

Student Trustee Handbook 2022



Disclaimer

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This Handbook was produced by the trustee members of the OPSBA-OSTA Liaison Committee and student trustees on the Public Board Council (PBC) of OSTA-AECO. It is based on the law and government policies and guidelines in effect as of January 14, 2022. The information contained in this publication is not intended to be legal advice. It is general information only. It should be noted that this document does not necessarily reflect the views of the Ministry of Education.

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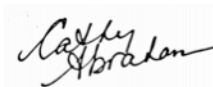
Introduction

Local, democratically elected school boards play a key role in ensuring that schools remain responsive to both provincial requirements and local needs and resources. A vital part of school boards are the student trustees, secondary students elected by their fellow students to represent the critical interests of all students from Kindergarten to Grade 12. Student trustees are the voice of students in decisions about education and they help keep students informed about important decisions that affect them. They play an important role in the education governance process and are constantly actively working at the local board and provincial levels on a number of initiatives.

During their tenure, student trustees gain understanding of the system that supports

education and can share that understanding with peers; and the board gains a fresh perspective from student trustees who may have unique knowledge of how policies will affect the classroom and their peers.

The Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) works with our public school board student trustees as partners to ensure student voices are represented in its advocacy. OPSBA encourages all its member boards to ensure that their policies truly engage student trustees and maximize the voice of all students in the system.



Cathy Abraham
President
OPSBA

With an ever-changing world and education climate, insight from students must be prioritized regarding decisions in education. Student trustees are able to provide a unique and invaluable opinion to the board table as we experience the effects of these decisions firsthand. We are responsible for communicating with our student bodies, leading the student senates, and actively participating as a member of the board of trustees. Additionally, many student trustees go above and beyond through initiatives in their school boards, and provincially. For instance, local policy changes such as menstrual product accessibility in schools resulted from school board motions. Additionally, the Ontario Student Trustees' Association (OSTA-AECO) reports include recommendations on education to the Ministry of Education and school boards. Such projects show the passion that students have for improving our education system, and creating more inclusive and equitable school environments.

In order to maximize their role, student trustees require support from trustees and school board staff. Having a strong support system allows student trustees to adapt to a new work environment, and receive valuable advice to further our leadership. Another component is ensuring the policies that dictate our roles truly support student trustees. Setting the foundation for student voice allows the school boards to make decisions that reflect the current needs of students.

We will see a brighter future when board staff and student trustees collaborate efficiently. OSTA-AECO will always put our students and student trustees first, and urge our school boards to do the same.



Jazzlyn Abbott
Public Board Council
President, OSTA-
AECO

OSTA-AECO and OPSBA Overview

The Ontario Student Trustees' Association (OSTA-AECO) is an independent, non-partisan group of democratically-elected student representatives in Grades 11 and 12. Student trustees work in local communities and on the provincial stage to ensure that students are always put first. In simple terms, they are the student voice: by students, for students.

OSTA-AECO works in the best interests of the students through the advocacy priorities year-by-year. The Students' Vision for Education sets out a broad, bold and ambitious roadmap to change Ontario's education system. It is rooted in both research and student voice, incorporating results from three surveys from 20,000 Ontario students over the past seven years and testimonials from students from across the province.

OSTA-AECO's Public Board Council (PBC) consists of student trustees in public boards across Ontario. This year, PBC is working on aiding students to transition back to school as well as several initiatives, including continuing the Student Voice series with a report addressing the stigma and barriers around student success. Through the Cabinet members, PBC promotes communication and cooperation amongst public student trustees in Ontario, to provide a united voice.

The Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) represents 31 English language public district school boards and public school authorities across Ontario, which together serve more than 1.3 million public elementary and secondary students. The Association advocates for the best interests and needs of students in the public school system in Ontario. OPSBA is seen as a highly credible voice of public education in Ontario and is routinely called on by the provincial government for input and advice on legislation and the impact of government policy directions.

The mission of OPSBA is to promote and enhance public education by: helping Member Boards to fulfil their mandates; developing effective partnerships with other groups interested in public education; and providing a strong and effective voice on behalf of public education in Ontario.

OPSBA was created in 1988 through the amalgamation of three existing public school board associations. Its internal structure was created to provide a fair and equitable representation and this can be seen through the five Regions, the Executive Council, the Board of Directors, the work groups and the Indigenous Trustees' Council.



Student trustees represent the voice of students in decisions about education, and they help keep students informed about important decisions that affect them.

The OPSBA-OSTA Liaison Committee is a recently created group whose purpose is to regularly connect on advocacy issues and offer support and guidance. This Handbook was produced by members of the Committee and student trustees who are members of the Public Board Council.

