



Trustee Expenses

#100.10

Adopted:	March 29, 2005
Last Reviewed/Revised:	June 7, 2024
Responsibility:	Superintendent of Business
Next Scheduled Review:	2027-28

POLICY STATEMENT:

The Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board (the “Board”) believes that trustees, in their role of stewards and guardians of Catholic Education, should be provided with resources, supports and reimbursements to fulfill their obligations, as allowed through the Education Act and the parameters and guidelines of this Policy. The Board will reimburse trustees for expenses incurred while conducting business on behalf of the Board, including hospitality expenses, which are in compliance with the Broader Public Services Expenses Directive. The Board also recognizes that, during their term of elected office, trustees require support services to effectively service their constituents.

APPLICATION AND SCOPE:

This Policy and Administrative Procedure was established and provides direction regarding the appropriate reimbursement of expenses incurred by trustees while on Board business and applied to all trustees making an expense claim, regardless of funding source.

REFERENCES:

- [The Education Act](#)
- [The Income Tax Act](#)
- [Broader Public Sector Expenses Directive](#)
- [Broader Public Sector Travel, Meal and Hospitality Expenses Directive](#)
- [Broader Public Sector Perquisites Directive](#)
- [FIN 700.01.P - Procurement](#)
- [Vehicle Rented for School Board Purposes - August 22, 2023 \(Staff Only\)](#)

FORMS:

APPENDICES:

- N/A

DEFINITIONS:

Hospitality: is the provision of food, beverage, accommodation, transportation, and other amenities to individuals who are not engaged to work for the Board or other broader public sector organizations (i.e., other school boards, Ontario government, agencies, and public entities).

Perquisites (or perks): refers to a privilege that is afforded to an individual or to a group of individuals, provides a benefit, and is not generally available to others.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES:

Responsibilities

- In general, trustee expenses must be approved by the Chair of the Board in accordance with this Policy and Administrative Procedure, or as otherwise approved by the Board. The Treasurer of the Board or any two trustees shall approve the expenses incurred by the Chair of the Board



- It is recommended that trustees seek pre-approval of uncertain purchase types to ensure reimbursement will be approved by the Chair of the Board or Treasurer of the Board.

Those individuals responsible for approving claims are prohibited from approving their own expenses. Expenses cannot be claimed by a trustee that are incurred by his/her approver (i.e., a trustee cannot submit a claim that includes the cost of the Chair of the Board's lunch even if they were at the same event, this results in the Chair of the Board approving their own expense).

Expense claims without appropriate approvals and/or supporting documentation will be flagged for further follow up and subject to processing delays.

- Trustee expenses will be posted on the Board's website annually following the close of the previous school year's financial records.

Information

- This Policy and Administrative Procedure was developed using the guidelines outlined by the Province of Ontario and its Ministries, including the Broader Public Sector Expenses Directive.
- The Board assumes no obligation to reimburse expenses that are not in compliance with this Policy and Administrative Procedure.

Reporting Requirements

- Trustees are expected to submit expenses on a regular basis (i.e., quarterly) to Financial Services, using the current electronic method of submission. All costs must be supported by original invoices and/or receipts including credit/debit card slips and itemized receipts providing details of the expense(s) to be submitted. Business rationale and other details are required depending on the type of expense and may include purpose, date(s), point of origin and destination, other participants, and appropriate approvals.
- All approved expense claims (including mileage) must be received by Financial Services by September 10th of each year, or the following business day should the 10th fall on a weekend. Reimbursement requests for prior year expenses received after that date will be refused and will not be paid, without exception.
- Trustee expenses shall be processed and reimbursed within a reasonable timeframe.
- The Board understands that from time-to-time receipts may become lost. It is the trustees' responsibility to make every possible effort to obtain a duplicate receipt. Trustees will be allowed reasonably valued missed receipts upon approval and at the discretion and approval of the Chair of the Board.
- Any other extraordinary or unusual expense(s), that have been denied by the Chair of the Board or Treasurer of the Board, that a trustee believes should be paid by the Board, must submit, in writing, to the Chair of the Board with the rationale for such claim. The trustee may then contest the eligibility of a claim during a public session of the Board.
- Pre-approval is recommended to ensure reimbursement will occur.

Travel Costs

- The Board recognizes that certain trustees will be required to travel as part of their regular duties. Any travel required should be pre-approved by the Chair of the Board.
- Travel arrangements must be made using the most practical and economical method of transportation (air, train, taxi, vehicle). A comparison of costs and travel time for different modes of transportation may be requested by the Chair of the Board to ensure the most reasonable, economical option. Air travel will be reimbursed at standard fare, up to economy/coach class or equivalent for all travel within North America. Travel in business class (or higher) will be permitted only for travel outside of North America and exceeding 6 hours of in air flight time with the prior approval of the Chair of the Board.
- Trustees may use personal frequent-flyer program miles to upgrade tickets, provided there is no cost to the Board. The Board does not reimburse individuals who choose to use personal frequent-flyer miles.



