



## **PR731, Virtual Consultations Procedure: New Procedure**

**To:** Governance and Policy Committee

**Date:** 10 February, 2021

**Report No.:** 02-21-4027

### **Strategic Directions**

- Create a Culture for Student and Staff Well-Being
- Provide Equity of Access to Learning Opportunities for All Students
- Build Strong Relationships and Partnerships Within School Communities to Support Student Learning and Well-Being

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Virtual Consultations Procedure (PR731), as presented in this report, be received for information.

### **Context**

In accordance with the Parent and Community Involvement Policy (P023), adopted on 25 November 1998, the Board committed to ensuring that all members of the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) school communities have opportunities to participate in the planning and decision making within the Board's education system. The Community Engagement Policy (P078) further confirmed the Board's commitment to open and inclusive engagement and emphasized the importance of stakeholders' input and participation in decision making at the TDSB. The Community Engagement Policy also outlines a continuum of methods for public engagement, i.e., information sharing, consultation, and co-construction.

The Board is implementing its public engagement commitment through a series of corresponding policies, procedures and established practices. Public engagement is an integral part of the accommodation and program review process, decisions related to naming schools and special purpose areas, budget decisions, and the development of the multi-year strategic plan. Public consultation is a mandatory component of the Board's policy review and development process.

The COVID-19 pandemic poses significant challenges for the Board to carry out meaningful public engagement activities, particularly public consultations. Since March - April 2020, the Board has paused most of its public consultations as school communities adapt to new realities of the pandemic.

To address the challenges of COVID-19, TDSB staff developed the Virtual Consultations Procedure (PR731) (Appendix A) which sets out expectations and parameters around conducting virtual public consultations at the TDSB. The Procedure provides guidance on the video and audio conferencing platforms to be used during consultations, equity and accessibility considerations, security and protection of privacy, staffing requirements to support consultation sessions, methods of consultations, communication and training requirements. The Procedure was reviewed by Executive Council on 29 January 2021.

It is expected that the TDSB will resume public consultations in early 2021 using virtual consultation methods as outlined in the newly developed Procedure.

## **Action Plan and Associated Timeline**

Subject to the Procedure being received at the Governance and Policy Committee, the revised Procedure will be provided to the Board of Trustees on 10 March 2021 for receipt.

## **Resource Implications**

No additional resources will be required for implementation of the Procedure.

## **Communications Considerations**

Contact Government, Public and Community Relations Department (Communications Officer for your area/department) to determine communication needs and support required. Communications plan to be drafted in consultation with Communications Officer, if required.

## **Board Policy and Procedure Reference(s)**

- Community Engagement Policy (P078)
- Parent and Community Involvement Policy (P023)

## **Appendices**

- Appendix A: Virtual Consultations Procedure (PR731)

**From**

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