



Huron-Superior Catholic

DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES TRUSTEE EXPENSES

Purpose

The Huron Superior Catholic District School Board (HSCDSB) will reimburse trustees for expenses reasonably incurred in carrying out their responsibilities, while representing the interests of students, the community and/or the board. The board also recognizes that, during their term of elected office, trustees require support to effectively serve their constituents.

Definitions

The term “board” refers to the Board of Trustees, including members of the board elected or appointed in accordance with the *Ontario Municipal Elections Act*, and student trustees elected or appointed in accordance with the *Education Act* and HSCDSB policies. Duties and responsibilities of the board are defined under the *Education Act* and Ontario regulations.

Intended Outcomes

This policy and procedural guidelines are intended to ensure:

- Trustees who incur expenses while performing their duties on behalf of the board are reimbursed in a fair, consistent, and transparent manner.
- Compliance with the Ministry of Education School Board Expenditure Guidelines (2006: B15).
- Compliance with the *Broader Public Sector Expenses Directive*.

Administrative Procedures

This administrative procedure establishes criteria and processes for the reimbursement of expenses incurred by trustees while performing duties on behalf of the Huron-Superior Catholic District School Board. The board assumes no obligation in reimbursing expenses that are not in compliance with these procedures. All amounts paid are subject to budget restrictions set annually by the board and include expenditures from all sources of funding.

Responsibility

1. The Chair of the Board is responsible for the implementation of this policy and associated procedures, while ensuring compliance by trustees.

2. The Chair of the Board will inform the trustees of changes to mileage reimbursement rates on an annual basis and ensure that trustees have access to the most current electronic expense claim submission forms.
3. The Business Department, in communication with the Director of Education, will ensure approved expense claims are processed in a timely manner.
4. The Information Technology (IT) Department will coordinate the distribution of equipment and activation of services at the commencement of the trustees' term of office.

Equipment

At the beginning of each term of office, trustees will be offered information technology (IT) equipment, as described below, to assist in conducting official business of the board. The IT items will be offered according to the contracts and standards in place at the board for such items at the time of order and may include:

- Computer or tablet with software
- Printer
- Mobile device/phone for board Chair (including associated service costs for all board-related matters)
- Office supplies, such as paper and toner cartridges, as needed.

To ensure effective use of technology and security of the board's systems and data, all IT equipment will be loaded with the board's standard software applications, configuration, and security applications. Equipment purchased with board funds is considered board property and must be used solely for board-related matters. At the end of the trustee's term of office, all equipment provided must be returned to the board. Equipment that is being replaced must also be returned to the board.

Travel, Meals, and Hospitality Expenditures

Approval for Conferences of Professional Development

Attendance at conferences for professional development opportunities that incur a cost must be pre-approved by board resolution. In special circumstances, where it is not feasible to receive prior approval (e.g., a sudden meeting request from the ministry), all trustees will be informed by e-mail for concurrence and then subsequent approval will follow at the next board meeting.

The board will reimburse for eligible expenditures, accompanied by original detailed receipts, subject to that which follows.

Travel to Board Meetings / School Functions

For attendance at school functions or school visits considered voluntary for trustee participation, trustees will not be reimbursed for this travel without the approval of the board prior to the function occurring.

For attendance at board meetings (i.e., meetings called for attendance by the whole board), trustees will be reimbursed for travel to / from a trustee's residence to / from the board meeting location (e.g., Mount St. Joseph Catholic Education Centre in Sault Ste. Marie) by a kilometre rate established through board protocol.

In rare cases, if time does not allow for prior approval by the board, the Chair of the Board may grant this approval. In certain circumstances, where the board requires the attendance of a trustee for school, board or community functions, which are approved by the Chair of the Board, trustees will be reimbursed for travel. If the trustee is going on board business and the board feels it is necessary to have trustee attendance, this travel would be reimbursed, if approved in advance. Travel for board / committee meetings (e.g., SEAC, Focus on Faith) will be reimbursed by the board through established kilometre rates.

Accommodations

When accommodation is required, the Executive Assistant to the Director will normally make hotel reservations for trustees. Preference should be given to travel services and accommodation that provide specially negotiated rates, such as government rates. Trustees are expected to stay in a standard-type room in a good standing hotel. The trustee is entitled to an individual room. Reimbursements will not be made for upgrades to hotel rooms or incidental expenses (e.g., mini-bar purchases, in-room movies).

Trustees are responsible for notifying the Executive Assistant to the Director, the Director, and the Chair of the Board via email about any required changes and cancellations to hotel reservations before the room is subject to cancellation fees. Trustees are responsible for all related fees incurred as a result of not adhering to cancellation deadlines.

Meals

Reimbursement amounts for meals will be provided in accordance with board Policy 6012 – Travel, Meals and Hospitality.

If meals are provided at the event or as part of the hotel booking, the trustee will not be eligible for reimbursement unless prior approval from the Chair of the Board is provided (e.g., if breakfast is provided at the hotel or conference, the trustee will not be eligible to submit expenses for breakfast on the date of the conference).

