

# NORTHEASTERN CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

**Policy  
B-24**

**Authority  
05-96**

## **ELECTRONIC MEETINGS**

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

Being that the Northeastern Catholic District School Board has a significant geographical area to serve, trustees and staff need technology opportunities to fulfil their commitment to the Board in carrying out their responsibilities. Pupil representatives have a dual commitment, to not only the Board, but also their academic studies; therefore, electronic meetings are necessary to encourage their participation. Members of the public must also have the opportunity to access to meetings of the Board to encourage community awareness of Board activities.

Therefore, it is the policy of the Northeastern Catholic District School Board that electronic meetings be utilized as a tool for all aspects of either educational or business operations of the system, and that

- i) meetings of the Board or committees of the Board utilizing electronic means be held when and where such meetings are organized consistent with the guidelines and procedures set out in this policy;
- ii) participants in these meetings are governed and regulated in accordance with parameters set forth in the guidelines and procedures set out in this policy; and
- iii) the equipment necessary for meetings to take place is operated and controlled in the guidelines and procedures set out in this policy.

Electronic meetings must be designed to make positive contributions to meetings of the Board. Their design must conform to the requirements of the Education Act.

### **Policy Regulations:**

#### **1. Attendance - Trustees:**

- 1.1 A member of the Board who participates in a meeting through electronic means in accordance with Board policy and the Education Act shall be deemed to be present at the meeting for the purposes of every Act.

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- 1.2 On the request of any Board member or pupil representative, the Board shall provide the member or representative with electronic means to participate in a meeting of the Board or a committee of the Board, including a committee of the whole Board. The Board shall provide the appropriate technology ensuring that two-way communication is available between all participants at the meeting.
- 1.3 At every meeting of the Board or of a committee of the whole Board, the following persons shall be physically present in the meeting room of the Board:
- i) the chair of the Board or his/her designate
  - ii) at least one additional member of the Board
  - iii) the director of education or his/her designate.
- 1.4 At every Board committee meeting, except a committee of the whole board, the following persons shall be physically present in the meeting room of the committee:
- i) the chair of the committee or his/her designate
  - ii) the director of education or his/her designate.
- 1.5 A pupil representative who attends a meeting by electronic means may not access proceedings which are closed to the public in accordance with the Act.
- 1.6 All trustees shall be physically present in the meeting room of the Board as per the requirements of the Education Act.
- 2. Attendance - Public**
- 2.1 The Board may provide electronic means for members of the public to participate in meetings open to the public.
- 3. Procedures**
- 3.1 All trustees and the pupil representative should have a copy of the Board package, including the agenda, prior to the meeting for reference during an electronic meeting.
- 3.2 All trustees and the pupil representative should have a copy of the committee's agenda prior to a committee meeting for reference during an electronic meeting.

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- 3.3 The chair of the board shall ensure that declarations of conflict of interest are heard by all trustees and the public in attendance and that those participating by electronic means outside the meeting room of the Board have an opportunity to verbally declare any conflict.
- 3.4 Committee of the whole (in-camera) is a meeting closed to the public and the pupil representative. The chair of the Committee of the Whole shall make a reasonable effort by communicating with the site monitor to ensure access to committee of the whole (in-camera) meetings is not available for either the public or pupil representative.
- 3.5 The meeting room of the Board or of a committee of the Board shall be open to permit physical attendance by members of the public. It is understood that this provision does not apply where a meeting is closed to the public in accordance with the Education Act.

#### **4. Refusal to Provide Electronic Means**

- 4.1 Where the requirements of Sections 1.3 and 1.4 cannot be fulfilled, the Board may refuse to provide electronic means, as per the Education Act.

## Appendix 'A' - Procedural Guidelines

### **1. Electronic Means:**

#### 1.1 Electronic means shall include:

- i) teleconferencing, or
- ii) videoconferencing.

1.2 Teleconferencing will be provided by the Board on telephones or communications centers at designated sites.

1.3 Portable or radio phones are not allowed for electronic access of meetings. These telephones can cause interference with the signal of similar devices in the area and lead to privacy concerns in the case of an in-camera meeting.

Cellular telephones may only be used with the approval of the chair of the meeting. These devices often generate static noises which may be disruptive to the meeting. When the use of a cellular telephone is approved, it shall be used from a stationary location where signal strength is high.

### **2. Electronic Meetings:**

2.1 Committee of the whole (in-camera) meetings are closed to the public and pupil representative. The chair of the meeting will ensure that electronic means are turned on and off accordingly.

2.2 The Board will designate sites where trustees, the pupil representative and/or the public can gain access to Board or committee meetings via electronic means. These sites will be available only when required by the Board. When appropriate, the public will be notified of the time and place of meetings.

2.3 In the event that a Board meeting that is being accessed electronically is encountering interference and/or disruption by electronic participants, the chair shall warn the participants the first time, advise them the second time that disturbance/interference continue, and on further disturbance/interference, direct the site monitor to shut off the electronic access. Trustees and/or the pupil representative will be asked to join the meeting by alternate means (e.g. teleconference).

2.4 No trustee or pupil representative will be denied access at any time under section 2.4.

### **3. Attendance:**

3.1 Roll call for all meetings shall be taken verbally and duly recorded to ensure trustees and the pupil representative are recognized as being in attendance.

- 3.2 Trustees participating in an electronic meeting shall notify the chair of their departure (either temporary or permanent) from the meeting before absenting themselves in order to ensure a quorum is maintained.
- 3.3 Trustees and/or the pupil representative must request participation by electronic means at least 24 hours in advance through the office of the director of education.
- 3.4 Electronic means will only be available to the public in designated sites other than the designated meeting room of the Board when deemed appropriate by the Board.

4. **Voting at Electronic Meetings:**

- 4.1 In preparation of Board motions, members must indicate their willingness to let their name stand as mover and seconder. Prior to the vote, the chair will read each motion and indicate the member who has moved the motion and the member who is seconding it.
- 4.2 The chair will call the vote for:
  - i) those in favor of the motion;
  - ii) those opposed to the motion.

The chair will make the decision whether the motion was carried or defeated, subject to the results of the vote.

- 4.3 The ruling of the chair may be appealed by any member.
- 4.4 When a ruling is appealed, the chair will poll the members alphabetically by their last name to verify the decision. It should be noted this is not a recorded vote as per the procedural guidelines for Board meetings.
- 4.5 If subsequent rulings are appealed during the meeting, the chair will poll the members as set out in 4.4 beginning at the second name alphabetically on the next appeal, the third name on the next appeal, etc. until all members have had the opportunity to vote first.