POLICY:	ELECTRONIC MEETINGS AND MEETING ATTENDANCE	#	314
SECTION:	300 : Business and Administrative Matters	Page	1 of 4

APPROVAL/REVISION DATE:	EFFECTIVE DATE:	REVIEW DATE:
October 27, 2025	November 4, 2025	November 4, 2030

CROSS REFERENCE:
Education Act
Ontario Regulation 463/97
Bill 68 Modernizing Ontario's Municipal Legislation Act
Municipal Conflict of Interest Act

A: POLICY

1. The Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board recognizes the necessity of providing Trustees and Catholic Student Trustees with the ability to participate in all meetings arranged by the Board including Regular and Special Board Meetings, Ad Hoc Committee Meetings and/or Standing Committees and/or any other Meetings that requires Trustee membership for both In-Camera and Open Session.

   Subject to any conditions or limitations provided for under the Act or under this Regulation, a member of a board who participates in a meeting through electronic means in accordance with this Regulation is deemed to be present at the meeting for the purposes of every Act. O. Reg. 463/97, s. 1; O. Reg. 234/04, s. 1; O. Reg. 313/24, s. 1.

B. GUIDELINES

2. Provision of Electronic Means

   2.1 This policy shall be in accordance with this Regulation and with any policies established and guidelines under paragraph 3.6 of subsection 8 (1) of the Act. O Reg. 463/97, s. 2 (2).

   2.2 At the request of any board member or student trustee, the board shall provide the member or student trustee with electronic means for participating in one or more meetings of the board or of a committee of the board, including a committee of the whole board.

   2.3 The electronic means shall permit all persons participating in the meeting to communicate with each other simultaneously and instantaneously.

   2.4 The electronic means shall be provided in such a way that the rules governing conflict of interest of members are complied with. O. Reg. 463/97, s. 3 (1); O. Reg. 268/06, s. 1 (1, 2); O. Reg. 313/24, s. 2 (1).

   2.5 Student trustees who are participating through electronic means shall not participate in any proceedings that are closed to the public under clause 207.

   2.6 Appropriate processes shall be put in place to ensure the security and confidentiality of proceedings that are closed to the public in accordance with the Act. O. Reg. 293/18, s. 1.

   2.7 Trustees shall inform the Secretary of the Board if they wish to participate electronically no later than 5 hours prior to a meeting.

   2.8 Despite the request, the Chair may refuse to provide a member with electronic means of participation in a meeting of the board, a meeting of a committee of the whole board or a meeting of any other committee of the board, unless the member has approval under subsection 7 (5) or where to do so is necessary to ensure compliance with section 6. O. Reg. 313/24, s. 2 (2, 3).

Same, Public

2.9 The board shall provide members of the public with electronic means for participating in meetings and shall provide for the extent and manner of electronic participation. Members of the public must make their request known to the Board no later than 24 hours in advance of the meeting.

2.10 The electronic means shall permit all persons participating in the meeting to communicate with each other simultaneously and instantaneously.

2.11 Members of the public who are participating through electronic means may not participate in any proceedings that are closed to the public in accordance with the Act. O. Reg. 632/20, s. 1; O. Reg. 313/24, s. 3.

3. Meetings Open To The Public

3.1 The board shall ensure that the meeting room of the board or of a committee of the board, as the case may be, shall be open to permit physical attendance by members of the public at every regular meeting of the board or of the committee of the board. O. Reg. 313/24, s. 4. (does not apply where a meeting is closed to the public)

3.2 For the purposes of 3.1 the meeting room of a committee of the whole board is the meeting room of the board. O. Reg. 313/24, s. 4.

4. Attendance

Committee Meetings - Member attendance

4.1 The chair of the committee or their designate shall be physically present in the meeting room at every regular meeting of the committee of the board, except a committee of the whole board. O. Reg. 313/24, s. 4, 5 (1).

4.2 Despite 4.1, the chair of the committee or their designate may participate in a meeting of the committee of the board by electronic means if another member of the committee, who is also a member of the board, is physically present in the meeting room. O. Reg. 313/24, s. 4, 5 (2).

Board Meetings - Member Attendance

4.3 All members of the board shall be physically present in the meeting room of the board at every regular meeting of the board and every regular meeting of a committee of the whole board. O. Reg. 313/24, s. 4, 6 (1).