Purpose

Student voice is valued, and critical to informing policy decisions that best serve student experience for maximum achievement in academics and well-being. This Handbook has been created for use by school board trustees to understand fully the requirements for inclusion of student representatives in the role of student trustees in the governance practices of the board, but more to appreciate and identify processes that will fully mobilize the valuable resource student representatives provide, and to standardize some of these key activities in school boards across the province.

Leveraging Student Voice:

Student representatives who are actively engaged in the dialogue and decisions of a school board ensure these decisions best respond to the needs of the student population, that they are relevant in the current environment, and that the outcomes will be received in the most positive way possible. In accordance with the responsibility of trustees for the strategic planning and school improvement supports, student voice is a key tool for trustees to ensure achievement of student success.

Provincial Consistency:

While there is a great need to have local autonomy in school boards to respond to local needs and pressures, there is great value in sharing leading practices, and operating in a consistent manner. This is certainly the case in how the role of student trustee is supported in Ontario. A number of opportunities exist for OPSBA to work in partnership with student trustees to develop standard approaches for member school boards in a number of areas outlined below to reduce duplication of effort, create equitable access, and strengthen these practices.

Policy Review:

In order to assist school boards to understand the requirements for, and fully realize the benefits of, active participation of student representatives, review of this Handbook as a planned exercise by the board, together with their student trustees, is suggested. This will assist boards to ensure their policies and practices are compliant with the required Legislation and Regulations for student trustee participation, and that they are getting the maximum value in practice of student voice. This could include processes like supporting motions, and clarity around participation in various committees and decisions.

Consistent Funding Support:

Provincial approaches to utilizing funding for student trustee roles will have benefit in a number of areas, including student trustee honoraria, access to professional development, and participation in provincial association events in a safe and equitable way.

Student Trustees: Role and Responsibilities

In Ontario, children and youth between the ages of six and 18 must be enrolled in a formal education program. The province's [Education Act](#) and its regulations establish the framework for the delivery of education programs. There are many key partners, including trustees and student trustees, that work together for public education in Ontario including the provincial government, school boards, educators (e.g. teachers, early childhood educators, etc.), students, parents, Indigenous partners, and the public. Collaboration and inclusion are vital to ensuring that all partners, at all levels of the education system, are working together to share knowledge, skills, and experience to improve student achievement and student and staff well-being.

Every school board in Ontario is governed by a Board of Trustees, who are elected for a term of office every four years at the same time as municipal elections. Other trustees are First Nations Trustees, Hospital Board Trustees, and a new group that governs and operates the Centre Jules-Léger Consortium.

The statutory recognition of student trustees within the *Education Act* occurred in 2006. The role of the student trustee is set out in section 55 of the Act and Ontario Regulation 7/07 Student Trustees.

A student trustee is a provincially mandated role designated to advocate for student voice in the publicly funded education system. This position is elected by students within their school board and serve as their elected representative on the board of

trustees.

Student trustees are to be elected either directly, by students of the board or, indirectly, by student representative bodies such as student councils.

They are responsible for facilitating communication on student issues and opinions between students and the school board by sitting on school boards and attending board meetings. Some boards have also introduced the position of Indigenous student trustee. A student trustee must be a full-time pupil at the secondary level. This requirement does not apply to a student who may not be able to attend full-time because of an exceptionality.

Student trustees are also involved with leading their Student Senate, or Student

Advisory Council. Student Senates/SACs, if the board has one, often comprise of secondary school representatives from across the board that meet regularly. No two student trustees are alike, and each student trustee approaches their role differently, depending on the circumstances and expectations of their board.

A Student Senate (or other forms of board-wide student government) is the committee designed to establish the student vision in local school boards. These committees are normally composed of representatives of each high school in a board. Senates often organize board-wide events, fundraisers, leadership conferences and awareness campaigns.

Section 55 of the *Education Act* describes the status, powers and responsibilities of student trustees, which includes:

- A student trustee is not a member of the board.
- A student trustee is not entitled to exercise a binding vote on any matter before the board or any of its committees.
- A student trustee is entitled to have a matter put to a recorded vote in which case the student trustee's vote is a recorded non-binding vote.
- A student trustee is not entitled to move a motion but can suggest a motion on any matter at a meeting of the board or of one of its committees on which the student trustee sits. If no board member moves the suggested motion, then the record will show the suggested motion.
- A student trustee is not entitled to be present at an in-camera* meeting that involves the disclosure of intimate, personal or financial information in respect of a trustee, a committee of the board, an employee (or prospective employee), a pupil or the guardian of a pupil
- Subject to the above, a student trustee has the same opportunities for participation at meetings of the board and of its committees as any other member.
- A student trustee has the same status as a board member with respect to access to board resources and opportunities for training.

