

GOVERNANCE

Policy 205-G

Trustee Professional Development and Travel

Types of Professional Development Activities

There are two main categories of professional development activities that trustees may wish to attend in their capacity as members of the Board or at which the Board may wish to have trustee representation. Access to funding for these activities by trustees shall be on a fair and equitable basis. The amount available shall be determined by the Board, in its Annual Operating Budget.

Board Supported Conferences, Workshops and Seminars

Conferences, workshops and seminars at which it is deemed advisable that the Board be officially represented, will be funded centrally by the Board.

Such conferences, workshops and seminars which are considered Board supported for the proper exercise of a committee or trustee mandate shall include, but shall not be limited to:

- BCSTA Conferences
- Canadian School Boards Association
- BCPSEA Conferences
- Ministry of Education sponsored events/activities
- Conferences, workshops, seminars organized by the Board or District Staff
- Others, as approved by the Board

Attendance by the Board at these events is subject to the availability of funding.

Other Professional Development Activities

Trustees are encouraged to pursue learning opportunities such as:

- Access to educational publications such as books, journals and newsletters
- Participation in conferences, workshops and in-services activities that are not listed in the section above, that enhance their understanding of educational issues and governance.

The Board may choose to limit the number of Trustees that may attend certain of these events.

Professional development opportunities may take the form of conversations with the broader educational community - at seminars, workshops, conventions and similar appropriate meetings offered within the district and the Lower Mainland.

In order to understand educational issues from a wider perspective, trustees may also occasionally engage in professional development opportunities offered outside the Lower Mainland.

Costs associated with events, functions and fundraisers of a political nature will not be covered by the Board.

Professional Development Expenses

Trustees whose expenses are being paid by another sponsoring organization will not be reimbursed.

Trustees are expected to travel and lodge using the most economical options, giving fair consideration to travel time and proximity to event.

It is expected that trustees attending a conference held within the Lower Mainland would usually return home each evening, unless the timing of events necessitates overnight lodging, or if the Board considers overnight lodging beneficial to build cohesion within the Board or with other educational colleagues.

Attendance requiring compensation for expenses must be pre-approved by the Board except for events hosted in British Columbia by the District, BCPSEA, BCSTA, and the Ministry of Education.

Claims for reimbursement may be made for the following expenses:

- Registration fees, membership dues and other associated charges.
- BCSTA rates for meals, plus \$10 for incidentals if the event takes more than eight (8) hours; or actual documented living expenses, whichever is greatest. The per diem allowance should be reduced for each meal provided at the event.
- Single hotel accommodation, as required; or \$20 per day for lodging with a friend or relative.
- Documented travel expenses within the Lower Mainland - vehicle kilometerage will be reimbursed at the current BCSTA (BC School Trustees' Association) rate. Receipts will be required for parking and taxi claims but not bus fare.
- Documented travel expenses outside the Lower Mainland - economy return airfare, bus, ferry, train, or vehicle kilometerage and parking, whichever is the lesser. Vehicle kilometerage will be compensated at the current BCSTA rate.
- Expenses incurred outside Canada will be reimbursed in the Canadian equivalent value at the time the expense was incurred.
- Expense claims for professional development activities are subject to the approval process and all other restrictions noted in Policy 203-G.
- Notwithstanding the approval process and restrictions noted in Policy 203-G, it is recognized that there may be circumstances that arise which preclude preapproval of Trustee expense claims. Trustees should document the extenuating circumstances surrounding the exception with their supporting documentation for their claim. Exceptions to the approval process will not preclude the reimbursement of such claims.