

# Toronto District School Board

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Policy P070

Title: **STUDENT LEADERSHIP**

Adopted: September 23, 2009

Effectuated: September 23, 2009

Revised: May 18, 2011; **January 22, 2025**

Reviewed: May 18, 2022; March 2012; **January 22, 2025**

Authorization: Board of Trustees

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## 1. RATIONALE

The Student Leadership Policy (the “Policy”) supports the requirements under the *Education Act* and its regulations, including Ontario Regulation 7/07 – Student Trustees. The Policy is aligned with the Board Bylaws.

## 2. OBJECTIVE

- To further the Board's commitment of expanding platforms for student voice and establishing a governance framework for equitable, effective and efficient student representation and leadership across the system.
- To affirm the leadership roles of Student Council, Student Presidents' Council, Student Senate and Student Trustees in advancing interests and aspirations of TDSB students and the promotion of effective communication.
- To provide resources and opportunities in order to build and foster a diverse group of student leaders.

## 3. DEFINITIONS

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

*Student Presidents' Council* is an advisory committee of student leaders composed of Student Council presidents or designates from each TDSB secondary school.

*Student* is any person enrolled in a school run by the Board. Schools include, but are not limited to: elementary schools, secondary schools, alternative schools, adult learning centres, and continuing education programs.

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*Student Communication* is a written and/or electronic communication sent by Student Trustees and Student Senate members to all secondary school students, Student Councils, or any other mass distribution and/or consumption. These communications include all digital, electronic and social media platforms, and other forms of written communications. It also applies to any electronic posting on the Student page of the TDSB website.

*Student Council* is a student-run organization in a school which represents the entire student body. Student Councils are also known as SAC (student activity/administrative councils) or student government.

*Student Senate* is a body of student leaders established by the Board and democratically elected by students. It represents and advocates for all students in the Board.

*Student Senate Constitution* is a document that outlines the membership, composition, roles and responsibilities of Student Senate members and the Student Senate election process. The Constitution is reviewed annually at the beginning of each school year.

*Student Trustee* is a TDSB student in Grade 11 or 12 who represents the interest of students to the Board of Trustees. Student trustees have certain privileges and duties which are outlined in the TDSB Bylaws.

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

#### **4. RESPONSIBILITY**

The Director of Education holds primary responsibility for the implementation of this Policy.

Within the Director’s Office, the responsibility for the coordination and day-to-day management of the Policy is assigned to the Associate Director, Student Learning and Equitable Outcomes.

#### **5. APPLICATION AND SCOPE**

This Policy applies to all TDSB students, employees and Trustees involved in student leadership activities.

#### **6. POLICY**

##### **6.1. Guiding Principles**

- 6.1.1. The TDSB is committed to supporting student engagement and student leadership in TDSB's decision-making.

- 6.1.2. The TDSB recognizes the important role of student leaders who elevate student voice and advance student interests.
- 6.1.3. The TDSB will provide the staff support, resources and training to student leadership groups.
- 6.1.4. The TDSB has different types of student leadership groups, including but not limited to: Student Councils, the Student Presidents' Council, the Student Senate, and Student Trustees. Other student leadership groups may be developed based on the emerging needs of students and/or the Board (e.g., Toronto Indigenous Youth Council and Youth Participatory Action Research [YPAR] Groups).
- 6.1.5. The TDSB recognizes all leadership groups in its schools that give students an opportunity to exercise student voice and/or develop their leadership skills such as affinity groups, clubs, student unions and student alliances. Each group contributes to the vitality and positive climate of TDSB schools.
- 6.1.6. TDSB student leaders will serve as role models and mentors for their peers and school communities, by exemplifying high standards of conduct and behaviour, as outlined in the Board Code of Conduct (PR585).

### ***Student Governance Framework***

#### **6.2. Student Councils**

- 6.2.1. Student Councils will be established in schools with students in grades 7 and above to carry out student advocacy functions at these schools and to administer a variety of student-run activities and initiatives to support the student body, while enhancing student voice in TDSB schools.
- 6.2.2. All Student Council positions will be democratically elected by the students in grades 7 and above in the school through a balloting or other democratic process determined by the school administration, teachers, and students, in consultation with the Student Council.
- 6.2.3. Student Councils will be mandatory in all schools that offer grades 7 to 12 programming with the exception of alternative schools and adult learning centres.
- 6.2.4. Full-time students will be eligible to become candidates for school Student Council elections. Candidates are required to obtain a staff sponsor to support their nomination.
- 6.2.5. A minimum of one staff advisor will be appointed by the Principal to provide guidance to the candidates for Student Council.
- 6.2.6. Student Councils will serve as the main contact for consultation on matters related to the local student body and will work proactively

with the school administration and the school council, when appropriate, to resolve issues related to the interests of the student body.

