

STUDENT TRUSTEES

Statement of Policy

The Peel District School Board supports the appointment of student trustees, as directed in Section 55 of the Education Act. Student trustees represent the voice of students in decisions about education in Peel and help keep students informed about important decisions that affect them.

This policy is aligned with and supports the principles and expectations of the Board's Human Rights policy ([Policy 51](#)) and the Equity and Inclusive Education policy ([Policy 54](#)). At all times, this policy should be interpreted to be consistent with the Board's policies and the *Human Rights Code*.

1. Number of Student Trustees

Two student trustees will be elected to represent the interests of all students. One student trustee will be elected to represent the schools north of Highway 401, and one to represent the schools south of Highway 401.

2. Eligibility and Qualifications

The student must:

- a) be a full time student in regular attendance at a Peel secondary school or be an exceptional pupil in a special education program for whom the board has reduced the length of the instructional program;
- b) be 16 years of age or older by December 31 of school year in which they hold office;
- c) have parental consent (if under 18 years of age);
- d) have strong academic standing, good leadership skills and good communication skills.

3. Mentors

Two Peel District School Board trustees will be appointed by the Board to act as mentors for the student trustees.

4. Role Description and Expectations

Student trustees must:

- a) sign a Declaration agreeing to maintain confidentiality with respect to board business dealt with in closed sessions of board and/or committee meetings (Appendix A);
- b) comply with the Ministry of Education Attendance and Conflict of Interest Guidelines for Student Trustees (Appendix B);

- c) arrange their own transportation to the Board Meetings and other meetings they would need to attend;
- d) sign a media consent form prior to starting term;
- e) notify the Board at the start of the term of any reasonable accommodations that the student trustee may require;

As part of the duties of office, student trustees:

- f) are required to attend all regular meetings of the board. In the event that a student trustee is unable to attend, they must notify the chair in advance of the meeting;
- g) may attend all meetings of the board, including standing committee meetings, supplementary meetings, and In Committee meetings except those that are closed to the public under Clause 207(2)(b). 2006, c. 10.s. 6;
- h) will participate with other trustees in discussion, and represent students' positions during such discussions at the Board table;
- i) are entitled to request that a matter before the board to be put to a recorded vote. Student trustees' votes are non-binding;
- j) will report regularly to the students of Peel, through student governments, on the activities of the Board pertaining to any public meetings of the Board and its committees;
- k) will report their work biannually to the board and students through oral and written board reports at a board meeting mid-year and at the end of each school year;
- l) will use the student trustee Twitter account, in compliance with Policy 78 - Digital Citizenship and Peel District School Board's social media disclaimer, to promote initiatives and communicate with students, parents and the community;
- m) will use the student trustee email account as the primary source of communication and respond to all requests in a timely manner; and
- n) will perform other duties, as assigned.

5. Term of Office

The term of office will be one school year. A student trustee may be re-elected and can serve a maximum of two years. Student trustees will be expected to serve during the school year only.

6. Disqualification of student trustees

A student trustee will be disqualified from service when they:

- a) ceases to be a student in Peel District School Board;
- b) is absent from three consecutive regular meetings of the Board without permission of the Board;
- c) is convicted of an indictable offense.

A student trustee may be disqualified from service when they:

- a) breaches the confidentiality of the Board;
- b) is suspended from school for a serious violation of the behaviour code;
- c) fails to fulfill their contractual promise and duties as the student trustee.

7. Co-op Credits

Service as a student trustee may be acknowledged by the granting of co-operative education credits, in recognition of the experience gained and the commitment demonstrated. Such credits will be granted by the Principal of the student's home school. A student trustee would be required to speak with their principal prior to the start of their one year term if they wish to pursue a co-op credit.

8. Selection of student trustees

Student trustees will be selected in April for the following school year. Peel Board students will be provided with the opportunity to select student trustees. See section 9 for information about campaigning during election period.

The selection process will include these steps:

- (a) Secondary students who meet the eligibility requirements will be invited to self-nominate for the position of student trustee.
- (b) The nomination package will include a nomination form with parent permission, resumé, cover letter, digital photo, and a campaign video of three minutes in length. Candidates must submit their completed nomination package before the deadline, which is outlined in the email sent to all Principals/Vice-Principals.
- (c) Each year, voting will occur at each secondary school, including Peel Alternative Schools. Election dates are determined by the Director's Office to coincide with the Ministry of Education's expectations.
- (d) Schools will receive ballots, with all candidates listed, from School Support Services. Each secondary school will tally the votes and rank the candidates: first, second, third, and so on.
- (e) The candidate with the most first place finishes will be elected. In the event of a tie, the candidate with the most second place finishes will be elected, and so on.
- (f) The names of the successful student trustees will be presented to the Board for approval before the end of April.
- (g) The Board will submit the names of the appointed student trustees to the Ministry of Education by April 30.
- (h) In the event that a student trustee leaves office before the completion of his or her term, the vacancy will be filled by a by-election.