*** In-Camera/Closed/Private Meetings**

The Education Act [s. 207(2)] provides that a meeting of a committee of the board, including a committee of the whole board, may be closed to the public, the media, and any trustee who has declared a conflict of interest regarding the matter being discussed.



Ontario Regulation 7/07 provides further details regarding student trustees:

- A board shall have at least one but not more than three student trustees.
- Student trustees are to be elected by students of the board or by a student representative body.
- A person is qualified to act as a student trustee if they are a full-time pupil of the board in the senior division, and provided they are not serving a sentence of imprisonment.
- A student trustee's term of office starts on August 1 of the year in which they are elected and ends on July 31 of the following year.
- The board has to reimburse student trustees for out-of-pocket expenses as if they were members of the board.
- The present honorarium is \$2,500 for a student trustee who completes their year in office. The honorarium is prorated if the student trustee holds office for less than a complete term of office.
- A board has to develop and implement a policy providing for matters relating to student trustees and the payment of honoraria for student trustees.

Code of Conduct

While student trustees are not required by law to have a code of conduct, it is expected that student trustees respect the provisions in their board's trustee code of conduct. School boards may provide in their By-Laws, or as a policy, that student trustees must abide by their board's trustee code of conduct.

Social Media / Communications

It is important to remember that as a student trustee you are representing all the students in your school board in and out of the board office. Be mindful of your social media presence; anything posted on outlets such as Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, VSCO, etc. should be respectful and respectable. You are allowed to voice your own thoughts and opinions through social media, being mindful and clear that these are not the thoughts of all students in your board.

Everything put online is public and if you would not feel comfortable showing the members of your board a post, then you should definitely avoid posting it. As well, remember that what you post online is a reflection of your school board and there are consequences for inappropriate content posted on social media. A best practice is to include disclaimers like "opinions expressed are my own" or "retweets are not endorsements" in your Twitter bio, which helps to separate your own opinions from those of your school board or constituents.

Student trustees are encouraged to use social media as a platform to engage and communicate with their constituents!

Note: The Chair of the Board is the spokesperson to the public on behalf of the board, unless otherwise determined by the board. No other trustee shall speak on behalf of the board unless expressly authorized by the Chair of the Board or board to do so. When individual trustees express their opinions in public, they must make it clear that they are not speaking on behalf of the board.



Overview of Board and Committee Meetings

One of the primary ways that school boards meet public expectations of transparency and accountability is to make policy decisions at open, public meetings. Public accountability is a cornerstone of Ontario's education system. The *Education Act* states that all meetings of the board shall be open to the public [s. 207(1)] with certain exceptions.

Boards hold meetings regularly in order to govern effectively. Most boards adopt a regular meeting schedule, usually monthly. Special meetings may be needed for the board to consider time-sensitive or weighty matters.

Student trustees may participate in in-camera meetings with the exception of those dealing with matters relating to intimate, personal or financial information about a member of the board or of a committee of the board, an employee (or prospective employee) of the board, a student, or a student's parent or guardian.

All trustees must be aware of the confidentiality that applies to in-camera sessions. As a member of the board, a trustee's role is to respect the board's

decision-making process and not discuss any aspect of private matters, including the nature of the topic and anything that occurred during the in-camera meeting.

Trustees are expected to attend all regular meetings of the board, either physically or through electronic means. Trustees are also expected to attend all meetings of the committee(s) of which they are a member.

A trustee must be physically present in the meeting room of the board for at least three regular meetings of the board in each 12-month period beginning December 1. In addition, a trustee cannot miss three consecutive meetings unless approval is granted by the board [s. 228(1)]

Advisory committees are established on either a short or long-term basis to provide input into policy development or other areas where the board would benefit from the experience and expertise of other participants. Non-trustee members might include teachers, students, parents, and members of the community or local business-people. Many boards now establish advisory committees as part of their commitment to public consultation.

Statutory Committees are required in accordance with the relevant regulation. Trustee representation on these advisory committees is required. The four statutory committees are:

- ✓ Special Education Advisory Committee (Ontario Regulation 464/97)
- ✓ Audit Committee (Ontario Regulation 361/10)
- ✓ School Councils and Parent Involvement Committee (Ontario Regulation 612/00)
- ✓ Supervised Alternative Learning Committee (Ontario Regulation 374/10)

Select, special or ad hoc committees, such as task forces or work groups, investigate a specific issue and report to the board within a stated time frame. These committees are generally created by a board resolution and are composed of and led by trustees.