4.4 Despite subsection 4.3 , a member of the board may participate in a meeting described in that subsection by electronic means instead of being physically present if the member receives written approval under subsection (5) before the meeting begins. O. Reg. 313/24, s. 4, 6 (2).

4.5 If a member of the board proposes to participate in a meeting described in subsection 4.3 by electronic means, the member shall submit a request in writing and the reasons for the request to the chair of the board before the meeting begins. O. Reg. 313/24, s. 4.

4.6 If the member of the board making a request under subsection 4.5 is the chair of the board, the chair shall submit the request and reasons to the vice-chair of the board, or if the board has no vice-chair, to another member of the board. O. Reg. 313/24, s. 4.

4.7 The chair, vice-chair or other member, as applicable, may approve a request if they are satisfied that one or more of the following circumstances exist:

a. The member's primary place of residence within the area of jurisdiction of the board is located 125 kilometres or more from the meeting location.
b. Weather conditions do not allow the member to travel to the meeting location safely.
c. The member cannot be physically present at a meeting due to health-related issues.
d. The member has a disability that makes it challenging to be physically present at a meeting.
e. The member cannot be physically present due to family responsibilities in respect of,
   i. the member's spouse,
   ii. a parent, step-parent or foster parent of the member or the member's spouse,
   iii. a child, step-child, foster child, or child who is under legal guardianship of the member or the member's spouse,
   iv. a relative of the member who is dependent on the member for care or assistance, or
   v. a person who is dependent on the member for care or assistance and who considers the member to be like a family member. O. Reg. 313/24, s. 4.

4.8 The chair shall not approve a request under subsection 4.5 if approving the request would result in fewer than one member of the board, in addition to the chair of the board or their delegate, being physically present in the meeting room. O. Reg. 313/24, s. 4.

4.9 The vice-chair or other member of the board shall not approve a request under subsection 4.5 unless the chair's designate will be physically present in the meeting room. O. Reg. 313/24, s. 4. (8)-(10) Revoked: O. Reg. 313/24, s. 6 (3).

Board and Committee Meetings - Director of Education Attendance

4.10 The Director of Education or their designate shall be physically present in the meeting room for each meeting of the board and each meeting of a committee of a board, including a committee of the whole board. O. Reg. 313/24, s. 4, 7.

5. Procedures For Electronic Meetings

5.1 All Trustees and Catholic Student Trustees shall be provided with a copy of the board package, including the agenda, prior to the meeting for reference during an electronic meeting.

5.2 All Trustees and Catholic Student Trustees shall be provided with a copy of the committee's agenda prior to the committee meeting for reference during an electronic meeting.

5.3 Roll call for all electronic meetings shall be taken verbally and duly recorded to ensure Trustees and Catholic Student Trustees are recognized as in attendance.

5.4 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. Those trustees that verbally declare conflict of interest must complete a written declaration of conflict of interest to be filed in the registry of conflict of interest declarations from trustees.

5.5 Trustees participating in electronic meetings in closed session shall ensure confidentiality and this shall be noted by the Secretary of the Board.

5.6 Electronic meetings of the Board shall be conducted in accordance with the Board Procedural By-laws, or where not stated, Robert's Rules of Order.

6. School Closures

6.1 Members are to be physically present at meetings, and the requirement under section 5, do not apply for the period described in 6.2 of this section, if all schools of the board are closed pursuant to an order made by,

a. the Minister under section 5 (1) of the Act;
b. a medical officer of health or the Chief Medical Officer of Health under section 22 or 77.1 of the Health Protection and Promotion Act;
c. the Lieutenant Governor in Council under paragraph 5 of subsection 7.0.2 (4) of the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act; or
d. the Lieutenant Governor in Council under clause 4 (1) (a) of the Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Response to COVID-19) Act, 2020. O. Reg. 313/24, s. 8.

6.2 The period referred to in subsection 6.1 is determined as follows:

1. If an order is made under subsection 6.1 before September 1, 2025 and continues to apply on that date, the period starts on September 1, 2025 and ends 60 days after the order ceases to apply.

2. If an order is made under subsection (1) on or after September 1, 2025, the period starts on the day the order is made and ends 60 days after the order ceases to apply. O. Reg. 313/24, s. 8.