



# Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board

*A Great Place to Learn and A Great Place to Work!*

Chair of the Board: Carl Pitman

Director of Education: Kathy Soule

## NOTICE OF MEETING

This notice is to confirm that the next meeting of the  
**Student Enrolment/School Capacity Committee (SE/SCC)**  
will be held on:

**Monday, September 21, 2009  
at 5:00pm  
in the Board Room, Education Centre  
156 Ann Street, Belleville**

The agenda and supporting documents for this meeting are attached to this notice.

**Thelma Goodfellow  
Chair of the SE/SCC**

**Kathy Soule  
Director of Education**

*Trustees: M. Brant, S. Clements, C. Cotton, T. Goodfellow, M. Hall, D. Inch, H. Marissen, C. Pitman,  
M. Walker, J. Williams*



# Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board

*A Great Place to Learn and A Great Place to Work!*

Chair of the Board: Carl Pitman

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## Student Enrolment/School Capacity Committee PUBLIC AGENDA

September 21, 2009 – 5:00 p.m.  
Board Room, Education Centre

<b>Section</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Report No.</b>	<b>Resp.</b>
<b>A</b>	<b>Call to Order</b>		
	Approval of agenda Approval of minutes – June 22, 2009 Business arising from the minutes		
<b>B</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>		
	Notice of Motion: Board Policy 15: Student Enrolment/School Capacity	B-1	KS
	Accommodation Review Committee: Prince Edward County	B-2	KS/DR
<b>C</b>	<b>Information</b>		
	Encouraging Facility Partnerships	C-1	DR
	Integration Committees (verbal)		JM
<b>D</b>	<b>Correspondence</b>		
	None		
	<b>Adjournment</b>		



**HASTINGS AND PRINCE EDWARD DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD  
STUDENT ENROLMENT/SCHOOL CAPACITY COMMITTEE  
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES  
June 22, 2009**

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**Present:** M. Brant, S. Clements, C. Cotton, T. Goodfellow, M. Hall, D. Inch, H. Marissen, C. Pitman, M. Walker, J. Williams

**Resource:** T. Fitzgibbon, J. Montgomery, R. McGall, D. Rutherford, K. Soule, D. Tregenza

**Minutes:** S. Smith

**Call to order**

Trustee Goodfellow called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

**Approval of agenda**

Moved: C. Pitman

Seconded M. Brant

**That the agenda be approved.**

Carried

**Approval of minutes**

Moved: H. Marissen

Seconded: M. Walker

**That the minutes of April 8, 2009 be approved.**

Carried

**Business arising from the minutes**

None

**Recommendations**

None.

**Information**

**Disposal of surplus property**

At the Board Meeting of May 25, 2009, Sir Mackenzie Bowell Public School, Belleville and Bancroft Public School, Bancroft were both approved for closure and declared surplus for school accommodation purposes. The proposed timelines for the closure of both facilities is June 2011.

Ministry regulation 444/98 governs the disposal of surplus real property. Once a property is declared surplus a board may sell, lease or otherwise dispose of the property only after issuing a proposal in accordance with the regulation.

That proposal involves offering the property to preferred agencies and any offer from a preferred agency must be at fair market value. This process has a 90 day expiration period. At the expiration of the 90 day period and if the board does not receive an offer from a preferred agency, the board may sell, lease or otherwise dispose of the property at fair market value to any other body or person.

Given the excess capacity within board facilities and long term enrolment projections, administration does not anticipate the need to retain either site. Appraisals would need to be completed for both sites and given the schools will not be closed until June 2011 those appraisals do not likely need to be completed before the fall of 2010. Once the appraisals have been completed a recommendation would be brought forward initiating the disposal process.

In response to questions from Board members, clarification was provided in the following areas:

- fair market value will be determined when the appraisal process begins in the fall 2010;
- preferred agencies are those listed in Ministry Regulation 444/98;
- size of Sir Mackenzie Bowell Public School is approximately 9.7 acres.

**Accommodation review process: next steps**

Proposed revisions for Policy 15 Student Enrolment/School Capacity were shared with Board members for information, discussion and input. The proposed changes to policy are based on feedback received throughout the accommodation review process and include changes in wording to more accurately reflect current process, the role of the Student Enrolment/School Capacity Committee in the review process and language consistent with other Board policies.

Director Soule walked Board members through the proposed changes. Points of clarification and additional comments included:

- school valuations are completed by each school accommodation review committee in the review area. The framework is used to assess the value of the school to the student, community, school board and the local economy.
- 'district' refers to the jurisdiction of Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board
- change "Board", referring to trustees, to "Board members" where applicable
- timelines for the review process are based on seven days per week and include statutory holidays. Defined school holidays such as summer vacation, Christmas and March Break are excluded from the timeline calculations, however statutory holidays are not.
- a minimum number of scheduled Student Enrolment/School Capacity Committee meetings throughout each accommodation review will keep Board members informed and up to date
- SE/SCC members will be provided with copies of minutes from each accommodation review committee meeting and each school's valuation framework as it is completed.

- further discussion will take place regarding item 3.4 and 3.5, specifically regarding the role of the Student Enrolment / School Capacity Committee and the recommendation to the Board.

Director Soule explained that, as per Board policy, changes to policy will require a Notice of Motion to Board. The draft policy will come forward to the Student Enrolment/School Capacity Committee for further review in September.