Rules of Order

School board meetings are run according to parliamentary procedure. These rules of procedure are designed to allow trustees to introduce motions and proceed with debate, dissent, and decision-making in an orderly way.

Although specific practices may vary, most school boards follow accepted rules of parliamentary procedure for their public decision-making processes. The most commonly used procedures are the recent editions of Robert's Rules of Order or Bourinot's Rules of Order.

General Order of Meetings

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Minutes
3. Officers Reports (if applicable)
5. New Business
6. Miscellaneous items
7. Adjournment

Meeting Tips

- Dress appropriately - business casual is the expected dress code of all attendees during meetings and conferences.
- Read over materials provided by the board in advance of any meeting.
- Prepare your ideas and questions in advance.
- Pay attention to education issues – locally, provincially and nationally.



Student Trustee Tips and Advice



"Your voice as a student is often the most valued at the board table; never be afraid to speak up or ask for the resources necessary to do so!"

"Invite open conversation with your peers, you may not agree with their point of view, but you will look at things from a different perspective."

"You are a student first. Sometimes with this role you can get tied into the idea of you have to accomplish every single thing but in reality you are only in this position for a certain amount of time, so do what you can in this position."

"When you receive pushback, respectfully push back harder no matter what. You are there for a reason!"

"With this job, it is so tempting to want to take on every single task but you need to make your mental well-being a priority."



“Never be afraid to ask for help! Many trustees and senior administration will be great resources to help you navigate your role while ensuring you make every moment of it a memorable one.”

“Your voice and perspective is important, education should be student-centered.”

“Try to work with and learn from all trustees to form your view points, not just the most vocal.”

“Stay true to yourself.”

“Remember that leadership is demonstrated in many ways, so it will be important to seek support from staff to hear all student voices and experiences, including those who may express their needs in different ways.”

Indigenous Education

In Ontario, Indigenous (First Nation, Métis, and Inuit) students who live in First Nation communities attend schools in their own communities or the province's publicly funded schools, with a small number attending private schools.

Indigenous students who live in First Nation communities and attend schools operated by a district school board or school authority may do so under an Education Services Agreement (ESA), also commonly referred to as a Tuition Agreement. These agreements are legal and binding, and are developed through mutual discussions around the provision of services for school-based programs, or individual student supports as determined by both the First Nation and the public school board or school authority.

They provide a basis for the relationship between the First Nation community and the board. The individual relationship a board has with a First Nation, the needs of the students and community, and the ability to provide appropriate services, are all considerations in the development of an ESA. The nature of ESAs will vary by board, as will the needs vary by community.

In addition to Indigenous students who attend provincially funded schools under ESAs, there are a significant number of students who self-identify as Indigenous. These may be students who have moved from a First Nation and/or are students with full or partial Indigenous ancestry who have never lived in a First Nation community.

The appointment of First Nation Trustees to a school board is related to Education Services Agreements and is outlined in Ontario Regulation 462/97: First Nations Representation on Boards. First Nation representation on a school board is determined first by the existence of one or more ESAs and then by the number of Indigenous students attending the board's schools.

However, recently boards have made local decisions to formally include an Indigenous Trustee as part of their board and have funded the position themselves. In addition, school boards are also adopting an Indigenous Student Trustee position.

Impact of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)

In 2015, the TRC, released its final Executive Report and with it, the issuance of 94 "Calls to Action." These Calls to Action also align and are in support of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), of which Canada is an official signatory. The UNDRIP identifies clearly that education systems around the world, and in particular those in countries that are signatories, must reflect and endorse education that includes languages, the history, and the cultures of Indigenous peoples. Among the Calls to Action, two identify the need for ongoing review and subsequent action for appropriate curriculum reform; and sufficient funding for development and implementation of revised curriculum. Individual boards may be at different phases of implementation in approach and development for such action.

First Nation Trustees

A person appointed to the board to represent the interests of Indigenous students is deemed to be an elected member of the board, with all the rights and responsibilities of the position. The role of all trustees is to help create the vision and set the strategic direction that will guide the board and its schools. As the representative of Indigenous students, the First Nation trustee is in a unique position to ensure that Indigenous culture is part of that vision and that the strategic direction of the board includes the interests of First Nations.

