

BUSINESS AND BOARD ADMINISTRATION	3000
ELECTRONIC MEETINGS POLICY	3094

1. Rationale

Ontario Regulation 463/97 Section 2(1) requires:

Every board shall develop and implement a policy providing for the use of electronic means for the holding of meetings of a board and meetings of a committee of a board, including a committee of the whole board.

2. The Policy

It is the policy of Lakehead District School Board (LDSB) that trustees and student trustees who participate in a meeting through electronic means, with approval in accordance with Ontario Regulation 463/97 under the Education Act, shall be deemed to be present at the meeting.

3. Guidelines

A. Statutory Committees of the Board

- 3.1 Meeting rooms of the public Board or a public committee of the Board shall be open to permit physical attendance by the members of the public, except in inclement weather.
- 3.2 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.
- 3.3 Despite section 3.2, the chair may participate electronically in a meeting of the Board if another member of the Board is physically present in the meeting room.
- 3.4 The director of education or their designate shall be physically present in the meeting room for each meeting of a committee of the Board.

B. Regular Board Meetings

- 3.5 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 meeting of the whole Board. The chair and secretary of the Board may waive the requirement to be physically present and may move the meeting to a virtual meeting due to severe inclement weather.

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- 3.6 Despite section 3.5, a member of the Board may participate in a Board meeting by electronic means instead of being physically present if the member receives written approval. To obtain written approval, no later than 24 hours prior to a meeting, the chair/vice-chair and the secretary of the Board shall be notified in writing of a trustee's or student trustee's request for electronic participation, and the reason for the request for electronic communication at the meeting. (Exceptions to the 24-hour rule may be made by the chair in extenuating circumstances up to the start time of the meeting). If the chair is making the request for electronic participation, it shall be submitted in writing to the vice-chair and the secretary of the Board.
- 3.7 The chair, vice-chair or designate may approve a request if they are satisfied that one or more of the following circumstances exist:
- the member's primary place of residence within the area of jurisdiction of the Board is located 125 KM or more from the meeting location;
 - weather conditions do not allow the member to travel to the meeting safely;
 - the member cannot be physically present at a meeting due to health-related issues;
 - the member has a disability that makes it challenging to be physically present at a meeting;
 - the member cannot be physically present due to family responsibilities in respect of the following:
 - the member's spouse;
 - a parent, step-parent, foster parent of the member or member's spouse;
 - a child, step-child, foster child who is under legal guardianship of the member or member's spouse;
 - a relative of the member who is dependent on the member for care or assistance; and/or
 - a person who is dependent on the member for care or assistance and who considers the member to be like a family member.
- 3.8 The chair/vice-chair shall not approve a request under section 3.7, 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.
- 3.9 Despite section 3.7, the chair or designate shall be physically present in the meeting room of the Board for at least half of the meetings of the Board during each 12-month period beginning November 15.
- 3.10 Despite section 3.7, a member of the Board shall be physically present for at least 3 regular meetings of the Board during each 12-month period beginning November 15.
- 3.11 The director of education or their designate shall be physically present in the meeting room for each meeting of the regular Board, including a committee of the whole Board.

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3.12 If a trustee does not qualify under section 3.7 to participate virtually, they are considered absent under section 228 (1)(e) of the Education Act.

3.13 Requirements to be physically present at meetings do not apply if all schools of the Board are closed to an order made by:

- The Minister of Education;
- A medical officer of health or the Chief Medical Officer of Health; and/or
- The Lieutenant Governor in Council.

If an order is made, it remains in effect from the day the order starts and ends 60 days after the order ceases to apply.

C. Electronic Guidelines

The electronic means shall permit the member or student trustee to hear and be heard by all other participants in the meeting.

3.14 Electronic connection to the meeting shall ensure clear communication.

3.15 Trustees and student trustees shall have copies of the meeting agenda and package while participating electronically.

3.16 Trustees and student trustees participating in electronic meetings, in closed session, shall ensure confidentiality and this shall be noted by the secretary. Student trustees participating in electronic meetings, in closed session, shall not participate in any closed session items under section 207(2)(b) of the Education Act.

3.17 The Governing By-Laws, the conflict of interest rules and the most current edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall apply to electronic meetings of LDSB.

3.18 Lakehead District School Board shall provide members of the public with electronic means for participating in meetings to the extent and manner outlined for public participation in the LDSB Governing By-Laws.

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4. Review

This policy shall be reviewed in accordance with 2010 Policy Development and Review Policy.

<u>Cross Reference</u>	<u>Date Approved</u>	<u>Legal Reference</u>
Lakehead District School Board 2022 Governing By-Laws	June 16, 1998	Education Act 22 Education Act 207 (2) Education Act 228(1)(e) Education Act 208.1(1)(b) O. Reg. 234/04 O. Reg. 268/06 O. Reg. 293/18 O. Reg. 313/24 O. Reg. 463/97 O. Reg. 632/20 Health Protection and Promotion Act Section 77.1 Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act 5(7.0.2)(4) Reopening Ontario Act 2020 4(1)(a)
	<u>Date Revised</u> February 27, 2007 September 22, 2015 June 5, 2023 September 23, 2025	