**Updated enrolment projections and utilization factors**

In December, 2007 Watson and Associates Economists Ltd. completed a long term capital study. Included in the study were long term enrolment projections for the years 2007-08 through to 2020-21. Enrolment projections were based on historical trends in school retention rates, demographic analysis and growth projections as a result of consultation with municipality planning offices, statistics Canada and board officials.

Updated enrolment projections, based on comparison of actual versus projected enrolments for the years 2007-08 and 2008-09 were shared for each school group.

Discussion focused on particular areas showing future enrolment decline and lower school utilization factors particularly in Prince Edward County and the Trenton area. Director Soule explained that this information was being shared to Board members for information and to possibly identify areas that may require further review. Senior administration may be looking at possible accommodation reviews in some capacity in the future.

**Correspondence**

There was no correspondence.

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m.



**Decision   X   Information**

**To:** The Chair and Members of the Student Enrolment/School Capacity Committee

**From:** Kathy Soule, Director of Education and Secretary to the Board

**Re: Notice of Motion: Revisions to Policy 15, Student Enrolment/School Capacity**

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### **Purpose**

To review and give notice of motion to the Board to approve changes to Policy No. 15 – Student Enrolment and School Capacity.

### **Background**

At its meeting on June 22, 2009 the Student Enrolment/School Capacity Committee reviewed the proposed revisions to Policy No. 15. The changes were based on community feedback received and best practices implemented during the recent accommodations reviews and also to ensure consistency in language with other Board policies.

On June 26, 2009 the Ministry of Education introduced Revised Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline. Based on feedback received from a number of stakeholders, several revisions were made to the existing Guidelines to better support the ARC process.

### **Current situation**

Policy No. 15 has been further revised to reflect the revisions to the Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline. These revisions include:

- reduction from 60 days to 30 days for the minimum period between the announcement of an ARC and the first public meeting.
- change from a minimum of six to four mandatory public meetings
- introduction of a *Terms of Reference* prepared by administration that will clarify the mandate of the ARC; the parameters and criteria that will guide the development and recommendation of accommodation options; the roles and responsibilities of ARC members; and the ARC process.
- modification of the “valuation tool” to reflect a process that better supports the review of existing schools and the evaluation of accommodation options. The modified “School Information Profile” replaces the former School Valuation Framework and is provided to the ARC by administration.
- Improved clarity regarding the ARC’s role in making accommodation recommendations and the presentation of those recommendations in an Accommodation Report to the SE/SCC.

### **Appendices**

- Revised draft Policy No. 15: Student Enrolment/School Capacity
- Ministry Memorandum 2009:B7, Revised Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline



**Recommendation**

**Moved:  
Seconded:**

**That the Student Enrolment/School Capacity Committee recommend that the changes to Board Policy No. 15 Student Enrolment/School Capacity be approved as contained in the Student Enrolment /School Capacity Committee Report B-1 and accompanying appendices dated September 21, 2009.**

**Moved:  
Seconded:**

The Student Enrolment/School Capacity Committee give notice of motion at the September 28, 2009 Board meeting as follows:

**That the Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board approve the changes to Board Policy No. 15 Student Enrolment/School Capacity as contained in Appendix 1.**

Respectfully submitted,

**Kathy Soule  
Director of Education and Secretary to the Board**

## APPENDIX 1



### Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board

#### BOARD POLICY NO. 15

Adopted	September 25, 2000
Last Revised	September 25, 2007
Review Date	September, 2010

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## STUDENT ENROLMENT/SCHOOL CAPACITY

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### OBJECTIVE

Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board is committed to providing the best educational opportunities while ensuring fiscal responsibility and to enhancing the learning environment in its schools for the children and young people of Hastings and Prince Edward. Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board agrees with the Ministry of Education's observation in *Good Places to Learn* (February 17, 2005) that "the education program needs of students must lead decisions concerning buildings and grounds," and that "there is a strong link between the standard of the physical environment and good outcomes, such as better student performance and higher teacher retention."

### POLICY

The Board will consider from time to time, the need to consolidate, close or relocate a school due to changes in curriculum, program demands, student enrolment, community demographics and other factors. An essential component of this policy will be an analysis of the value of a school or group of schools to students, community, school system and local economy.

The Board is committed to these tenets:

- Student curriculum and program needs will drive facilities planning.
- Upgrades to the condition of facilities will occur where feasible.
- The Board will comply with Ministry of Education guidelines for school consolidation and closure decisions.
- The Board will pursue better value for capital grants.
- The Board will exemplify open decision-making, Board oversight and public participation in capital planning.

The Board is not obligated to conduct an accommodation review under the following circumstances:

- Replacement of a school on the same site or within the school attendance boundary.
- Lease termination.
- Program relocation where the enrolment in the grade or grades, or program constitutes less than 50% of the enrolment of the school.
- Temporary relocation of students to perform major renovations in a building.

### CONTEXT

The district's elementary schools are organized in groups linked to a secondary school. The goal of providing a suitable and equitable range of learning opportunities in a school or group of schools requires monitoring and active curriculum and programming decisions. Decisions that might require consolidation, closure or program relocation will take into account the needs of all of the students in all of the schools in a particular school group. There may, however, be circumstances in which a single school should be studied for closure or relocation.

Any decisions under this policy will take into account the school board's Long-Term Capital Plan.

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## DEFINITIONS

**Accommodation Review Committee (ARC)**—An advisory committee appointed by the Board that will make accommodation recommendations based on the School Information Profile and the Terms of Reference provided by administration.

