



TITLE: PREGNANCY AND PARENTAL LEAVE (BOARD MEMBERS)

Date Authorized: 25 April 2024

Last Revised:

Last Reviewed:

COMMITMENT TO INDIGENOUS RIGHTS, HUMAN RIGHTS, AND EQUITY

The Board recognizes its responsibility to ensure that this policy and associated procedures promote and protect Indigenous rights, human rights, and equity. The Board will strive to address and eliminate racism and structural and systemic barriers for students, staff, and the community.

1.0 RATIONALE

To support the facilitation of pregnancy and parental leaves for OCDSB Board Members, in compliance with the *Education Act*.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

Please refer to Appendix A for a list of definitions of terms used in this policy.

3.0 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- 3.1 Board Members' are entitled to pregnancy or parental leave for up to 20 weeks without authorization from the Board.
- 3.2 Pregnancy and parental leave shall be available to any Board Member who notifies the Board of a planned absence due to pregnancy, giving birth, and/or otherwise becoming a parent, including surrogacy and adoption.
- 3.3 The privacy of Board Members and any necessary discussion of the reason for leave shall be limited, follow OCDSB employee privacy standards, and, if necessary, occur in closed session.

4.0 SPECIFIC DIRECTIVES

- 4.1 The Board Member shall notify the Chair of the Board as soon as reasonably possible of their intent to take a pregnancy or parental leave.

- 4.2 In the case of the Chair intending to take a pregnancy or parental leave, the notice of an intended leave shall be given to the Vice-Chair.
- 4.3 The notice of a Board Member's intention to take a pregnancy or parental leave must include the following:
- a) the purpose for the leave;
 - b) the expected dates the leave is to begin and conclude;
 - c) clarification regarding whether and to what capacity the Board Member will continue to fulfill responsibilities and participate in Board and/or committee meetings, either in person or via electronic means;
 - d) details concerning how the Board Member intends to notify their community about the leave period and how the community will be supported during the leave; and
 - e) in the case of a Chair or Vice-Chair requesting the leave, a request for the Board to conduct an election to appoint an interim Chair or Vice-Chair for the duration of their pregnancy or parental leave.

In addition, the Board Member shall provide relevant medical documentation to Employee Wellness in support of their request

- 4.4 The Chair shall notify the Director and the Board of the intended leave and shall submit relevant forms to the Director's office. The relevant forms shall be confidential and accessible only to the Board Member, Chair and/or Vice-Chair, Director, and appropriate District staff.
- 4.5 The allowed pregnancy or parental leave period may begin up to 20 weeks before or finish up to 20 weeks after the Board Member's expected delivery date, the date of the medical procedure/incident, or the expected date of gaining custody and/or guardianship of the child, including an adopted child.
- a) Medical procedures/incidents include miscarriage, termination and stillbirth that occur during the 17 weeks preceding the due date.
- 4.6 The Board Member on pregnancy or parental leave may continue to participate in any and all responsibilities as a member of the Board, including Board and Committee meetings (in-person and/or electronically), attending community meetings as a representative of the Board, and any required internal or external communications.
- 4.7 The Board Member shall continue to receive Board-related material and have access to information during the leave period.
- 4.8 A Board Member on pregnancy or parental leave is authorized to be absent for three or more consecutive regular Board meetings during the leave period.

- 4.9 While a Board Member is on pregnancy or parental leave there is no adjustment to quorum requirements.
- 4.10 No Board Member shall be coerced or pressured to vacate or resign from their position as Trustee during or leading up to the pregnancy or parental leave period.
- 4.11 The Board Member shall not forfeit their Board and Committee membership privileges during the leave period.
- 4.12 Where the Board Member taking pregnancy or parental leave is on one or more Committees and does not intend to fulfill those responsibilities while on leave, their alternate will be assigned to those duties. Where no Committee alternate is named, the Chair of the Board (or Vice-Chair in absence of the Chair), in consultation with the Director of Education, may decide to assign one or more other Board Members to cover the duties of the Board Member taking pregnancy or parental leave on the Committee.
- 4.13 Relevant Board Member expenses shall continue to be reimbursed during the leave period.
- 4.14 Board Member Honoraria shall continue to be provided during the leave period.

5.0 APPENDICES

Appendix A: Policy Definitions

6.0 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

The Education Act

Municipal Elections Act

[OCDSB By-laws and Standing Rules](#)

Board [Policy P.073.GOV Board Member Code of Conduct](#)

Board [Policy P.018.GOV Electronic Meetings of the Boards and Committees](#)

Board [Policy P.005.GOV Board Member and Student Trustee Expenses and Support Services](#)

Board [Procedure PR.503.GOV Trustee and Student Trustee Expenses for Professional Development, Constituency Communications and Support Services](#)

Board [Policy P.004.GOV Board Member Honoraria](#)

APPENDIX A: Policy Definitions

In this policy,

Board means the Board of Trustees.

Board Member means a member of the Board elected or appointed in accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act* and the *Education Act*, and includes elected student representatives to the Board, including one Indigenous Student Trustee and two Student Trustees who represent all pupils of the District.

District means the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board.