Greater Essex County District School Board

Title: Trustee Expenses and Reimbursement

Category: Policy
Responsibility: Superintendent of Business – Treasurer and Facility Services and Board of Trustees
Effective Date: December 9, 2009
Review Date: October 20, 2026
Next Review Year: 2031

Policy Statement

As elected officials, school board trustees are guardians of the public trust. The establishment of a distinct trustee expense and reimbursement policy by the Greater Essex County District School Board promotes financial integrity, accountability, transparency, and public confidence in Ontario's public education system.

It is the policy of the Greater Essex County District School Board to provide trustees with specified resources to enable them to fulfill their governance responsibilities for expenses necessarily incurred in carrying out core Board business.

Definitions

Trustee: A person elected or appointed to serve as a member of the Board of Trustees of the Greater Essex County District School Board.

Eligible Expense: A reasonable and necessary expense incurred by a Trustee while carrying out authorized Board business and eligible for reimbursement under this policy.

Board Business: Activities undertaken by a Trustee in fulfillment of their governance responsibilities on behalf of the Board.

Reimbursement: Repayment by the Board of approved expenses incurred by a Trustee in accordance with this policy.

Honorarium: The annual compensation provided to Trustees as prescribed by the Education Act and applicable regulations.

Kilometrage: Reimbursement for travel using a personal vehicle at the Board-approved rate per kilometre.

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to establish a clear and transparent framework for the reimbursement of expenses incurred by Trustees in the fulfillment of their governance responsibilities. This policy supports accountability, financial stewardship, and public confidence by ensuring that Trustee expenses are reasonable, necessary, compliant with legislative and regulatory requirements, and directly related to conducting Board business.

Pursuant to the amendments made by Bill 101 the Board will not incur or reimburse expenses for board members to pay membership fees in a Trustee Association or similar professional association. The board will not incur or reimburse expenses for board members to attend or participate in a discretionary event or activity. This includes registration fees and travel, meal, accommodation and hospitality expenses.

A discretionary event or activity is any of the following events or activities in cases where a member's attendance or participation is not essential to a board's core business operations and for which expenses are incurred by choice rather than operational necessity:

- Professional development activities
- Professional associations' or sector organizations' events or activities
- Education-related symposiums, conferences and conventions

Trustees may participate in professional development opportunities at their own expense.

Policy Guidelines

The following guidelines support the implementation of this policy:

1. Kilometrage

   Travel by personal vehicle to Board events will be reimbursed at the Board's rate per kilometre, as described in Regulation R-BA-15: Expenses (Staff) – Conference, Workshops, Meetings, Travel.

2. Board Approved Equipment Package
   A Board approved equipment package will be provided to all Trustees, as follows:
   - A standard equipment package, which includes a computer (laptop or tablet), printer or printer/scanner, and shredder.
   - Board owned smartphone and monthly service, including data
   - Internet Service for home, reimbursable to a maximum cost of $125 / monthly.

   For Board-owned cell phones/smartphones, out of country use is permitted only for Board business. Trustees travelling outside of Canada must contact the Board's Purchasing Agent in advance to confirm international cellular and data coverage and applicable plans. Personal use while out of the country is not covered by the Board.

   All Board owned equipment must be returned to the Board when Trustee duties cease.

3. Expenses
   Costs for the following expenses, with original, itemized receipts, shall be reimbursed by the Board to a Trustee as long as the expense relates directly to the role of Trustee:
   i. Computer paper and printer cartridges
   ii. Documented long distance calls for Board/Trustee business from a private phone line
   iii. Miscellaneous purchases less than $100 related to the role of Trustee, if approved in advance of purchase by the Chairperson or designate. Purchases over $100 must be

processed through the Purchasing Department and each purchase requires prior approval from the Chairperson or designate.

Trustees may only submit expenses for reimbursement of office supplies if these items are not available from the Board Administration Office. In all cases, Trustees shall request office supplies from the Board Administration Office as the first source.

No expenses shall be incurred, paid or reimbursed if prohibited by legislation, regulations, a Ministry policy or guideline, or this Policy.

4. Reimbursement Procedures

All completed Trustee expense reports must be submitted to the Director's Office.

Reimbursement Forms

- The form for all requests for reimbursement including mileage reimbursements: Expense Report -Trustee.
- All claims for reimbursement must be submitted by the end of the month following the month in which the expense was incurred. If information required for the reimbursement is not available within this timeline, you must submit a written explanation with the claim to provide the approver with adequate information for decision-making.
- Submit any claims for expenses before your Trustee duties cease.
- Any overpayments are considered a debt owing to the Board and must be repaid.
- Expenses may be denied at the discretion of the Chairperson. In such circumstances, the Chairperson shall provide a written explanation for the denial. Trustees may appeal the decision of the Chairperson, within 30 days of the denial, to the Finance and Facility Services Committee.

Support for Reimbursement

- Claims for reimbursement must be fully supported by original, itemized paid invoices or receipts where possible (including group meals). A debit/credit card slip alone is not acceptable.
- Photocopies or credit/debit card receipts are not acceptable.

Lost Receipt Form

- In the event that an original receipt has been lost, accidentally destroyed or unobtainable, the Lost Receipt Form (must be completed and attached to the Trustee Reimbursement Expense Report.

Approval for Reimbursement

- The Chairperson or designate approves the completed claim form for the Trustees. Approved forms are forwarded to the Superintendent of Business, Treasurer and Facility Services

- The Vice-Chairperson approves the completed claim form for the Chairperson. Approved forms are forwarded to the Superintendent of Business Treasurer and Facility Services
- Approval can only be provided for expenses that were necessarily incurred in the performance of the Board's business.
- Approval can only be provided for expenses that include all appropriate documentation.
- Approvers are prohibited from approving their own expenses.
- Approvers should consider whether the request is able to stand up to scrutiny by the auditors and members of the public, properly explained and documented, fair and equitable, reasonable, and appropriate.

Enforcement of Policy

- The individual designated for approval is responsible for ensuring claims for reimbursement conform to those procedures.
- The Business Department will also review submissions and will return non-conforming claims.
- The Chairperson/Vice-Chairperson, Superintendent of Business, Treasurer and Facility Services or the Chief Executive Officer can refer a claim to the Board for approval at any time.
- All purchases must be in accordance with the, the Procurement Policy P-BA-01 and Regulation R-BA-01. All purchases must be from an Ontario or a Canadian Vendor.

5. Student Trustees

Student Trustees are subject to the provisions of this Policy. The restrictions established through Bill 101 regarding discretionary events and activities do not apply to Student Trustees. Accordingly, Student Trustees may attend approved conferences, workshops, meetings and related events, with eligible expenses reimbursed in accordance with Policy and Regulation: Expenses (Staff) – Conferences, Workshops, Meetings and Travel.

Reporting Requirement

Individual Trustee's annual expenditures will be published in the first quarter following the end of the fiscal year.

A policy review cycle of every five years has been established to ensure regular review of Greater Essex County District School Board policies, unless otherwise required by system need or legislation.

Reference

Putting Student Achievement First Act, 2026, S.O. 2026, c.4, Schedule 2, s. 2(2), assented to May 7, 2026.

Appendix - Nil.