**Board**—Refers to all Board members.

**Pupil Accommodation Review Guidelines**—Established by the Ministry of Education to guide boards in preparation of a pupil accommodation policy and included as Appendix A.

**Ministry Administrative Review**—Established by the Ministry of Education to allow for the review of the school board's accommodation review process by the Ministry and included as Appendix B.

**School Information Profile**— A set of criteria established by the Board based on Ministry of Education guidelines and included as Appendix C. The Profiles provide the ARC with information about the school(s) in the review area based on their value to the student, the school board, the community and the local economy. A School Information Profile will be completed by board administration and provided to the ARC to discuss, consult on, modify based on new or improved information, and finalize. The criteria may be revised from time to time by administration.

**Resource Guide**—Prepared by administrative staff to assist in preparation of the ARC review and report and included as Appendix D. The guide may be revised from time to time by administration.

**Student Enrolment/School Capacity Committee (SE/SCC)**—Established as a committee of all Board members to review school accommodation data and prepare recommendations for formal Board approval.

**Terms of Reference** – objectives and criteria prepared by administrative staff that clarifies the mandate of the ARC; the parameters and criteria that will guide the development and recommendations of accommodation options; describe the roles and responsible of the ARC members; and the ARC process.

**Timelines**—Where referred to in this document, all time calculations are based on seven days per week including statutory holidays. Defined school holidays for the Christmas break, March break and the summer vacation period are excluded from this calculation.

## PROCESS

### 1. Preliminary report

Administration will present a preliminary report to the **Student Enrolment/School Capacity Committee** identifying a school or group of schools in which challenges may be faced in providing a suitable and equitable range of learning opportunities for students, and in respect of which there may be a need to consider the possible consolidation, closure or program relocation in respect of one or more schools.

A school or group of schools may be considered for study if one or more of the following conditions apply:

- The school or group of schools is unable to provide a suitable and equitable range of learning opportunities for students.
- The school or group of schools has experienced or will experience an adverse impact on learning opportunities for students due to declining enrolment.
- Reorganization involving the school or group of schools could enhance program and learning opportunities for students.
- Teaching/learning spaces are not suitable to provide the programs needed to serve the community and retrofitting may be cost prohibitive.

- Under normal staffing allocation practices, it would be necessary to assign multiple (more than two) grades to one class in one or more of the schools.
- One or more of the schools is experiencing higher building maintenance expenses than the average for the system and/or is in need of major capital improvements.
- In respect of one or more of the schools there are safety and/or environmental concerns attached to the building, the school site or its locality.
- It has been no less than five years since the inception of a study of the school by an Accommodation Review Committee, except where extenuating circumstances warrant, such as an unexpected economic or demographic shift, or a change in a school's physical condition.

## 2. Establishing an Accommodation Review Committee

After reviewing the preliminary report, the SE/SCC may recommend that the Board **direct administration** to form an Accommodation Review Committee (ARC) for a group of schools or for a single school.

**Following the public Board** meeting, parents, guardians, staff and school council members of the identified school group or school will be informed within one week, in writing, through their respective schools, of the Board's decision to form an ARC. The decision will be posted on the district's web site.

### 2.1 The mandate of the ARC

The ARC will study, report and make recommendations on the accommodation options respecting the group of schools or single school referred to it in the manner set out below, and will express a preference if possible.

### 2.2 Composition of the ARC

The ARC will consist of the following persons:

- The appropriate school superintendent;
- From each affected school:
  - The school principal or designate;
  - One teacher;
  - One non-teaching staff member;
  - Three parents, one of whom will be the school council chair or designate;
  - Municipal and business leaders;
  - One intermediate or secondary student from each school.

**Other school board officials and trustees may attend ARC meetings but are not considered members of the ARC. The Terms of Reference will identify ARC membership and the role of voting and non-voting members, including board and school administration.**

The committee will be deemed to be properly constituted whether or not all of the listed members are willing and able to participate, but must include at least one member from the school community and one member from the broader community.

The committee may request that **the SE/SCC** appoint additional members.

### 2.3 Process for selecting ARC members

#### Selection of parents

The principal of the school will call a meeting of parents with students attending the school. The selection of the parents for the ARC will follow nomination and voting procedures with the successful selected parent(s) being those who receive the greatest number of votes from the parents present.

**Selection of business and municipal leaders**

Advertisements will be placed in the local media and on the district's web site inviting community business and municipal leaders within the municipalities included in the school's attendance area to apply through the Director of Education. The names of interested persons will be received up to a specified date.

Selection of persons for the ARC will follow a defined process analyzing the person's qualifications, knowledge of issues related to public education, knowledge of the community, expressed interest in serving on the ARC, and other factors as determined by the SE/SCC. The SE/SCC may request municipal councils to appoint a representative.

**Selection of student representatives (secondary and intermediate only)**

The student representative will be from a grade level above Grade 6. The student body will recommend a student representative to the principal for confirmation.

**Selection of staff**

The selection of teaching and non-teaching staff representatives will be identified by each school included in the review and follow nomination and voting procedures.

**2.4 ARC meetings**

The superintendent will call the first public meeting of the ARC, giving due public notice, no earlier than 30 days after the Board's decision to form an ARC. A public information session will be held following the Board's decisions and prior to confirming committee membership and structure.

At the first meeting of the ARC, a chair will be selected by the committee members. The superintendent or designate will function as secretary and resource person. Other resource personnel can be called to provide information to the ARC including third party private and public representatives from municipalities, post-secondary institutions and coterminous school boards.

