



Memo No. 23-078

TO: Trustees
Student Trustees

FROM: Pino Buffone, Director of Education and Secretary of the Board
Michèle Giroux, Executive Officer, Corporate Services

DATE: 1 December 2023

RE: Trustee Pregnancy and Parental Leave Policy

This memo serves to apprise trustees on the development of a new policy regarding trustee pregnancy and parental leave.

The Government of Ontario passed legislation that made changes to municipal governance in the province in May 2017. Referred to as Bill 68, amendments were made to a series of legislative Acts including the *Education Act*, *Municipal Elections Act*, and *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*.

Consequently, these modifications mandate school boards to permit a trustee to take a pregnancy or parental leave for a duration of up to 20 weeks without requiring authorization from the Board of Trustees. Importantly, the seat of the trustee taking such leave will not be declared vacant.

While the *Education Act* maintains the stipulation that trustees must not miss three consecutive meetings unless approved by the board, this provision does not extend to trustees on pregnancy/parental leaves lasting 20 consecutive weeks or less. Notably, Page 72 of the *Education Act* requires every school board to "adopt and maintain policies with respect to pregnancy leaves and parental leaves of members of the board."

OPSBA created a template for the policy (attached as Appendix A) and other school districts have already implemented policies and procedures. Staff will be using these as guiding documents in the preparation of the draft policy.

A draft policy will be presented to the Ad Hoc Policy Review Committee on 8 February 2024, for review and discussion and again at the 4 April meeting, following public consultations, for approval.

Any questions or comments can be directed to Michele Giroux, Executive Officer, Corporate Services or Nicole Guthrie, Manager, Board Services.

cc Senior Staff
 Ad Hoc Policy Committee
 Manager of Board Services
 Corporate Records

Attach.

Appendix A: OPSBA Template re: Trustee Pregnancy and Parental Leave Policy