



# Huron-Superior Catholic

## DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

### PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES ELECTRONIC MEETINGS

#### Provision of Electronic Meetings

At the request of any trustee, including student trustees, the board shall provide the member or representative with electronic means for participating in one or more meetings of the board or a committee of the board. The electronic means must permit all participants in the meeting to communicate with each other simultaneously and instantaneously. A trustee who participates in a meeting through electronic means is considered to be present at the meeting and will be recorded as being in attendance in the minutes.

#### Confidentiality in Electronic Meetings

All provisions in the legislation with regard to in-camera meetings and conflict of interest will apply for electronic meetings of the board or committees. Persons who wish to attend electronically and who are invited to participate in in-camera sessions must ensure that the contents of such meetings are kept secure and confidential. This may require these persons to wear headphones during the meeting, type messages, and/or participate from a private location (e.g., a room in one's home that is separated from others by a closed door), in addition to keeping the matters discussed confidential outside of the meeting. Furthermore, participants are encouraged to keep their cameras on and their true backgrounds visible as a means of demonstrating the privacy of their environments.

#### Requirement for Physical Attendance at Board Meetings or Committee of the Whole

As required by Ontario Regulation 313/24, all trustees must be physically present in the meeting room of the board at every regular meeting of the board and every regular meeting of a committee of the whole board in each year of the term of office. A trustee may participate in a meeting by electronic means instead of being physically present if the trustee receives written approval before the meeting begins. If a trustee proposes to participate in a board meeting or a committee of the whole meeting by electronic means, the trustee shall submit a request in writing and the reasons for the request to the chair of the board before the meeting begins. If the trustee making the request is the chair of the board the chair shall submit the request and reasons to the vice-chair of the board.

The chair or vice chair may approve a request if they are satisfied that one or more of the following circumstances exist:

- The trustee's primary place of residence within the area of jurisdiction of the board is located 125 kilometres or more from the meeting location.

- Weather conditions do not allow the trustee to travel to the meeting location safely.
- The trustee cannot be physically present at a meeting due to health-related issues.
- The trustee has a disability that makes it challenging to be physically present at a meeting.
- The trustee cannot be physically present due to family responsibilities in respect of:
  - The trustee's spouse.
  - A parent, step-parent or foster parent of the trustee or the trustee's spouse.
  - A child, step-child, foster child, or child who is under legal guardianship of the trustee or the trustee's spouse.
  - A relative of the trustee who is dependent on the trustee for care or assistance.
  - A person who is dependent on the trustee for care or assistance and who considers the member to be like a family member.

The chair or vice-chair shall not approve a request if the request would result in fewer than one trustee, in addition to the chair of the board or their delegate being physically present in the meeting room.

The director of education of the board or their designate must be physically present in the meeting room for each meeting of the board and each meeting of a committee of the board, including a committee of the whole board.

The requirements for in-person attendance do not apply if all schools of the board are closed pursuant to an order made by,

- The Minister of Education under section 5 (1) of the *Education Act*;
- A medical officer of health or the Chief Medical Officer of Health under section 22 or 77.1 of the *Health Protection Act*; or
- The Lieutenant Governor in Council under clause 4 (1) (a) of the *Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Response to COVID-19) Act, 2022*

If the order is made, the period starts on the day the order is made and ends 60 days after the order ceases to apply.

### Public Access to and Participation in Meetings

The meeting room of the board or of a committee of the board shall be open to permit physical attendance by members of the public at every regular meeting of the board or of the committee of the board, where the meeting is not closed to the public.

The board shall provide electronic means for members of the public to participate in meetings open to the public at sites to be determined by the board from time to time. Their participation shall be limited to:

- Observing/listening to proceedings of the board.
- Responding to board activities and/or providing input during the period of the board agenda Ten-Minute Question and Answer Period.