).
6. Add one report (School Naming).
7. Add disclaimers to note that appendices are to be excluded from multiple appearances.
8. Eliminate the practice of some reports appearing 3 times, once at COTW and twice at Board (e.g. policies, governance procedures, governance By-law).

Executive Summary of Changes to the By-law effective June 21, 2023

1. Updated 4.1.2-4.1.3 for clarity and to reflect practice of setting the meeting schedule and accommodating conflicts.
2. Removed redundancies related to quorum 4.4.3; delete 4.4.4
3. Clarified Trustee motions and placement on the agenda, 4.5.5.
4. Deleted "Public Questions" from Agenda templates Appendix A & B.

Executive Summary of Changes to the By-law effective May 17, 2023

1. Insert hyper-links to all policies, procedures, and external documents
2. Deleted redundant words from 1.1.1.
3. Deleted 4.2.3.
4. Edited 4.4.2 for clear language.
5. Added 4.5.1 D to prescribe public notice requirements for Special Meetings.
6. Edited 4.5.5. a. 1) to account for meetings that fall on a day other than Wednesday.
7. Edited 4.5.6.B. to reflect current practice
8. Updated Appendix A - Regular Meeting agenda template
9. Updated Appendix B - Special Meeting agenda template

Executive Summary of Changes to the By-law effective September 21, 2022

1. Introduction
 - Use the same branding template as used in Policy and Governance Procedures documents (i.e. HDSB logo and revision information).
 - Renamed to Board Governance By-Law to reflect the nature of this By-law.
 - Added introduction stating the general purpose and application of the By-law.
2. Numbering

- Use of “Parts”, articles, section and subsection numbering system: Part 1; 1.1,1.2, 2.1, 2.2, and so on.
3. Review cycle
 - Added a review cycle of the By-law that is “no less than every four (4) years”.
 4. Part I - Interpretation
 - Definitions - Remove Definitions and create a separate “Definitions” document to be appended to the Policy and Procedure Framework Policy.
 5. Part II
 - Changed the responsibility for communicating school based events from the Chair to individual Trustees.
 - Added an example of a reason why a Trustee vacancy might occur part way through a term.
 6. Part III - Officers
 - Formatting (i.e. use of bulleted list).
 - Added notation regarding inaugural and organizational meetings of the Board.
 - Added “Secretary of the Board”.
 - Extracted procedure for election of Chair and Vice-Chair to be considered. separately as a separate Governance Procedure.
 - Revised subsection titles to reflect context of the subsection.
 - Added “Vacated Positions” subsection, with provisions of the Education Act.
 7. Part IV - Meetings
 - Added references to the Education Act.
 - Notice - specified a time by which notice must be posted.
 - Agendas - Expanded on the meaning of “Consent Agenda” and consideration of same.
 - Motions - Added bullet regarding Student Trustee motions, verbatim from the Education Act.
 - Minutes - added f) on recorded votes and added “third consecutive” to the requirement to record a motion regarding a Trustee’s absence.
 - Meetings - added faith-based days of significance and statutory holidays, simplified Private Session section, added reference to Committees and Appointments Governance Procedure, changed the requirement for Trustees to notify the Chair of an absence from “shall” to “may”.
 8. Part VI - Amendments
 - Added that the Chair and Vice-Chair shall sign the By-law once it has been ratified.
 9. Appendices to be reviewed/revised
 - Board Meeting Agenda (Public) - reviewed and amended
 - Board Meeting Agenda (Private) - removed