The ARC will perform its duties and complete the report in no less than 90 days and no more than 110 days.

Minutes will be kept of the ARC meetings and will be posted on the district's web site. Copies of the minutes will be provided to SE/SCC members on a regular basis. Meetings of the SE/SCC will be held no fewer than three times throughout the ARC process.

Attendance of all persons at ARC meetings will be recorded by the secretary.

The ARC will provide information to the affected school communities on an ongoing basis. Public consultation meetings are to be structured to encourage an open and informed exchange of views. The ARC will attempt to respond to all reasonable questions from the public during public consultation meetings. The ARC may choose to respond to questions that cannot be answered at a public consultation meeting on the district's website or at a subsequent public meeting.

The ARC will meet as often as required but must hold at least four public meetings giving due public notice:

- At the first public meeting, the ARC will describe its mandate, select a chair, outline its study process, give the public a briefing on the data and issues to be addressed and receive community input.
- At the second public meeting, the ARC will receive and review the School Information Profile(s), consider how it could be modified based on new or improved information and receive public input.

- At the third public meeting, the ARC will receive community input on the accommodation options to be considered.
- At the fourth public meeting, the ARC will prepare its final report and provide additional opportunities for community input and public consultation on the report.

Notice of the public meetings will be provided through school newsletters, letters to the school community, the district's web site and advertisements in local community newspapers and will include date, time location, purpose, contact name and number. Notice of the first public meeting will be provided no less than **30** days in advance of the meeting. A minimum of two weeks notice will be provided in respect of the other public meetings.

### **2.5 The work of the ARC**

The ARC provides an opportunity for parents, students, educators, school board officials, business and municipal leaders **to assess a school's ability** to provide the best educational opportunities for students while ensuring fiscal responsibility. Attention should first be paid to the current educational situation in the school or group of schools and how it is likely to evolve if things are left as they are and then to the potential for enhancing the learning environment for students.

**The ARC must ensure that a wide range of school and community groups are consulted and seek input and community feedback on the accommodation options presented.**

The school board encourages the ARC to work collaboratively and cooperatively through adequate resources and reasonable responses.

### **2.6 Information and Documentation**

An information package necessary to permit the ARC to carry out its mandate will be provided to the ARC. The package will include information outlined in the Resource Guide. **The ARC will be provided with a Terms of Reference prepared by administration that describes:**

- the ARC's mandate;
- ARC membership and the role of voting and non-voting members;
- procedures for the ARC, including meetings;
- educational and accommodation criteria for examining the schools under review and accommodation options;
- support materials and analysis;
- materials to be produced by the ARC; and
- partnership opportunities, or lack thereof, identified in the board's long term planning process

### **2.7 School Information Profile**

The ARC will discuss and consult about the School Information Profile (Appendix C) prepared by board administration for the schools under review and modify the Profile(s) where appropriate. This discussion is intended to familiarize the ARC members and the community with the school(s) in light of the objectives, criteria and Terms of Reference provide by administration. The final School Information Profile(s) and the Terms of Reference will provide the foundation for discussion and analysis of accommodation options.

**Information relevant to the accommodation review will be made public by posting on the district's website.**

**School board staff will respond to reasonable requests for additional information from the ARC.**

## 2.7 ARC report

The ARC will prepare a report based on the **School Information Profile and the Terms of Reference provided by administration.** The ARC must share the report in plain language with the community at a public meeting. The ARC may make changes to the report based on feedback at the meeting. The ARC will deliver its report to the **Director of Education** and the report will be posted on the district's website. **The ARC will present its report to the Student Enrolment/School Capacity Committee no sooner than 90 days and no later than 110 days after the beginning of the ARC's first public meeting.**

## 3. Consideration of the ARC report

### 3.1 Report to the SE/SCC

**The ARC will present its final report to the Student Enrolment/School Capacity Committee.** Administration will examine the ARC report and present its analysis and recommendations to the student Enrolment / School Capacity Committee. The report may include as appendices, the information packages provided to the ARC, minutes of the ARC meetings, recorded questions and responses, attendance registers and any material received by the ARC from the public.

The recommendation accompanying administration's report will be one or more of the following:

- To maintain the schools and to continue to monitor them;
- To reorganize the schools, their programs or their grade structures;
- To change the boundaries of the schools;
- To consolidate and/or close one or more of the schools.

**The ARC report and** the Administration's report and recommendations will be presented to the SE/SCC in public session.

### 3.2 SE/SCC meeting for public input

The SE/SCC will hold a meeting for public input no sooner than 30 days after the presentation of **the ARC report and** administration's report. Recommendations will be presented in public in order to provide an opportunity for the public to make formal presentations to Board members concerning administration's report and the matters that are addressed in it and in the ARC report.

A minimum of two weeks notice of the SE/SCC public meeting for community input will be provided via school newsletters, letters to the school community, the district's website and advertisements in the local community newspapers and will include date, time, location, purpose, contact name and number.

The public may provide written input to the Director of Education at any time.

### 3.3 Administration's follow-up report to the SE/SCC

Following the SE/SCC meeting for public input, administration will prepare a report to the SE/SCC in which it will report on and respond to the representations made by the public. Administration may revise its earlier recommendations to the SE/SCC.

Administration's follow-up report will include copies of the presentations made by the public during the SE/SCC meeting for public input and those received directly, and minutes of the SE/SCC meeting for public input.

Administration's follow-up report will be released publicly and posted on the district's web site.