The First Nation trustee is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the actions of the board reflect the education services agreement
- Ensuring that both parties to the agreement are fulfilling their obligations
- Ensuring that mechanisms are in place for effective accountability to the First Nation community
- Ensuring a high-quality academic and cultural education for Indigenous students
- Ensuring that Indigenous students are free from any expression of racism and harassment as students of the board's schools.

The First Nation trustee has a key role in representing the interests of the First Nation communities at the school board level and ensuring that there is dialogue with the First Nation communities about the work of the board and, in particular, matters affecting Indigenous students. The First Nation trustee is also in a position to encourage the involvement of the parents and the First Nations communities in their students' education.

A majority of Ontario school boards have established First Nation or Indigenous Advisory Committees. These provide a forum for discussing Indigenous education issues and contributing to initiatives that ensure the implementation of the First Nation, Métis and Inuit Policy Framework within the board.

In 2016, school boards were required to develop board action plans on Indigenous Education and a position – the First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Lead – was created in each school board to support the development and implementation of the First Nation, Métis and Inuit Policy Framework.

In these advisory committees, the First Nation trustee is usually the chair or co-chair, and membership includes the First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Lead, and a representative from each First Nation that has students in the board's schools. Some ESAs also specify First Nation representation on the school board's Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC). Where a First Nation trustee is required by regulation to be a member of the board, the SEAC must also have one or two First Nation members to represent the interests of First Nation students.

Indigenous Student Trustees

The Indigenous student trustee is meant to convey two voices: the student voice and the Indigenous student voice. When asked which role is their primary role, overwhelmingly they indicate their Indigenous voice as their primary responsibility.

- Indigenous student trustees will commonly raise issues unique to their community that are separate from the actual realities and lived experiences of other student trustees.
- Indigenous student trustees bring a unique perspective and historical experience of life as an Indigenous person, often living on a First Nations Territory.
- Indigenous student trustees can provide unique context and insight into systemic barriers that they face. These can include impacts of the Residential School System and the vicarious effects of inter-generational trauma.
- Indigenous student trustees can provide insight into external barriers such as racism and discrimination both inside and outside of the education system.
- Indigenous student trustees can bring attention to and highlight the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and how this can impact a school, and the entire Board.
- Indigenous student trustees can be in a position to support and advocate for Indigenous Students from a First Nations Territory who have enrolled in a provincially funded school by virtue of a Reciprocal Education Approach and may have little or no student support or advocacy.
- Indigenous student trustees are encouraged to represent all Indigenous students within their board. This may require some creative ways to communicate within their school board jurisdiction.

The Unique Role of the Indigenous Student Trustee

- Provides an additional student voice, which leads to a positive feeling among Indigenous students, parents, and community leaders in that their interests and issues are being heard.
- Creates feelings of belonging and being valued.
- Creates opportunities for leadership, training and experience among Indigenous students.
- Creates opportunities to raise level of TRC awareness.
- Brings a perspective that trustees and all board personnel can benefit and learn from.
- Provides an opportunity to contribute to and influence the development of policies that reflect the needs and perspectives of Indigenous learners.
- Because of the relatively new role of Indigenous student trustees, there is a need for support and mentorship to develop confidence in their role.
- Indigenous student trustees could benefit from opportunities to come together for conversations and awareness of issues and events that are taking place across the province.

Resources



OESC Module 20: A Journey Towards Truth and Reconciliation for examples of models of Indigenous representation at school boards [here](#).