- The cost of flight changes or missed flights will be deemed a personal expense, except in the event of an emergency or extraordinary circumstance and accompanied by a written explanation and approval by the Chair of the Board.
- Passports are considered a personal expense and will not be reimbursed under any circumstances.
- Vehicles should only be rented when it is economically justifiable. Unreasonable charges (i.e., penalties and surcharges levied for not filling up a gas tank or extra mileage charges) will not be reimbursed. Documented justification may be requested to support any vehicle rental. Please contact the Director's Office for suggested vendors or agencies.
- The cost of taxi fares and other public transit (i.e., subway, trains, etc.) are reimbursable by the Board. The trustee is responsible for ensuring a receipt is obtained. In the event that a receipt is difficult to obtain, the Board will allow a reasonable amount provided details are provided.
- Reimbursement is provided for necessary and reasonable expenditures on standard parking, public transportation (i.e., subway), highway tolls when driving on Board business. Valet parking is not reimbursable unless there is no self-serve option (or self-serve is unavailable). Annual 407 ETR or other transponder charges are considered personal and not reimbursable.
- 407 ETR charges are generally not allowed, except under exceptional circumstances and require the approval of the Chair of the board.
- Parking or traffic violations will not be reimbursed under any circumstance, including those using Board owned vehicles.

Use of a Personal Automobile

- The Board will reimburse trustees for use of their personal vehicle while on Board business for actual distances travelled from a trustee's home to the meeting locations, Board event, or conference and back to their home. Mileage rates will be reviewed annually and communicated by the Superintendent of Business & Treasurer when a change is required. Reimbursement for kilometers traveled will be calculated based on the rate in place on the date the travel took place.
- It is highly encouraged that trustees carpool when attending the same event to minimize costs.

Accommodations

- Reimbursement for overnight accommodation will be provided for a standard room or equivalent. In the case of a conference or seminar, trustees should stay at the host hotel if a group rate is offered to participants. Charges above the standard room rate will require prior approval from the Chair of the board.
- Reasonable expenses eligible for reimbursement include internet access, laundry/dry-cleaning (when stays are longer than five (5) days), and standard parking charges. Valet parking is permitted when other options are not feasible or under special circumstances upon approval from the Chair of the Board. Expenses of a personal nature (i.e., hotel movies, mini bars, concierge, fitness facility charges, etc.) are not eligible for reimbursement.
- Penalties or charges incurred for non-cancellation of guaranteed hotel reservations are the responsibility of the trustee and will not be reimbursed. Exceptional circumstances may allow for reimbursement and must be submitted, in writing, to the Chair of the Board for a decision.

Meals

- Reasonable and appropriate meals will be reimbursed while away on business for the board.
- Meals charged to hotel rooms or room service require detailed receipts. Most hotels do not include the itemized receipts and trustees are responsible to obtain the required documentation in order to ensure reimbursement.

Alcohol

- Alcohol cannot be claimed and will not be reimbursed.
- Approval from the Chair of the Board is required where alcohol is being expensed to facilitate Board business, to respect cultural expectations, or in board approved hospitality situations.

Conferences, Seminars, Workshops

- Registration fees for approved conferences, seminars and workshops related to Board business will be paid directly by the Board or reimbursed by the Board. Fees and expenses for a guest accompanying trustees are not eligible or reimbursable.
- Trustees will be reimbursed for travel to conferences, workshops and other events as approved by the Board.



Attendance at the Annual General Meeting and Regional Meetings and other events sponsored by the Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association (OCSTA), the Annual General Meeting of the Canadian Catholic School Trustees' Association (CCSTA) and When Faith Meets Pedagogy Conference are deemed approved for all trustees when these events are held in Canada. Attendance at the Annual Chair and Vice-Chair Conference is deemed approved for the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Board when held in Canada.

- Attendance at conferences, meetings, or events outside of Ontario must be approved by the Chair of the Board.
- Pre- or post-conference activities such as sightseeing tours are considered personal and are not eligible for reimbursement.
- Cash advances will not normally be provided, however, a trustee who is unable to use a personal credit card may make a written request to the Chair of the board at least fifteen business days prior to when the funds are required.

Hospitality

Hospitality may be extended on behalf of the Board in an economical and consistent manner when it can facilitate Board business and it is considered desirable as a matter of courtesy or protocol. Hospitality may be extended when:

- engaging in discussions or hosting receptions regarding Board matters with representatives from other governments; the broader public sector; business and industry; public interest groups or labour groups;
- providing individuals from national, international, or charitable organizations with an understanding or appreciation of Ontario and the workings of its government.
- honouring distinguished individuals for exceptional public service in Ontario.
- conducting prestigious ceremonies for heads of state, government or distinguished guests from the private sector.
- the business of the Board includes hospitality functions.
- Hospitality may never be offered solely for the benefit of trustees, employees or contractors of the Board or other designated agency of the Broader Public Sector.
- Alcohol expenses may be permitted for specific events and occasions when pre-authorized by the Chair of the board.
- All hospitality expenses must be documented and include original itemized invoices or receipts. The claim must include event details regarding purpose, date(s), location, type of hospitality (meals, refreshments, etc.) and a list of attendees (those within and outside the Board).