- Move Committee of the Whole Agendas (Public and Private) to Committees Governance Procedure (Board Committees Working Group)
 - Create a Special Board Meeting Agenda Template
 - Create an appendix which includes the [Board Reports – Immediate or Deferred Consideration/Approval](#)
10. Revision History
- Re-insert Revision History as an appendix
 - Capture the revision history for changes made since June 2019, including this review
11. Feedback from Trustees
- Placement of Student Trustee Report on Agenda
 - Move all COTW items to Committees Governance Procedure (Board Committees Working Group)
 - Part III: Officers - Officers of the Board, item #3 clarified
 - Determine how often the By-laws should be reviewed
12. Update reference from 'Robert's Rules of Order' to 'Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised'
13. Housekeeping
- Revised order of "parts" so that appendices appear after all part of the By-law
 - Standardize spelling
 - All variations of "Vice-Chair"
 - All variations of "By-law"
 - Standardize word use
 - Where appropriate, used the term "Board of Trustees" and "Halton District School Board", or "HDSB", instead of "Board" for clarity.
 - Consistently use "shall" (replace all use of "will")
 - Remove extraneous words
 - "Chair of the Board" -- Chair
 - "Vice-Chair of the Board" -- Vice-Chair
 - "Director of Education" -- Director
 - "Education Act" – *the Act*
 - "Regular Board Meeting" -- regular meeting
 - "Special Board Meeting -- special meeting

Executive Summary of Changes to the By-laws effective December 1, 2021

1. Part III: Officers of the Board -- The election of the Chair and Vice-Chair has been updated to ensure a process is in place should no Trustee put their name forward to run for these positions.

Executive Summary of Changes to the By-laws effective October 20, 2021

1. Part IV: Regular Meetings -- Meetings have been updated to ensure regular meetings do not occur while students are not in school.

Executive Summary of Changes to the By-laws effective June 19, 2019

1. The Delegations By-law included information that falls within the domain of Governance Policies and/or Governance Procedures. The Delegations By-laws was rescinded concurrent with the approval of Delegation Governance Policies and Governance Procedures.
2. Grammar, spelling and other general housekeeping changes have been made throughout the By-laws.

Executive Summary of Changes to the By-laws effective April 17, 2019

1. The Committees and Naming of Schools By-laws included information that falls within the domain of Governance Policies and/or Governance Procedures. The Committees and Naming of Schools By-laws were rescinded concurrent with the approval of their respective Governance Policies and Governance Procedures.

Executive Summary of Changes to the By-laws effective October 17, 2018

1. Additions:
 - a. Part I: Definitions have been updated to include Presiding Officer and Student Trustee
 - b. Part II: Trustee Communications section has been updated to include that correspondence directed by Board motion shall be shared publicly in the Chair's Report in the Board agenda package, and shared on the Board website.
 - c. Part II: Trustee Communications section has been updated to include that Trustees are encouraged to liaise with various levels of government in their role as Trustee.
 - d. Part IV: Regular Meeting section has been updated to include that a motion to approve Trustee absences is required in keeping with the attendance requirements of *the Act*.
 - e. Part IV: Participation in Meetings through Electronic Means section has been added. Applicable references to legislation have been added throughout the By-laws.
2. Modifications:
 - a. Part III: Role of the Chair section has been amended as per applicable legislation
 - b. Part IV: Motions section has been amended to include that amendments must not be contrary to the main motion in keeping with Robert's Rules of Order.
 - c. Part VI: Meeting Minutes section has been amended as per applicable legislation.
 - d. Part VI: Recess and Adjournment of Meetings section has been amended in keeping with Robert's Rules of Order.
 - e. Part VI: Recess and Adjournment of Meetings section has been amended to include that Motions to Extend Meetings shall now require the length of extension (e.g. 15 minutes, 30 minutes). Subsequent motions to extend shall be permitted as required.

- f. Part V: Debate of a Motion section has been amended to specify that debate of information items is limited to two opportunities and debate of action items is limited to three opportunities, each no longer than three minutes, with one follow-up allowed within the time limit – motions to extend debate beyond these limits can be accommodated for more significant items.
 - g. Part V: Suspend the Rules of Order section (previously entitled Waiving the Rules) has been updated in keeping with Robert's Rules of Order.
 - h. Part IX: Amendments to the By-laws has been amended to require a 2/3rds majority (currently just a simple majority) in keeping with Robert's Rules of Order.
3. Grammar, spelling and other general housekeeping changes have been made throughout the By-laws.