



Ontario Catholic School
Trustees' Association

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April 3, 2018

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chairpersons and Directors of Education
- All Catholic District School Boards

FROM: Patrick J. Daly, President

SUBJECT: **School Board Governance Review: Next Steps**

As you may be aware, on March 26, 2018 the Minister of Education issued a letter to education partners regarding the school board governance engagement and next steps in this consultation process. As you will recall, there are five areas under review:

- Trustee Codes of Conduct and Integrity Commissioners
- Trustee Honoraria
- Student Trustee term of office and election process
- Electronic meeting participation
- Director of Education qualifications.

Next Steps in the Consultation Process

Trustee Code of Conduct and Integrity Commissioners

- The ministry will establish a working group with trustee associations to develop minimum standards for trustee code of conduct;
- Facilitate voluntary access to an Integrity Commissioner for boards;
- Develop a new regulation under the Education Act that will require boards to make publicly available its Code of Conduct and to review their code on a regular basis (possibly following each trustee election cycle).
- Timing: the regulation is being developed now and the working group may move forward in the late fall of 2018.

Trustee Honoraria

- The ministry is now in the process of developing a regulation that will increase the base amount from \$5,900 to \$6,300 annually from December 1, 2018 going forward, as part of the GSN.
- Establish a working group to further review the structure of the trustee honoraria formula.
- Timing: the regulation is being developed now as part of the GSN set of regulations. The working group may start in the fall.

Student Trustee term of office and election process

- Adjust the existing regulation (O.Reg 7/07) to provide boards the option of extending the term of student trustees to two years, or a staggered term of office or a one year term;
- Requiring all boards to have at least two student trustees;
- Moving the election date to the end of February;
- Timing: 2019-2020 school year. The regulation is under development at the present time.

Electronic meeting participation

- The ministry is developing a regulation now that would permit boards to include in policy the ability for board and committee chairs to preside over meetings by electronic means under certain conditions (weather, distance over 200km, health issues);
- Boards would be required to establish processes for closed meetings;
- Non more than half of board meetings in a 12-month period could be chaired electronically;
- Maintain the current requirement of having one trustee and the director of education attend board meetings in person.

Director of Education qualifications

- No changes are being contemplated with respect to change the rules related to director qualifications.

OCSTA Policy Recommendations on School Board Governance

OCSTA is pleased to note that many of its recommendations on the five areas under review formed the basis of the ministry's decisions. For example, we recommended boards have access to integrity commissioners if they believe it necessary to resolve issues. We also recommended the length of term of student trustees that were accepted and additional increases to the Trustee Honoraria that were taken into consideration. The proposed regulation for electronic meetings recognizes a board's autonomy and flexibility to determine a policy framework in respect of electronic meetings, a key recommendation from our submission.

Next Steps for OCSTA

OCSTA will continue to liaise with the ministry on its regulation development and the creation of working groups in these key school board governance areas and provide updates in a timely manner.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me or Stephen Andrews at sandrews@ocsta.on.ca.