

Topic:	Use of Schools for Elections
Effective:	December 2011
Cross-Reference:	Municipal Elections Act 1996, RSO 1990; Canada Elections Act (S.C. 2000, c. 9); Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 Access to School Premises, O. Reg. 474/00; Halton District School Board Policy, Access to Schools Halton District School Board Volunteer in Schools
Revision Date:	September 2017, September 2020
Review Date:	September 2024
Responsibility:	Superintendent of Facility Services

INTENDED PURPOSE:

The Halton District School Board recognizes and supports the use of schools in the election of officials at Federal, Provincial, Municipal and School Board level. The process of electing official at all levels is supported through specific legislation being the Canada Elections Act 2000, Election Act R.S.O.1990 and the Municipal Elections Act 1996.

The use of space for polling stations is supported and afforded protection through the applicable legislative Acts. The Halton District School Board supports this use of the space as it offers a first-hand experience to students regarding the democracy of elections.

Notwithstanding the legislation, student and staff health and safety take precedence over the use of the space for election purposes. School sites may not be available due to circumstances beyond the reasonable control of the Board or where student and staff health and safety may be affected. The Board encourages the use of school sites for election purposes during hours when students and staff are not on site such as a Professional Development Day or weekend. The intent of this procedure is to outline the procedures for securing the space and the protection of a safe learning and working environment for students and staff.

PROCEDURES**Prior to the Election:**

The election officials will provide the Halton District School Board with a comprehensive spreadsheet containing the list of schools they would like to use on election day. This list would contain the names of schools and any remediation items needed to ensure the location is fully accessible. In addition, the names and contact information of each returning officer should be provided.

Prior to confirmation of the site as a voting site/polling station and at a mutually convenient time the election official and School Principal will conduct a site visit of each school listed as a potential voting site/polling station. Items to be reviewed and identified for use may include but are not limited to access to parking, washrooms and the route through the school to the parking area.

Online Permit Application to Use the School

Election officials will apply *on-line* through the [Rentals - Community Use of Schools](#) website and officially apply for each individual school. They will also attach a "Route of Travel" through the school with each application using floor plans provided by the Halton District School Board.

The Community Use of Schools Outreach Coordinators will forward and communicate directly with each school, regarding the permit needs and requests. The Principal and the election official will determine any security requirements needed at each school.

Elections costs incurred in conducting the election, which may include security and caretaking are to be borne by either the municipality, province or the Federal government.

If the election officials and the School Principal agree that volunteers may assist in directing individuals through the school to the polling stations these individuals must comply with the Halton District School Board Volunteer in Schools process, as published on the Halton District School Board website [Volunteer in Schools](#)

Permit distribution

The Halton District School Board will email the permits to the elections officials as identified.

Polling Station Location

The preferred location for the polling station will be in the school gym having direct access to the exterior building area or the closest interior entrance to the school gym, be fully accessible and provide accessible parking.

Communication with school

The election official will be required to meet with the School Principal three (3) weeks prior to the election to finalize the mutually agreed upon "Route of Travel" through the school.

Day of the Election

Hours of voting will be in accordance with the applicable legislation.

Election officials will be responsible for obtaining the correct number of tables and chairs for the polling stations. While the Halton District School Board may have some tables and chairs available for the polling stations, the election officials cannot rely fully on the Board for these items. Halton District School Board will be responsible for the set up and take down of the table and chairs.

A blue recycling container and a waste container and one green compostable container will be made available at the entrance to the polling station room for use by the Polling Station Staff and general public.

Security/commissionaires will be positioned at all entrances/exits to the polling station or the area of public access. It is recommended a minimum of two (2) security/ commissionaires personnel should be located at each school. If additional personnel are required, this will be mutually agreed to by the Halton District School Board and the Municipal election officials.

Volunteers utilized by the Returning Officer will be clearly identified by a high visibility vest and identification tag or badge.

Service animals will be permitted. Pets will not be permitted. The election official is encouraged to provide this information on the enumeration card to all voters.