### 3.4 SE/SCC follow-up meeting

The SE/SCC will meet following the release of administration's report to the public to review and consider the school accommodation recommendations and reports and to prepare its recommendation to the Board regarding the school accommodation.

**3.5 Board meeting to consider school accommodation**

The Board will make its decision regarding the school accommodation recommendations **from the SE/SCC**, the ARC Report, administration's report and administration's follow-up report to the Board at a regularly scheduled meeting which will not occur sooner than 60 days after the presentation of the administration's report, 30 days after the SE/SCC meeting for public input and 15 days after the administration's follow-up report is released publicly.

Public notice of the meeting at which the Board will make its decision regarding the school accommodation recommendations in the ARC report, administration's report and administration's follow-up report to the Board will be provided through school newsletters, letters to the school community, the district's website and advertisements in local community newspapers, and will include date, time, location, purpose, contact name and number at least 60 days prior to the date of the Board meeting.

Parents, guardians, staff and school council members will be informed within one week, in writing, through their respective schools, of the Board's decision, which will also be posted on the district's web site.

**3.6 The school integration process**

It is important that the integration of students and staff into their new school(s) is achieved in a way that is positive and supportive for the students and parents of the respective school communities. This process of integration should be carried out in consultation with parents and staff. The Resource Guide offers alternatives to provide an effective transition to a new school environment.

**Legal References:**

- *Education Act, paragraph 8 (1)26 School Closings; paragraph 171 (1) 7 Power of Boards to Close Schools; sections 194-196 Disposal or Purchase of a School Site*
- Ontario Regulation 444/98 Disposition of Surplus Real Property
- Ministry Guidelines: Loading Capacity

**Board References:**

- Board Policy No. 1 - Board Mission and Goals
- Board Policy No. 4 - Corporate Board Job Description
- Board Policy No. 5 - Director of Education Job Description
- Board Policy No. 11 - Committees of the Board
- Administrative Procedure 555 - Maximizing Use of School Space
- Administrative Procedure - 560 Disposal of Real Property

DRAFT

2009:B7

**MEMORANDUM TO:** Directors of Education

**FROM:** Nancy Naylor  
Assistant Deputy Minister  
Business and Finance Division

**DATE:** June 26, 2009

**SUBJECT:** Revised *Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline*

In the past year, school boards across the province have successfully completed accommodation reviews based on the *Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline* released in **Memorandum 2006:B12**. The Ministry commends boards for undertaking these consultation processes that are critical to decision-making about the future of your schools.

Accommodation decisions can be some of the most difficult faced by school boards and they are best made at the local level with meaningful involvement of the local community.

Based on these accommodation review processes, the Ministry has received hundreds of comments directly and through the media from school boards, parents, community members and Ministry-appointed independent facilitators. We also reviewed reports from other stakeholders and the report of the Declining Enrolment Working Group, *Planning and Possibilities*, which recommended that the Ministry review the *Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline*.

As a result of the feedback, it is clear that the original *Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline* supports that principle by strengthening consultation and decision-making processes at school boards. The Accommodation Review Committee (ARC) process has supported improved transparency of decision-making, constructive discussions among the board and the public, meaningful community engagement, and outcomes that will benefit current and future students.

The feedback identified several areas where the *Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline* could be strengthened to better support the ARC process. The Ministry has made several revisions to the *Guideline* as a result.

## Highlights of Revisions to the *Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline*:

- The reduction from 60 days to 30 days for the minimum period between the announcement of an ARC and the first of four public meetings. ARCs can begin to prepare for their work during this 30 day period.
- The addition of a reference to board long-term enrolment and capital planning, including the potential for partnerships.
- The introduction of a Terms of Reference designed to clarify the mandate of the ARC; the parameters and Reference Criteria that will guide the development and recommendation of accommodation options; the roles and responsibilities of ARC members; and the ARC process.
- The modification of the “valuation tool” to reflect a process that better supports the review of existing schools and the evaluation of accommodation options. The modified “School Information Profile” is intended to ensure the ARC and the public are well-informed about all schools under review based on their value to students, the school board, the community and the local economy. This process will ensure that the ARC is well-positioned to make accommodation recommendations to the board based on a full understanding of the schools and their relationship to the local communities.
- Improved clarity regarding the ARC’s role in making accommodation recommendations to the board and the presentation of those recommendations in an Accommodation Report to the board.
- Other clarifications to better reflect policy intentions.

We received many questions and comments regarding the role of trustees in the ARC process. We note in the revised *Guideline* that trustees are not required to serve on ARCs. This remains a board decision, but based on existing practice, many boards find it is more consistent with trustees’ corporate decision-making responsibility for trustees to not sit on ARCs.

The Reference Criteria are an important tool for boards, ARCs and the public. The criteria – outlined in the Terms of Reference – are intended to improve transparency about accommodation decision-making by ensuring that ARCs and the public consider accommodation options that fit within the educational and accommodation policies of the school board. Examples of Reference Criteria are: grade configuration, programming objectives, transportation policies, and school utilization. It is up to boards to determine the level of detail they wish to include in the Reference Criteria.

You will note that the underlying principles and processes of the *Guideline* remain the same and that boards still have considerable discretion about the details of their own accommodation policies. Please also note that there are no revisions to the Administrative Review process.

### **Successful Practices**

Some constructive feedback was not incorporated into the *Guideline* because the Ministry recognizes that what may work successfully at some boards may not be as successful at other boards. The Ministry believes that sharing experiences among boards is a useful way to strengthen policies and practices regarding the accommodation review process. The Ministry will work with the Ontario Association of School Business Officials to create a forum for boards to share successful practices.