Perquisites

- A perquisite (or "perk") is allowable only in limited and exceptional circumstances, where it is demonstrated to be a business-related requirement for the effective performance of an individual's job. Any requests are to be submitted, in writing, to the Chair of the Board.

The following perks are not allowed under any circumstance:

- Club membership for personal recreation or socializing purposes (i.e., fitness clubs, golf courses, or social clubs).
- Tickets to cultural, sporting, or community events.
- Clothing allowances not related to health and safety or special job requirements.
- Access to private health clinics – medical services outside those provided by the provincial health care system or by the employee's group insured benefit plans.
- Professional advisory services for personal matters, other than those outlined in the Board Employee Assistance Program (EAP) (i.e., tax or estate planning).
- These privileges cannot be provided by any means including:
 - An offer of employment letter, as a promise of a benefit.
 - An employment contract.
 - A reimbursement of an expense.
- Trustees must also be aware of receiving perks from outside stakeholders (i.e., vendors). The receipt of any perks from outside stakeholders, regardless of value, is prohibited and should be reported to the Chair of the Board



Community Events, Consultants and Other Expenses

- Trustees will not be reimbursed for tickets to community events unless a trustee is requested to represent the Board at such community events by the Chair of the Board. Further, if any trustee wishes to be accompanied by a guest (i.e., spouse, friend etc.), the trustee member/guest is responsible for the additional ticket expense.
- Trustees who wish to participate in fundraising events such as golf tournaments or walks are responsible for any payment of golf fees or donations, etc.
- External consultants and other contractors will not be given or reimbursed for any hospitality, incidental or food expenses, including, but not limited to:
 - Meals, snacks, and beverages
 - Gratuities
 - Laundry or dry cleaning
 - Transportation
 - Dependent care
 - Home office
 - Personal telephone calls
- Reimbursements for allowable expenses under this Policy and Administrative Procedure can be claimed only when the consultant or contractor's agreement with the Board specifically allows for it.
- Appropriate token gifts of appreciation (i.e., Tim Horton's gift card or flowers) for volunteers, valued up to \$50 per person, may be offered in exchange for gratuitous offerings of service or expertise, including community partners engaging Board co-op students. These gifts can only be offered to people who are not engaged in work for the Board (i.e., trustees, employees, contractors). Justification may be requested to support a token gift of appreciation. A meal may be extended for a group of volunteers where it would be more cost effective than providing each volunteer with a token gift of appreciation. Gift cards should be purchased as required, the Board discourages staff from purchasing gift certificates in bulk and keeping them in hand.
- Donations or gifts to external charities, community groups, political parties, and schools will not be reimbursed. Supporting a fundraiser or event for a specific political party or candidate is not an eligible expense.

Service Equipment

- During a trustee's term of office (i.e., every four years), the following equipment will be provided to the trustee:
- Cell phone or smart phone, including hands-free device, connection fees, airtime and long-distance charges. Any outside-Canada charges, such as U.S. or international long distance, texting or roaming charges, will not be reimbursed by the Board.
- A mobile device (i.e., laptop) and printer/scanner/copier to a value up to \$3000 maximum per trustee, once every four years.
- In addition, a Trustee is responsible for any unamortized cell phone/smart phone costs should they wish to retain it. Should the trustee not wish to retain the cell phone/smart phone it is returned at the end of their term. Based on exceptional circumstances, the Board of Trustees may waive the requirement for the reimbursement of unamortized costs of a trustee cell phone/smart phone.
- Connection and monthly charges for internet provision.
- If traveling outside of Canada, trustees must inform the Manager of Procurement Services to modify cellphone/data plans to ensure roaming charges are mitigated for the period.
- At the end of the trustee's term of office, user fees for cellphone/smart phone and internet access will be terminated.
- The purchase of mobile device accessories (i.e., wireless accessories, car chargers, or holsters) are considered personal use items and will not be reimbursed. Eligible mobile device accessories for Board issued cell phones or smartphones may be requested through the Manager of Procurement Services. Any charges above the Board's corporate plan (i.e., ring tones, roaming/travel add-on for non-Board use) are also considered personal and are to be reimbursed by the trustee.
- In addition, a Trustee is responsible for any unamortized cell phone/smart phone costs should they wish to retain it. Should the trustee not wish to retain the cell phone/smart phone it is returned at the end of their term. Based on exceptional circumstances, the Board of Trustees may waive the requirement for the reimbursement of unamortized costs of a trustee cell phone/smart phone.