

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2026

Open Session: 5:30 p.m. – 6:15 p.m. (In person in the Boardroom)

MINUTES

ATTENDANCE

(*denotes approval received to attend electronically)

Trustee Committee Members

Trustee Beamer (Chair), Trustee Baggott, Trustee Barnett, Trustee Brousseau, Trustee Mitchell

Administration

Kelly Pisek (Chief Executive Officer), Karen Bellamy (Executive Assistant to Chief Executive Officer), Jennifer Feren (General Counsel)

Recording Secretary

Kerry Baker (Law Clerk to General Counsel)

Trustee Guests

Trustee Klassen

A. ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF TRADITIONAL TERRITORY

Chair Beamer opened the meeting with an Acknowledgement of the Traditional Territory of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe peoples.

B. CALL TO ORDER /NOTING OF ABSENCE

Chair Beamer called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Quorum was met.

C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The Agenda was reviewed and approved.

Moved by Trustee Baggott

Seconded by Trustee Mitchell

“That the Agenda of the Ad Hoc Governance Committee is approved.”

CARRIED

D. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

1. Policy Governance Framework

Moved by Trustee Brousseau

Seconded by Trustee Barnett

“That the Policy Governance Framework report dated September 22, 2026 be received.”

CARRIED

General Counsel Feren presented the Policy Governance Framework report. The Committee discussed the proposed framework for organizing and reviewing the Board’s policy library, offering some suggestions for further consideration. The Committee confirmed it would defer approval of the framework until the mapping of the policies was presented at the next Committee meeting.

2. Policy Update - Preamble

General Counsel presented the report and rationale for the proposed updated preamble policy. The Committee reviewed the proposed new policy and offered feedback including making the first review in one year, removing “significant” from the Board Receipt Policies, modifying the CEO delegation for compliance with binding Ministry Direction only and inclusion of language confirming policy generation similar to the current policy. The matter was tabled for further refinement and consideration at the next meeting.

E. NEW BUSINESS

AD HOC GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2026



1. Draft Minute Posting

CEO Pisek proposed posting draft or pending-approval minutes to the Board website before formal approval to improve timely public access and transparency. Trustees supported the concept, provided draft minutes are clearly identified as subject to approval. Trustees also requested that draft minutes also be made available to Trustees before public posting.

F. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be Tuesday, October 6, 2026 in person in the Boardroom.

G. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting of the Ad Hoc Governance Committee adjourned at 6:15 p.m.



Policy Governance Framework

Tuesday, September 22, 2026

BACKGROUND:

During this Board's term, the Policy Committee met three times a year to review policies scheduled under the established review cycle and determine whether they should be updated or revoked. The Trustees' proactive engagement in reviewing individual policies and considering their governance role provided a strong foundation for taking a broader view of the policy library, while also highlighting the opportunity for a more coordinated and efficient approach.

At its June 8, 2026, meeting, the Governance Committee discussed a more purposeful approach to reviewing the policy library and supported the concept of working to streamline the policy library focusing on the policies that need to be public facing and eliminating others. As reflected in the Minutes, the Governance Committee identified three categories for reviewing and streamlining the policy library:

- policies to retain
- policies to revoke and convert to public guidance available as tools or guidelines to assist families and Trustees navigate situations
- Policies to revoke as not relevant to the public (e.g., staff retirement guidance)

The Governance Committee Minutes also reflect that once the policy library review is complete, future policy reviews could be brought directly to the Board as part of its ongoing work.

Based on the discussion and feedback received through the Governance Committee meeting, a Policy Governance Framework has been developed.

CATEGORY			RATIONALE
1A	GOVERNANCE	FOR TRUSTEE APPROVAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies that address significant legislative, regulatory or other legal requirements, or that involve an exercise of permitted discretion warranting Board authorization • Propose that these policies would be considered at the Governance Committee before being presented to the Board
1B	GOVERNANCE	FOR TRUSTEE RECEIPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies that primarily reflect or give administrative effect to legislation, regulations, Ministry policy or other legal requirements, without requiring the Board to make a significant discretionary policy choice • Propose that these policies be received directly at Board meetings
2	POLICY TO REVOKE	COMMUNITY FACING RESOURCE EXISTS OR RECOMMENDED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information is already contained in community facing resources on website through guidelines, handbooks or other practical resources • Alternatively, convert important concepts to public guidance as policy may contain some useful information for family and/or community that could instead be provided on the website through guidelines, handbooks or other practical resources

AD HOC GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

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3	POLICY TO REVOKE	NO COMMUNITY FACING RESOURCE RECOMMENDED	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Content is operational in nature and/or internal and/or staff related
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At the next meeting, the proposed placement of policies within the framework will be considered further, informed by the perspectives and preliminary observations brought to the discussion.