## **Long-term Planning, Partnerships and the ARC Process**

The objective of improving support for students while managing declining enrolment requires long-term enrolment, staffing and capital planning; consultation; and the engagement of co-terminous school boards and local entities that are candidates for forming effective, sustainable partnerships. The Terms of Reference for Accommodation Review Committees should be informed by these ongoing planning processes.

Boards are expected to be transparent regarding the capital planning process in order for ARCs and the public to understand the difference between planning proposals and the capital approval process. Boards are also expected to be transparent with ARCs and the public regarding available funding, the process of applying for funding, and funding approvals, including planning approvals. Where no funding is available to support a particular accommodation option for students, boards are required to inform the ARC and propose how students would be accommodated if funding does not become available.

In response to the report of the Declining Enrolment Working Group, *Planning and Possibilities*, and the *Review of Roots of Youth Violence*, the Ministry will be consulting with school boards about how to encourage more partnerships in schools to support students and/or serve the communities.

Schools will be expected to form more partnerships that provide services to students, their family or the community. It is not intended that partnerships override a board's educational and accommodation objectives; indeed, those objectives take priority. However, where a school can serve a board's educational and accommodation objectives and support partnerships with appropriate organizations, boards should explore those opportunities as fully as possible.

## **Transition Policy**

Boards should not review previous ARC processes or decisions based on the revised *Guideline*. ARCs that are currently announced or underway may proceed based on the board's existing pupil accommodation review policies. The revised *Guideline* will apply to any ARC that is announced after September 30, 2009.

In light of the revised Ministry *Guideline*, school boards should review their current pupil accommodation review policy and revise them, where required, to ensure compliance with the revised *Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline*. Boards are to approve the revisions to their policy and then inform the Ministry when this process is completed. Should a board complete a review of their policy and find that no revisions are required, then a motion to approve the existing policy and notification to the Ministry are still required. Notification can be sent to the Ministry by email at [BSB.GPL@ontario.ca](mailto:BSB.GPL@ontario.ca). After September 30, 2009, this confirmation to the Ministry is required prior to a board announcing an accommodation review. All confirmations are required no later than March 31, 2010.

**Ministry Contacts:**

If you require further information regarding the *Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline*, please contact Amy Olmstead at (416) 326-9921 or [amy.olmstead@ontario.ca](mailto:amy.olmstead@ontario.ca)

Sincerely,



Nancy Naylor  
Assistant Deputy Minister

c: Superintendents of Planning

**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION**  
**PUPIL ACCOMMODATION REVIEW GUIDELINE**  
(Revised June 2009)

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of the *Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline* (previously referred to as school closure guidelines) is to provide direction to school boards regarding public accommodation reviews undertaken to determine the future of a school or group of schools.

The *Guideline* ensures that where a decision is taken by a school board regarding the future of a school, that decision is made with the full involvement of an informed local community and it is based on a broad range of criteria regarding the quality of the learning experience for students.

In recognition of the important role schools play in strengthening rural and urban communities and the importance of healthy communities for student success, it is also expected that decisions consider the value of the school to the community, taking into account other government initiatives aimed at strengthening communities.

School boards in Ontario are responsible for providing schools and facilities for their students and for operating and maintaining their schools as effectively and efficiently as possible to support student achievement.

Under paragraph 26, subsection 8 (1) of the *Education Act*, the Minister of Education may issue guidelines with respect to school boards' school closure policies. The *Guideline* is effective upon release.

## **SCHOOL BOARD ACCOMMODATION REVIEW POLICIES**

School boards are responsible for establishing and following their own accommodation review policies. At a minimum, boards' accommodation review policies are to reflect the requirements of the *Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline* set out below.

A copy of the school board's accommodation review policy, the government's *Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline* and the *Administrative Review of Accommodation Review Process* documents are to be available at the school board's office and posted on the school board's website.

School boards are expected to undertake long-term enrolment and capital planning that will provide the context for accommodation review processes and decisions. This planning should take into account opportunities for partnerships with other school boards and appropriate public organizations that are financially sustainable, safe for students, and protect the core values and objectives of the school board.

The *Guideline* recognizes that, wherever possible, accommodation reviews should focus on a group of schools within a school board's planning area rather than examine a single school. These schools would be reviewed together because they are located close enough to the other schools within a planning area to facilitate the development of viable and practical solutions for student accommodation.

## **ACCOMMODATION REVIEW TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The review of a particular school or schools is to be led by an Accommodation Review Committee (ARC) appointed by the board. The ARC assumes an advisory role and will provide recommendations that will inform the final decision made by the Board of Trustees.

Each ARC must include membership drawn from the community. It is recommended that the committee include parents, educators, board officials, and community members. Trustees are not required to serve on ARCs.

School boards will provide the ARC with a Terms of Reference that describes the ARC's mandate. The mandate will refer to the board's educational and accommodation objectives in undertaking the ARC and reflect the board's strategy for supporting student achievement. The Terms of Reference will contain Reference Criteria that frame the parameters of ARC discussion. The Reference Criteria include the educational and accommodation criteria for examining schools under review and accommodation options. Examples may include grade configuration, school utilization, and program offerings.

The Terms of Reference will identify ARC membership and the role of voting and non-voting members, including board and school administration. The Terms of Reference will also describe the procedures for the ARC, including meetings; material, support, and analysis to be provided by board administration; and the material to be produced by the ARC.