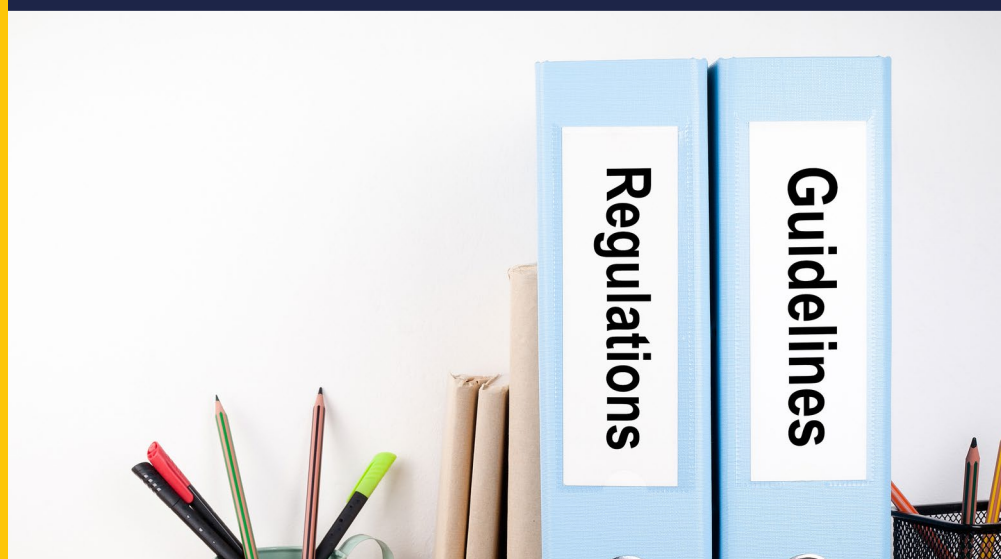
School Board Policies

The Ministry of Education provides direction and expectations for district school boards and school authorities via policy documents called Policy and Program Memoranda (PPM). A full listing of PPMs can be found [here](#).

Student trustee should familiarize themselves with all PPMs, but may consider these recent PPMs that directly concern students:

- [Policy/Program Memorandum 166: Keeping Students Safe: Policy Framework for School Board Anti-Sex Trafficking Protocols](#)
- [Policy/Program Memorandum 164: Requirements for Remote Learning](#)
- [Policy/Program Memorandum 163: School Board Policies on Service Animals](#)
- [Policy/Program Memorandum 162: Exemption from Instruction related to the Human Development and Sexual Health Expectations in The Ontario Curriculum: Health and Physical Education, Grades 1–8, 2019](#)
- [Policy/Program Memorandum 161: Supporting children and students with prevalent medical conditions \(anaphylaxis, asthma, diabetes, and/or epilepsy\) in schools](#)
- [Policy/Program Memorandum 160: Protected time for daily mathematics instruction, Grades 1 to 8](#)
- [Policy/Program Memorandum 158: School board policies on concussion](#)

In addition, each school board would have their own local board policies that reflect their student and school community. These could include advertising, accessibility, equity & diversity, fundraising, homework, and transportation.



Professional Development Opportunities / Conferences

OPSBA: The Association offers these conferences and seminars to trustees and school board staff. The events are a dynamic opportunity for professional learning that is uniquely tailored to the needs of Ontario's education leaders. These events include:

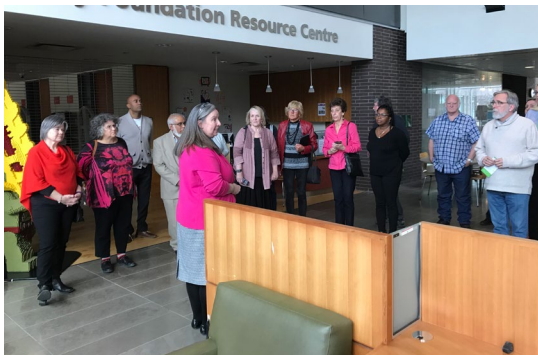


Public Education Symposium (PES):

Hundreds of trustees, student trustees and school board administrators participate in OPSBA's PES each January. This premier professional development symposium, specifically designed for school boards, offers dynamic sessions on topics directly affecting the role of trustee and the broader environment within which school boards operate.

Annual General Meeting (AGM) and Program

At the OPSBA AGM, members determine priorities and directions for the coming year, elect officers and plan for the future. The event also offers a comprehensive professional development program for trustees.



Regional Meetings

The Member Boards of each region hold no fewer than two meetings each year, usually in the fall and spring, in addition to the regional meetings held at OPSBA's Public Education Symposium and the Annual General Meeting.

Summit on Children and Youth Mental Health

OPSBA has continued to be a leader in the Coalition for Children and Youth Mental Health, which held its last Summit in Toronto in April 2018.





OSTA-AECO Conferences:

Annually, OSTA-AECO holds three conferences: the Fall General Meeting in October, the Board Council Conference in February, and the Annual General Meeting in May. Each conference includes engaging sessions to allow student trustees to better understand their role, phenomenal guest speakers, and breakout sessions that allow student trustees to work with their designated board councils and working groups on focused yearly initiatives. These conferences provide student trustees with the invaluable opportunity to network with and learn from fellow student trustees across the province. Student trustees from all around Ontario advocate and collaborate as a team on the executive council, working groups, and board councils.

Canadian School Board Association Conference Annual Congress (CSBA):

The CSBA Congress is an annual professional development event that takes place in early July. Approximately 350 school trustees or commissioners gather for professional development and to share best practices, compare experiences and learn new ways of better serving Canadian students.



The National Trustee Gathering on Indigenous Education

Often in conjunction with the annual congress, the CSBA hosts the National Trustee Gathering on Indigenous Education. CSBA member provincial associations alternate as hosts for the Congress.