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

“That the Policy Governance Framework report dated September 22, 2026, be approved. “

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Feren
General Counsel

Date: September 22, 2026

For further information, please contact Jennifer Feren, General Counsel

Policy Update - Preamble

Tuesday, September 22, 2026

BACKGROUND:

At its June 8, 2026 meeting, the Governance Committee considered a more purposeful approach to reviewing and considering the Board's policy library, which is being considered in the proposed companion Policy Governance Framework report.

On June 22, 2026, the Board amended its By-Laws and Rules of Orders streamlining its committee structure.

These changes require changes to the current pre-ambles policies **i-01: Policy-General**; **i-02: Policy Committee**; and **i-03: Policy Generating Process** to reflect the changes to the By-Laws and Rules and Order and Governance Committee's more purposeful approach to reviewing and streamlining the policy library.

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

"That Policies i-01: Policy-General; i-02: Policy Committee; i-03: Policy Generating Process be revoked."

"That Policy i-01: Policy Framework be approved."

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Feren
General Counsel

Date: September 22, 2026

For further information, please contact Jennifer Feren, General Counsel

POLICY

SECTION:	PREAMBLE	POLICY:	i-01
TOPIC:	POLICY FRAMEWORK	PAGE:	Page 1 of 2
		DATE:	September 2026
REVIEW DATE:	September 2031	REVISED:	

The *Education Act* establishes distinct and complementary roles for the Board of Trustees in governing the school board and for the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in providing executive, administrative and educational leadership in accordance with their statutory responsibilities. Within this framework, the Board of Trustees establish focused governance policy in accordance with legislation while respecting the distinct statutory authority of the CEO.

The Board of Trustees govern through strategic direction, policy, oversight and accountability. Board policies set governance expectations within their legal authority. The Board of Trustees do not direct routine operations or detailed administrative processes.

The Board of Trustees are required under the *Education Act* to develop and maintain policies to:

- Promote student achievement and well-being
- Promote positive school climate that is inclusive and accepting of all pupils, including pupils of any race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, marital status, family status or disability
- Promote the prevention of bullying
- Deliver effective and appropriate education programs to its pupils.

The policy library will support the District School Board of Niagara's strategic priorities.

Consistent with this focused role, policies will come before the Board of Trustees in one of two ways. Policies will proceed through the Governance Committee to the Board for approval where the significance of the applicable legislation, regulations or other legal requirements—or the discretion exercised in implementing them—calls for Board authorization. Policies that primarily reflect or give administrative effect to legislation, regulations, Ministry policy or other legal requirements will be presented directly to the Board for receipt where Board awareness supports oversight and accountability.

- **Board Approval Policies:** policies that address significant legislative, regulatory or other legal requirements, or that involve an exercise of permitted discretion warranting Board authorization. These policies will be considered by the Governance Committee before being presented to the Board for approval. They will be reviewed on the Board-approved cycle or sooner where required.

Board Approval Policies scheduled for review will be posted on the DSN website for thirty (30) calendar days, with notice provided through an email distribution list. Stakeholders may submit input electronically, and a summary of the input will be presented with the revised policy to the Governance Committee.

- **Board Receipt Policies:** policies that primarily reflect or give administrative effect to legislation, regulations, Ministry policy or other legal requirements, without requiring the Board to make a significant discretionary policy choice. These policies will be presented directly to the Board for information and oversight, with receipt serving as the appropriate governance action.

Where an immediate policy amendment is required to maintain compliance with a legislative or regulatory change, binding Ministry direction, or other legal requirement, and the usual committee or Board process cannot reasonably be completed in time, the CEO will make the required amendment to ensure that the Board continues to meet its legal obligations. The CEO's office will promptly advise the Board of the amendment, and the amended policy will be presented at the next Board meeting for information.

Similarly, the CEO may make administrative or editorial revisions to Board policies to Board policies between review cycles, including such things as:

- correction of grammatical, typographical, formatting, or numbering errors;
- updates to position titles, department names, organizational structures, and contact information;
- revisions to terminology, nomenclature, legislation citations, document references, hyperlinks, forms, or cross-references;
- changes required to maintain consistency with approved Board policies and

POLICY

SECTION:	PREAMBLE	POLICY:	i-01
TOPIC:	POLICY FRAMEWORK	PAGE:	Page 2 of 2
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- housekeeping changes that do not materially affect the policy's authority, responsibilities, or substantive requirements of the policy.