School boards will inform the ARC at the beginning of the process about partnership opportunities, or lack thereof, as identified as part of boards' long-term planning process.

## **SCHOOL INFORMATION PROFILE**

School boards are required to develop a School Information Profile to help the ARC and the community understand how well school(s) meet the objectives and the Reference Criteria outlined in the Terms of Reference. The School

Information Profile includes data for each of the following four considerations about the school(s):

- Value to the student
- Value to the school board
- Value to the community
- Value to the local economy

It is recognized that the school's value to the student takes priority over other considerations about the school. A School Information Profile will be completed by board administration for each of the schools under review. If multiple schools within the same planning area are being reviewed together, the same Profile must be used for each school. The completed School Information Profile(s) will be provided to the ARC to discuss, consult on, modify based on new or improved information, and finalize.

The following are examples of factors that may be considered under each of the four considerations. Boards and ARCs may introduce other factors that could be used to reflect local circumstances and priorities, which may help to further understand the school(s).

### **Value to the Student**

- the learning environment at the school;
- student outcomes at the school;
- course and program offerings;
- extracurricular activities and extent of student participation;
- the ability of the school's physical space to support student learning;
- the ability of the school's grounds to support healthy physical activity and extracurricular activities;
- accessibility of the school for students with disabilities;
- safety of the school;
- proximity of the school to students/length of bus ride to school.

### **Value to the School Board**

- student outcomes at the school;
- course and program offerings;
- availability of specialized teaching spaces;
- condition and location of school;
- value of the school if it is the only school within the community;
- fiscal and operational factors (e.g., enrolment vs. available space, cost to operate the school, cost of transportation, availability of surplus space in adjacent schools, cost to upgrade the facility so that it can meet student learning objectives).

### **Value to the Community**

- facility for community use;

- program offerings at the school that serve both students and community members (e.g., adult ESL);
- school grounds as green space and/or available for recreational use;
- school as a partner in other government initiatives in the community;
- value of the school if it is the only school within the community.

### **Value to the Local Economy**

- school as a local employer;
- availability of cooperative education;
- availability of training opportunities or partnerships with business;
- attracts or retains families in the community;
- value of the school if it is the only school within the community.

### **ACCOMMODATION REVIEW PROCESS**

As indicated above, the public review of each school or group of schools is to be led by a local Accommodation Review Committee appointed by the board.

School boards must present to the ARC at least one alternative accommodation option that addresses the objectives and Reference Criteria outlined in the Terms of Reference. The option(s) will address where students would be accommodated; what changes to existing facilities may be required; what programs would be available to students; and transportation. If the option(s) require new capital investment, board administration will advise on the availability of funding, and where no funding exists, will propose how students would be accommodated if funding does not become available.

The Ministry recommends that, wherever possible, schools should only be subject to an accommodation review once in a five-year period, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

### ***School Information Profile***

The ARC will discuss and consult about the School Information Profile(s) prepared by board administration for the school(s) under review and modify the Profile(s) where appropriate. This discussion is intended to familiarize the ARC members and the community with the school(s) in light of the objectives and Reference Criteria outlined in the Terms of Reference. The final School Information Profile(s) and the Terms of Reference will provide the foundation for discussion and analysis of accommodation options.

### ***Public Information and Access***

School boards and ARCs are to ensure that all information relevant to the accommodation review, as defined by the ARC, is made public by posting it in a prominent location on the school board's website or making it available in print upon request. Where relevant information is technical in nature, it is to be explained in plain language.

## ***Accommodation Options***

The ARC may also create alternative accommodation options, which should be consistent with the objectives and Reference Criteria outlined in the Terms of Reference. Board administration will provide necessary data to enable the ARC to examine options. This analysis will assist the ARC in finalizing the Accommodation Report to the board.

ARCs may recommend accommodation options that include new capital investment. In such a case, board administration will advise on the availability of funding. Where no funding exists, the ARC with the support of board administration will propose how students would be accommodated if funding does not become available.

As the ARC considers the accommodation options, the needs of all students in schools of the ARC are to be considered objectively and fairly, based on the School Information Profile and the objectives and Reference Criteria outlined in the Terms of Reference.

## ***Community Consultation and Public Meetings***

Once an accommodation review has been initiated, the ARC must ensure that a wide range of school and community groups is invited to participate in the consultation. These groups may include the school(s)' councils, parents, guardians, students, school staff, the local community, and other interested parties.

As indicated above, the ARC will consult about the customized School Information Profile prepared by board administration and may make changes as a result of the consultation. The ARC will also seek input and feedback about the accommodation options and the ARC's Accommodation Report to the board. Discussions will be based on the School Information Profile(s) and the ARC's Terms of Reference.

Public meetings must be well publicized, in advance, through a range of methods and held at the school(s) under review, if possible, or in a nearby facility if physical accessibility cannot be provided at the school(s). Public meetings are to be structured to encourage an open and informed exchange of views. All relevant information developed to support the discussions at the consultation is to be made available in advance.

At a minimum, ARCs are required to hold four public meetings to consult about the School Information Profile, the accommodation options, and the ARC Accommodation Report.

Minutes reflecting the full range of opinions expressed at the meetings are to be kept, and made publicly available. ARCs and board administration are to respond to questions they consider relevant to the ARC and its analysis, at

meetings or in writing appended to the minutes of the meeting and made available on the board's website.