Transportation

Eligible airline tickets, taxis, bus fares, and parking fees will be reimbursed to individuals with detailed receipts showing proof of payment. If a trustee is travelling via airline, reimbursement rates will include mileage from the trustee's home to the airport and back.

Trustees will be reimbursed for the first checked baggage fee charged by certain airlines. Trustees will not be reimbursed for additional checked baggage fees. Trustees will not be reimbursed for fees associated with overweight bags.

When vehicle travel is chosen, rental vehicle and associated gas expenses will be the preferred choice. Mid-sized vehicles must be reserved, unless a larger vehicle is required to accommodate the number of travelers sharing the vehicle.

If trustees travel with their own vehicle, mileage reimbursement will be paid based on separate board policy.

If a trustee chooses to travel to a conference/meeting with their own vehicle where it is determined that air-travel would be the most economical, the trustee will be reimbursed at the economical air-travel rate. If a comparator air travel rate is available from another trustee's expense report, that rate will be used for reimbursement purposes. The trustee choosing to use their own vehicle where it is determined that air-travel would be the most economical, will be eligible to claim mileage reimbursement rates from their home to the airport and back, similar to the trustee choosing to use air travel.

Additionally, if a trustee extends their board related travel for personal reasons, the trustee will only be reimbursed for board related travel expenses. The Chair of the Board will determine which expenses are eligible in consultation with the Director of Education and Superintendent of Business.

Note: Trustees will NOT be reimbursed for any traffic or parking tickets resulting from business travel. Costs of damage to personal vehicles, including insurance deductibles, will be the responsibility of the trustee.

Spouse

When the spouse or other person accompanies the trustee on board business, the board shall not incur any additional costs as a result of accommodation (i.e., single vs. double occupancy), meals or travel. Costs associated with another person will be at the individual's own expense.

Dependent Care

For the purposes of this policy, a dependent is a person who resides with the traveler on a full-time basis and relies on the traveler for care (for example, a child, parent or spouse). Prior approval for reimbursement of dependent care expenses is required, as well as a documented explanation of the circumstances. If travel is an expected part the job duties, such as travel to board meetings, the dependent's cost would not be eligible for reimbursement. Travel

expenses for professional development opportunities such as attendance at conferences are eligible for dependent care reimbursement.

Request for dependent care expenses may be reimbursed under the following circumstances:

- If travel is occasional or unexpected; and
- If the dependent incurs expenses above and beyond the usual costs for dependent care as a direct result of travel.

In these situations, the dependent may be reimbursed for actual costs up to a daily maximum:

- \$35/day/dependent, if a documented explanation is provided and approved by the Board Chair or Vice Chair

Other

Reasonable costs for other travel expenses, such as telephone expenses and business Internet charges, shall be reimbursed at the discretion of the Chair of the Board.

Reimbursement Procedures / Reporting

In accordance with Policy 6012 – Travel, Meals, and Hospitality, trustees will be expected to pay the costs of travel when incurred and be reimbursed for eligible costs by submitting the appropriate form(s) within ten days of returning from the function. Expense reports submitted more than thirty calendar days after returning from the function will not be reimbursed.

Should there be a dispute about the eligibility of any expense, the trustee may contest the decision during a public session of the board.

HSCDSB will not provide travel advances.

Expense approvals required:

- The Director of Education and Superintendent of Business will review all trustees' (including the Chair of the Board) expense reports for compliance with board policy.
- The Chair of the Board will approve all trustee expense reports.
- The Vice Chair of the Board will approve the Chair of the Board's expense reports.

All documentation will be retained in accordance with the board's record retention guidelines.

Travel Reimbursement Through Ministry / Third Party:

HSCDSB recognizes there are times when a trustee will be travelling, and the expenses incurred are to be submitted to the Ministry of Education or a third party for reimbursement. When such a situation arises, the trustee is expected to follow the rules outlined in the ministry's or third party's expenditure policy. The ministry's or third party's expenditure policy

will supersede HSCDSB's expenditure policy with regards to allowable reimbursable expenses and dollar amounts. The board must approve any travel that is considered reimbursable through the Ministry / third party. Expense report approvals will follow this policy.

In order to keep track of costs and ensure no duplication of trustee reimbursement, the ministry or third party should reimburse HSCDSB directly. Under no circumstance should a trustee receive a cheque from the ministry / third party directly.

In situations where the employee/board member is travelling, and the ministry / third party will reimburse HSCDSB, the following must be adhered to:

- The ministry / third party expense report is to be completed, with a copy submitted to the HSCDSB's Business Department. The Superintendent of Business will ensure both the original expense report and the copy are identical prior to any report being submitted to the ministry / third party and HSCDSB's Business Department.
- The ministry / third party expense report and original, itemized receipts will be submitted to the ministry / third party for HSCDSB to be reimbursed. This expense report must include expenses incurred by both the trustee and HSCDSB.
- The ministry / third party expense report and copies of itemized receipts will be submitted to HSCDSB for the trustee to be reimbursed. This is the only circumstance where copies of itemized receipts will be accepted. Expense reports must be submitted within ten business days after each trip.
- HSCDSB will reimburse the trustee.
- HSCDSB will be reimbursed by the ministry / third party.