These revised policies will also be presented at the next Board meeting for information.

Current governance policies will be published in DSBN's public policy library. Superseded and revoked versions will be retained in accordance with DSBN's records management requirements.

References

Education Act

DSBN Website - Policies

POLICY

SECTION:	PREAMBLE	POLICY:	i-01
TOPIC:	POLICY - GENERAL	PAGE:	Page 1 of 1
REVIEW DATE:	December 2030	DATE:	December 2025
		REVISED:	

The District School Board of Niagara (DSBN) will establish policy in the general areas of:

- A. Board Governance and Administration
- B. Business
- C. Community Relations
- D. Educational Programs and Student Services
- E. Human Resources - General
- F. Facility Services and Operations
- G. General School Operations
- H. Support Staff
- I. Teaching Staff
- J. Transportation

All clauses of the *Education Act* and the Regulations of the Ministry of Education which apply to public elementary schools or secondary schools shall be considered as part of the governance of the DSBN.

Policy may be defined as the statement of formal guidance that provides the operational framework within which the organization functions. Policy statements help focus attention and resources on high priority issues by aligning and merging efforts to achieve the organizational vision.

The Policy Manual shall include all Policies passed by the Board of Trustees.

If there is any conflict between the collective agreements and a DSBN Policy, the terms of the collective agreement(s) shall take precedence.

DSBN Policies are available on the external website.

References

[Education Act](#)
[DSBN Website - Policies](#)

POLICY

SECTION:	PREAMBLE	POLICY:	i-02
TOPIC:	POLICY COMMITTEE	PAGE:	1 of 1
REVIEW DATE:	December 2030	DATE:	December 2025
		REVISED:	

The District School Board of Niagara (DSBN) recognizes that input is valuable in the formulation of sound organizational policies. The Policy Committee shall provide access to policy input from all stakeholders including staff, students, parents, and members of the community. The DSBN Board of Trustees understand their legislative responsibility for making policy.

The Policy Committee shall be a standing committee of the Board which will meet a minimum of three times per year between the months of September and June or as required.

Policies scheduled for review will be made available to stakeholders via posting on the DSBN public website and an email distribution list will be developed to alert stakeholders. This webpage will enable stakeholders to provide their input electronically on any policy within the review timeframe of 8 weeks.

A summary of the input shared will be presented to the Trustees at each of the Policy Committee meetings

At the Policy Committee meeting, after the expiration of the review timeframe, the revised Policy will be presented. Individuals or organizations may make a presentation to the Policy Committee provided they have followed the application process and been approved. Presentations will follow the By-laws & Rules of Order relevant to Delegations as published on the DSBN website.

References

[District School Board of Niagara By-Laws and Rules of Order](#)

POLICY

SECTION:	PREAMBLE	POLICY:	i-03
TOPIC:	POLICY GENERATING PROCESS	PAGE:	1 of 1
REVIEW DATE:	December 2030	DATE:	December 2025
		REVISED:	

The District School Board of Niagara (DSBN) Board of Trustees are required under the *Education Act* to develop and maintain policies to:

- Promote student achievement and well-being
- Promote positive school climate that is inclusive and accepting of all pupils, including pupils of any race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, marital status, family status or disability
- Promote the prevention of bullying
- Deliver effective and appropriate education programs to its pupils.

Recommendations for development of Policy may be initiated by a variety of sources: Trustees, students, staff, members of System Leadership, Ministry of Education or parents/guardians and community.

Recommendations for Policy development will normally be channeled through the Policy Committee for consideration by the Board of Trustees. Where this is not possible or practical, due to short timelines or other constraints, the recommendation may be routed directly to the Board of Trustees.

The development or approval of some specific Policy matters (e.g., Finance, Board Governance) may be directed to other DSBN Committees.

The Policy Committee may also review any existing Policy and recommend to the Board of Trustees reconsideration, revision, modification, revocation or any other course of action.

When creating or reviewing Policy, the DSBN is committed to fostering an inclusive, respectful learning and working environment, in alignment with the principles of the Canadian *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, the Ontario *Human Rights Code*, and the *Education Act*.

Reference

[Education Act](#)
[Charter of Rights and Freedoms](#)
[Human Rights Code](#)