- 6.2.7. Student Councils will operate in accordance with a locally developed constitution that adheres to the Board's Equity Policy (P037).
- 6.2.8. The Board will establish minimum requirements and provide a template for schools to use when developing local individual school constitutions.

### **6.3. Student Presidents' Council**

- 6.3.1. TDSB will establish a Student Presidents' Council, comprising all secondary school Student Council presidents (or designates).
- 6.3.2. The Student Presidents' Council will advise the Student Senate and Student Trustees on the issues and interests of their local schools.
- 6.3.3. The Student Presidents' Council will elect a Chair and Vice-Chair from amongst its members.
- 6.3.4. The Student Presidents' Council, at times determined by the Council, will be responsible for hosting meetings to bring forward student concerns from every secondary school to the Student Senate and Student Trustees.

### **6.4. Student Senate**

- 6.4.1. The Board will provide support to the Student Senate to help achieve its mandate of upholding responsible and equitable representation of all TDSB students.
- 6.4.2. The Student Senate will operate in accordance with the Student Senate Constitution to elevate student voice throughout the Board.
- 6.4.3. The Student Senate may have a standing item on the Planning and Priorities Committee agenda and will report to the Board of Trustees through the Planning and Priorities Committee.
- 6.4.4. The Student Senate will represent all students in the Board and will be the main contact for consultation on matters related to the TDSB student body.
- 6.4.5. The Student Senate will be composed of a minimum of twenty-two (22) members, democratically elected by the student body of the Board at large and representative of all Family of Schools.
- 6.4.6. A Superintendent of Education will be appointed by the Director of Education to provide guidance to the Student Senate.
- 6.4.7. Student Senate meetings will take place in various schools across the Board to encourage participation from all TDSB Family of Schools.

- 6.4.8. Meetings may be held in-person, or virtually, and are open for all TDSB students to attend.

## **6.5. Student Trustees**

- 6.5.1. In accordance with the *Education Act, Ontario Regulation 7/07* and the Board Bylaws, the Board will appoint three Student Trustees: two elected Student Trustees at large and one Indigenous Student Trustee selected by the Elders Council. Details regarding the election process for Student Trustees will be outlined in the Student Trustees Procedure (PR588).
- 6.5.2. Student Trustees will attend Board of Trustees and its committee meetings and act as a liaison between students, the Board and school communities. Student Trustees also sit on the Student Senate.

## ***Student Leadership Communications***

### **6.6. Student Councils and Student Presidents' Council**

- 6.6.1. Student Councils will work with their staff advisors and local principals to determine feasible communications methods for effective and efficient communication with their local school student bodies.
- 6.6.2. The Student Presidents' Council will work with the Student Senate and Student Trustees to disseminate Board wide messaging to their Student Councils and local student bodies.

### **6.7. Student Senate and Student Trustees**

- 6.7.1. Content and Design
  - (a) Student Trustees and Student Senate members will work with the TDSB Communications Advisor assigned to Student Senate and the Superintendent and/or lead staff advisor(s) to prepare and finalize their communications and postings on the Board's website. Student Trustees and Student Senate members are entitled to access copies of Board reports and other TDSB publications unless otherwise copyrighted.
  - (b) Student communications, as defined by this Policy, that are intended for mass distribution and/or consumption to TDSB students are intended to share factual information. They are not to contain criticisms of other Trustees, student or staff, or negative/liable statements about the Board or its schools. All student communications must abide by all applicable TDSB policies and procedures.
  - (c) All written and electronic materials must have the approval of the Superintendent, or designate, prior to publication.

#### 6.7.2. Communication Methods

##### (a) Student Senate Webpage

- The TDSB website will include a page for the Student Senate and Student Trustees to communicate information to TDSB students.
- Members of the Student Senate are responsible for items posted on this website, subject to the terms of this Policy.

##### (b) Media Relations

- As elected representatives of TDSB students, Student Trustees and Student Senate members must communicate in an articulate, effective and courteous manner. Student Trustees and Student Senate members are responsible for their comments made in public or to the media.

##### (c) Support and Resources

- TDSB staff will be available to assist Student Trustees or Student Senate members with media training prior to any public/media statements.

## 7. SPECIFIC DIRECTIVES

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

## 8. EVALUATION

This Policy will be reviewed as required, but at a minimum every five (5) years .

## 9. APPENDICES

N/A

## 10. REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

### Legislation

- *Education Act*
- Ontario Regulation 7/07: Student Trustees

### Policies

- Equity (P037)

### Procedures

- Board Code of Conduct (PR585)
- Student Trustees (PR588)

Other Documents:

- Board Bylaws
- Student Senate Constitution