Supervision

Student safety is a number one priority within all Ontario public school boards. To ensure safety at all conferences attended by student representatives, supervision and safety policies have been created by both OSTA-AECO as well as OPSBA to ensure the safety and well-being of all conference attendees.

Student trustee mentors should ensure that student trustees are aware of all conference opportunities and work alongside the students to create opportunities for engagement, attendance

and involvement in all conferences. There are numerous conferences that student trustees are able to attend.

For OPSBA conferences, protocols for student trustees should be in line with the safety protocols set up by OSTA-AECO (as outlined below). Most member boards ensure proper supervision and/or discussion is in place and discussed with senior staff when student trustees are participants and may even have policies and/or procedures about this.

OSTA-AECO has created a supervision policy for its conferences. In order to ensure student trustee safety, certain protocols must be followed:

- Prior to arriving at the conference, all student trustees must complete the Student Trustee Registration Form through which they provide us with their contact information, an emergency contact, outline any dietary restrictions or accessibility needs, and agree to the Student Trustee Code of Conduct.
- All student trustees are required to complete check-in with the board between 9:00pm and 11:00pm each evening of the conference. Once check-in has been completed, student trustees are to return to their hotel rooms to rest for the next conference day.
- In the case that an attendee has not completed check-in, the student trustee will be contacted via the cellular number provided in their registration.
- If we are unable to reach the student trustee directly, members of the board will contact the student trustee's parent/guardian, and Director of Education.
- All Directors are required to have verified criminal record checks with vulnerable sector screening, in addition to having a level of first aid and mental health training.
- Additionally, school boards may send chaperones to all of our professional development conferences if they so choose. Student trustees with chaperones may choose to complete nightly check-ins with their respective chaperones rather than the Board of Directors. Please note, chaperones or any additions aside from the student trustees formally registered are also required to adhere to the Code of Conduct.
- As conference attendance continues to grow on a yearly basis, the following additional measures have been implemented to ensure the safety of all our students:
 - ◊ Hiring a mental health counsellor for the annual conferences to provide student trustees with a trusted professional from whom to seek help on matters related to their mental health
 - ◊ Implementing workshops, trainings, and campaigns relating to gender-based violence and consent
 - ◊ Designating two Directors, of different genders wherever possible, to be on call and present at all times for the duration of conference days to address any concerns that may arise
 - ◊ Updating the Student Trustee Code of Conduct to explicitly prohibit student trustees from inviting any unauthorized individuals (anyone not currently a student trustee, supervisor, chaperone, or authorized guest) into conference spaces, including hotel rooms. Upon encountering an unauthorized individual, student trustees will be mandated to report that to the Board of Directors
 - ◊ Creating a versatile reporting portal with a transparent framework for student trustees to report incidents they may face.

Additional Resources

The Ontario Ministry of Education - The Ministry of Education is responsible for child care and for administering the system of publicly funded elementary and secondary school education in Ontario.

The Ontario Education Act - The *Education Act* and its regulations provide the statutory basis for how education is delivered to students who are enrolled in the publicly funded school system in Ontario.

OPSBA's Guide to Good Governance - The fully updated resource is for trustees and boards for the 2018-2022 term of office.

Ontario Education Services Corporation's Trustee Professional Development Program - This program includes 21 modules and aims to offer trustees a substantive overview of the areas that are essential to their governance role.

Transitioning from the COVID-19 School Experience – A Discussion Paper – This paper reflects the initial thinking of OPSBA membership from first-hand accounts of remote learning during the pandemic, in all manner of school and geographic setting.

The Students' Vision for Education OSTA-AECO Vision Document - This document includes 35 recommendations across six pillars: enhancing equity, funding formula reform, strengthening rural & northern schools, system modernization for 21st century learning, supporting student well-being, and school board governance.

The Volume of Our Voices - This OSTA-AECO project serves to amplify your stories as students in Ontario's education system. In the 2021-2022 school year, stories were published in three volumes, each addressing one of the following themes: the impact of COVID-19, cultural diversity, and diversity in gender identities and sexual orientation

Glossary

CODE

Council of Ontario Directors of Education. Members include directors of education from all four school board systems – English and French public, and English and French Catholic (See also ECCODE and CODELF).

Coterminous Boards

District school boards that serve all or part of the same geographical area.

EDU

Ministry of Education. An abbreviation used by the ministry in some of its publications.

Elementary Level

Junior Kindergarten to Grade 8 (See also Primary Division, Junior Division, and Intermediate Division).

EQAO

Education Quality and Accountability Office. A crown agency established in 1996 to measure and communicate the achievements of students, schools, and school boards, using province-wide assessments of students and other indicators.