9. Campaigning during election period

Students cannot begin their campaign until their nomination packages are reviewed and approval is provided by School Support Services.

- a) Candidate photos will be compiled into an election poster for each region (schools north of Highway 401/schools south of Highway 401), to be posted in all secondary schools in that region. Campaign videos will be posted through social media (YouTube).
- b) Candidates are responsible for distributing personal campaign materials to schools upon receiving principal/vice-principal approval at each school. If principal/vice-principal approval is given to one candidate, the same approval should be given to all candidates.
- c) Candidates can use their personal social media accounts, which have been listed on the nomination package, once the completed package has been submitted to their principal/vice-principal and approved by School Support Services. All students must adhere to Policy 78 – Digital Citizenship when using social media as an election tool. Peel Board staff will periodically monitor social media activity to ensure students are following proper online conduct.
- d) Additional campaign forums, such as an All Candidates Meeting, can be scheduled by an individual secondary school, as long as all candidates in that particular region of the hosting school are invited.

10. Honoraria and Student Trustee Support

- a) Student trustees will receive an honorarium of \$2,500 per annum.
- b) Student trustees will be reimbursed for any receipted expenses incurred as a function of the role including transportation costs to meetings with receipts and/or electronic mileage claims.
- c) Student trustees will be allocated \$1,500 per year to attend conferences and/or training sessions. Prior to attending, the professional development event(s) must be approved by the Director and all receipts must be submitted.

Approved: April 28, 1998
Reviewed: January 2000
Reviewed: February 25, 2003
Reviewed: December 2005

Approved: September 11, 2007 (*replaces former Policy #66.*)
Revised: April 26, 2011
Revised: June 11, 2013
Revised: April 25, 2017
Reviewed: November 13, 2018



Oath of Office for Student Trustees

Declaration

I, _____, do solemnly declare that:

1. I will truly, faithfully, impartially and to the best of my ability execute the Office of Student Trustee.
2. I recognize the importance of maintaining the confidentiality of the Board and I commit not to divulge, in any form, information or the contents of material shared with trustees in closed (In Committee) meetings.

Signature of Student Trustee

Declared before me at Mississauga in the Province of Ontario
this ___ day of _____, 20XX.

Signature of the Secretary of the Board

Appendix B

**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
STUDENT TRUSTEES: ATTENDANCE AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST GUIDELINES****PURPOSE**

The purpose of this guideline is to address the issues of attendance and conflicts of interest in relation to student trustees. This guideline was created with the intention of having the same principles that apply to board members under the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act* and the *Education Act* apply to student trustees.

Under the *Education Act* student trustees are not considered members of the board. As a result, they are not covered by the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act* and are not subject to the same conflict of interest and attendance criteria that apply to board members.

These guidelines are established by the Minister of Education under the authority of paragraph 8(1) 3.5 of the *Education Act* and are effective upon release.

ATTENDANCE

A student trustee must resign from their position if they are absent from three consecutive regular meetings of the board without being authorized by a resolution of the board. Authorizations by resolution must be provided to student trustees in the same manner as they are to board members and must be recorded in the meeting minutes.

Student trustees are considered present at a meeting in which they participate through teleconferencing, videoconferencing or other electronic means.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

A conflict of interest arises when a student trustee (or a student trustee's parent, spouse or child) has a direct or indirect financial interest in a matter being discussed at a board or committee meeting.

An indirect financial interest arises when a student trustee (or a student trustee's parent, spouse or child): 1) owns shares or is a senior officer in a privately-held company, 2) has a controlling interest or is a senior officer of a publicly-held corporation, or 3) is the member of a body that has a financial interest in the matter being discussed at a board or committee meeting.

For there to be a conflict, the financial interest must be of such a nature that it could reasonably be regarded as likely to exert influence over the student trustee.

When a student trustee realizes he or she is in a conflict of interest, the student trustee must declare this conflict to the board or to the committee. The declaration must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. During discussion of the matter that gives rise to a conflict, the student trustee cannot participate in the discussion, cannot attempt to influence the vote of board members, is not entitled to a recorded vote and cannot suggest a motion.

In the event that there is a conflict of interest at a closed meeting, the student trustee must leave the meeting during the time that the matter giving rise to the conflict is being discussed. When a student trustee leaves for this reason, this must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.