



## REPORT TO BOARD OF TRUSTEES March 31, 2020

Deb Crawford, Director of Education

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**SUBJECT:** Board Meetings During the COVID-19 Pandemic

**PREPARED BY:** Deb Crawford, Director of Education

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### BACKGROUND:

The new reality that has been thrust upon the global community by the COVID-19 pandemic has altered every aspect of our society. At St. Clair Catholic, this has not only meant a complete re-envisioning of our core business – leading and supporting the education of our students – it has also required the Board to overcome monumental challenges on the business side. That includes how we will meet as a Board for the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Regular meetings of the Board of Trustees are held in public session, which is vital if the public is to have confidence in the elected Trustees and the governance of the Board. However, due to the emergency measures enacted by the governments of Ontario and Canada, it is currently not possible for the Board of Trustees to meet face-to-face in an open session at the Catholic Education Centre.

The Board's Procedural By-Laws permit Trustees and members of committees to attend Board and Committee meetings by electronic means. The relevant sections of the By-Laws are found at 8.8.1 and 8.8.2, which specifically direct that during meetings of the Whole Board or Committees, the Director of Education (or designate) and the Chair of the Board (or designate) or Committee Chair (or designate) and at least one other Board member be physically present in the room, which is a requirement under Ontario Regulation 463/97. However, on March 19, 2020 the Ministry of Education announced changes to O. Reg. 463/97, which allow school board meetings to be conducted exclusively via electronic means.

As a result of this regulatory change, I am recommending the Board temporarily suspend Sec. 8.8.1 and Sec. 8.8.2 of the Procedural By-Laws. These new measures will remain in place for up to 60 calendar days following an order made under provincial law directing school closures has expired.

St. Clair Catholic will also ensure that members of the public are able to attend electronic meetings as "observers" with audio access to public session meetings. A link will be posted to the Board website, which will take stakeholders and interested members of the public to a site which will permit audio access to the meeting. Closed captioning will also be available.

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

**That the St. Clair Catholic District School Board receive the report: *Board Meetings During the COVID-19 Pandemic*, for information.**

**REPORT:  
Board Meetings During the COVID-19 Pandemic**

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**That the St. Clair Catholic District School Board approve changes to the Board's Procedural By-Laws such that effective immediately and until 60 days after the expiration of a provincial order to close all publicly-funded schools, the Board will abide by revisions to O. Reg. 463/97, and as such Sec. 8.8.1 and Sec. 8.8.2 of the Procedural By-Laws are temporarily suspended, as the Board conducts its public and private meetings by electronic means.**