GSN

Grants for Student Needs.

IEP

Individual Education Plan. A special education plan developed for a student who requires specific services, supports and accommodations.

Intermediate Division

Grades 7 to 10.

IPRC

Identification, Placement and Review Committee. A committee made up of at least three individuals, at least one of whom is a principal or a supervisory officer, who decide whether individual students should be formally identified as exceptional and, therefore, requiring special education support.

MACSE

Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education.

MFIPPA

Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

OCT

Ontario College of Teachers. The Ontario College of Teachers establishes and implements standards for certification, teaching practice, and professional development. It also accredits faculties of education. The OCT is a self-regulating professional body, which may confer, suspend, or rescind the teaching certificates of its members.

OEN

Ontario Education Number. A number assigned to each student by the Ministry of Education to facilitate data collection.

OESC

Ontario Educational Services Corporation. A non-profit organization set up by the four school board associations (OPSBA, OCSTA, ACÉPO, and AFOCSC) and the Council of Directors of Education (CODE) to provide services to school boards, (e.g., a school energy coalition which intervenes at the Ontario Energy Board to effect savings for boards).

OPC

Ontario Principals' Council. Related associations include ADFO and CPCO.

OSR

Ontario Student Record.

OSSC

Ontario Secondary School Certificate.

OSSD

Ontario Secondary School Diploma.

OSSLT

Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test. A province-wide test administered by the EQAO and written by Grade 10 students. The test is based on the Ontario curriculum expectations for language and communication – particularly reading and writing – up to and including Grade 9.

PIC

Parent Involvement Committee. This is a system-level committee of parent representatives established to support improved student achievement and well-being through encouraging and enhancing parent involvement. The Parent Involvement Committee may provide advice to the Board.

Rules of Order

Rules of Order refer to the parliamentary procedures followed to ensure motions are introduced, debated and voted on in an orderly manner.

- **Amendment:** Inserting or striking out words or paragraphs, or substituting whole paragraphs or resolutions.
- **Divide the Question:** Divides a motion into two or more separate motions (must be able to stand on their own).
- **Motion to Adjourn:** Close the meeting/session.
- **Parliamentary Inquiry:** Inquire as to the correct motion - to clarify where we are in the session.
- **Point of Information:** Generally applies to information desired from the speaker: "I should like to ask the (speaker) a question."
- **Point of Order:** Infraction of the rules, or

improper decorum in speaking. Must be raised immediately after the error is made.

- **Point of Privilege:** Pertains to noise, personal comfort, etc. - may interrupt only if necessary.
- **Time Sensitive Item:** Closing debate at a certain time, or limiting to a certain period of time.

SAL

Supervised Alternative Learning – relates to policies and programs intended to re-engage young people 14 to 17 years old who are not attending school and are at risk of not graduating.

School Authorities

Governing bodies for school systems in remote or distinct communities that are not served by district school boards. In this Handbook, the terms school board and board are used to refer to both district school boards and school authorities.

School Boards Collective Bargaining Act (SBCBA)

The SBCBA is the provincial bargaining legislation and under it, the central parties are the employee bargaining agent (represented by unions), the employer bargaining agent (represented by school board/trustees' associations, and when bargaining with unions represented in multiple publicly funded school systems, the Council of Trustees' Associations), and the Crown (represented by the Government of Ontario).

School Councils

Advisory bodies composed of parents, community members, and others with a mandate to provide advice to the school principal and the school board on certain matters.

SEAC

Special Education Advisory Committee. A committee established by each school board to monitor the board's special education programs, services, and plans.

Secondary Level

Grades 9 to 12 (See also Intermediate Division and Senior Division).

Senior Division

Grades 11 and 12.

Education Stakeholder Partners

[Association of Municipalities of Ontario](#)

[Canadian School Boards' Association \(CSBA\)](#)

[Children's Mental Health Ontario](#)

[Kids Help Phone](#)

[Education Quality and Accountability Office \(EQAO\)](#)

[Ontario Education Services Corporation](#)

[Ontario Ministry of Education](#)

[Ontario College of Teachers \(OCT\)](#)

[Ontario Principals' Council \(OPC\)](#)

[Ontario Ministry of Indigenous Affairs](#)

[Ontario Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services](#)

[Ontario Ombudsman](#)

[Ophea](#)



OSTA AECO

Ontario Student Trustees' Association / l'Association des élèves conseillers et conseillères de l'Ontario

ONTARIO PUBLIC SCHOOL BOARDS' ASSOCIATION

Leading Education's Advocates

