

Toronto District School Board

Policy P039

Title: **ELECTRONIC PARTICIPATION IN MEETINGS**

Adopted: June 28, 2000

Effected: June 28, 2000

Revised: March 7, 2001; June 26, 2002; April 16, 2003; **February 6, 2019**

Reviewed: December 2012; **February 6, 2019**

Authorization: Board of Trustees

1.0 RATIONALE

The Electronic Participation in Meetings Policy (the “Policy”) supports the requirements under the *Education Act* and Ontario Regulation 463/97 – Electronic Meetings related to electronic participation by Trustees in the meetings of the Board of Trustees and its Committees and is consistent with the Board’s Bylaws.

2.0 OBJECTIVE

To govern electronic participation by Trustees in the meetings of the Board of Trustees and its Committees in accordance with the *Education Act* and its regulations.

3.0 DEFINITIONS

Board refers to the Toronto District School Board, which is also referred to as “TDSB.”

Chair means the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees or of any Committee.

Committee refers to committees of the Board of Trustees established pursuant to Board Bylaws.

TDSB refers to the Toronto District School Board, which is also referred to as the “Board.”

4.0 RESPONSIBILITY

The Director of Education holds primary responsibility for overseeing this Policy. Within the Director’s Office, the responsibility for the day-to-day management

and coordination of the Policy is assigned to the Executive Officer of Governance and Board Services.

5.0 APPLICATION AND SCOPE

This Policy applies to all Trustees of the Board participating in the meetings of the Board of Trustees and its Committees.

6.0 POLICY

- 6.1. The Board will provide Trustees with an opportunity to participate electronically in Board of Trustees and Committee meetings in accordance with the provisions as outlined in the *Education Act* and its regulations.
- 6.2. Trustees will make every effort to provide notice to the Director of Education (via Board Services) if they intend to participate electronically by 5 p.m. on the day prior to the Board of Trustees or Committee meeting.
- 6.3. Trustees attending the meeting electronically will advise the Chair when joining the meeting to be deemed present at the meeting.
- 6.4. Trustees, who leave the meeting before adjournment, whether temporary or permanent, will advise the Chair.
- 6.5. The Board will protect the security and confidentiality of all meetings held in private, including those where Trustees participate by electronic means.
- 6.6. Student Trustees may not participate electronically in meetings that are closed to the public in accordance with the *Education Act*.
- 6.7. Trustees who declare a conflict of interest must withdraw from the closed (private) session, including electronic/audio participation, for the entire discussion of the matter about which they have declared a conflict.
- 6.8. Notwithstanding section 6.1 of this Policy as outlined above, the following persons must be physically present:

At every Board of Trustees or Committee of the Whole meeting:

- (a) The Board of Trustees' Chair or designate;
- (b) At least one additional Trustee of the Board; and
- (c) The Director of Education or designate.

At every Committee meeting:

- (a) The Committee Chair or designate; and

(b) The Director of Education or designate.

6.9. The Chair of the Board or Committee Chair and/or their designate(s) may preside over a meeting electronically when either weather conditions do not allow the Chair to travel to the meeting location safely or the Chair cannot be physically present at the meeting for health reasons.

6.10. Notwithstanding section 6.9 of this Policy as outlined above, no more than half of the Board of Trustee or Committee meetings can be chaired electronically in a twelve (12) month period in accordance with Ontario Regulation 463/97.

6.11. All members participating via audio conference who are not speaking must use the mute function on their device.

6.12. Members will make every effort to avoid disrupting a meeting by turning personal and electronic devices to a non-audible function, reducing all background noise (including audible sounds transmitted from placing a call on hold), and refraining from private conversations.

7.0 SPECIFIC DIRECTIVES

The Director of Education is authorized to issue operational procedures to implement this Policy.

8.0 EVALUATION

This Policy is to be reviewed and updated as required, but at minimum, every four (4) years.

9.0 APPENDICES

NA

10.0 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Legislative Acts and Regulations:

- *Education Act*
- Ontario Regulation 463/97 – Electronic Meetings

Other Documents:

- Board Bylaws (December 1, 2018)