### ***ARC Accommodation Report to the Board***

The ARC will produce an Accommodation Report that will make accommodation recommendation(s) consistent with the objectives and Reference Criteria outlined in the Terms of Reference. It will deliver its Accommodation Report to the board's Director of Education, who will have the Accommodation Report posted on the board's website. The ARC will present its Accommodation Report to the Board of Trustees. Board administration will examine the ARC Accommodation Report and present the administration analysis and recommendations to the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees will make the final decision regarding the future of the school(s). If the Board of Trustees votes to close a school or schools, the board must outline clear timelines around when the school(s) will close.

### **TIMELINES FOR AN ACCOMMODATION REVIEW PROCESS**

After the intention to conduct an accommodation review of a school or schools has been announced by the school board, there must be no less than 30 calendar days notice prior to the first of a minimum of four public meetings.

Beginning with the first public meeting, the public consultation period must be no less than 90 calendar days.

After the ARC completes its Accommodation Report it is to make the document publicly available and submit the document to the school board administration. After the submission of the Accommodation Report, there must be no less than 60 calendar days notice prior to the meeting where the Board of Trustees will vote on the recommendations.

Summer vacation, Christmas break and Spring break, including adjacent weekends, must not be considered part of the 30, 60 or 90 calendar day periods. For schools with a year-round calendar, any holiday that is nine calendar days or longer, including weekends, should not be considered part of the 30, 60 or 90 calendar day periods.

### **APPLICATION OF ACCOMMODATION REVIEW GUIDELINES**

The *Guideline* applies to schools offering elementary or secondary regular day-school programs. The following outlines circumstances where school boards are not obligated to undertake an accommodation review in accordance with this *Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline*. In these circumstances, a board is expected to consult with local communities about proposed accommodation options for students in advance of any decision by the board.

- Where a replacement school is to be rebuilt by the board on the existing site, or rebuilt or acquired within the existing school attendance boundary as identified through the board's existing policies;

- When a lease is terminated;
- When a board is planning the relocation in any school year or over a number of school years of a grade or grades, or a program, where the enrolment constitutes less than 50% of the enrolment of the school; this calculation is based on the enrolment at the time of the relocation or the first phase of a relocation carried over a number of school years;
- When a board is repairing or renovating a school, and the school community must be temporarily relocated to ensure the safety of students during the renovations
- Where a facility has been serving as a holding school for a school community whose permanent school is over-capacity and/or is under construction or repair.

## MINISTRY OF EDUCATION ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW OF ACCOMMODATION REVIEW PROCESS

A review of a school board's accommodation review process may be sought if the following conditions are met.

### **An individual or individuals must:**

- Submit a copy of the board's accommodation review policy highlighting how the accommodation review process was not compliant with the school board's accommodation review policy.
- Demonstrate the support of a portion of the school community through the completion of a petition signed by a number of supporters equal to at least 30% of the affected school's student headcount (e.g., if the headcount is 150, then 45 signatures would be required). Parents/guardians of students and/or other individuals that participated in the accommodation review process are eligible to sign the petition<sup>1</sup>
  - The petition should clearly provide a space for individuals to print and sign their name; address (street name and postal code); and to indicate whether they are a parent/guardian of a student attending the school subject to the accommodation review, or an individual who has participated in the review process.
- Submit the petition and justification to the school board and the Minister of Education within thirty (30) days of the board's closure resolution.

### **The school board would be required to:**

- Confirm to the Minister of Education that the names on the petition are parents/guardians of students enrolled at the affected school and/or individuals who participated in the review process.
- Prepare a response to the individual's or individuals' submission regarding the process and forward the board's response to the Minister of Education within thirty (30) days of receiving the petition.

### **If the conditions set out above have been met, the Ministry would be required to:**

- Undertake a review by appointing a facilitator to determine whether the school board accommodation review process was undertaken in a manner consistent with the board's accommodation review policy within thirty (30) days of receiving the school board's response.

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<sup>1</sup> Information contained in the petition is subject to the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, 1990*.



**Decision**   X   **Information** \_\_\_\_\_

**To:** Chair and Members of the Student Enrolment / School Capacity Committee

**From:** Senior Administration

**Re:** **Accommodation review: Prince Edward County**

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### **Purpose**

To consider the creation of an Accommodation Review Committee (ARC) for Athol Central Public School and South Marysburgh Central School in Prince Edward County.

### **Background**

At its meeting of January 28, 2008, the Board reviewed the long term study prepared by Watson and Associates and approved the following motion:

“That the Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board consider further recommendations from the Student Enrolment/School Capacity Committee related to the establishment of Accommodation Review Committees following clear direction by the Ministry of Education on initiatives impacting on space utilization and the release and review of the 2008/09 Grants For Student Needs, and the first review be for schools in Prince Edward County identified in the Watson study as planning areas PE03 and PS02 for the fall of 2008.”

The Watson study included long term enrolment projections for the years 2007-08 through to 2020-21. Senior administration updated these enrolment projections based on a comparison of actual versus projected enrolments for the years 2007-08 and 2008-09. These updated projections and utilization of board facilities were reviewed by the Student Enrolment /School Capacity Committee on June 22, 2009. Prince Edward County was identified as an area with low utilization factors and increasing enrolment decline over time.

### **Current situation**

Current enrolment at Athol Central Public School and South Marysburgh Central School combined is 163 compared to a total capacity of 262 or utilization rate of 62%. Total enrolment for the two schools is expected to decline to 120 by 2014-15.

The challenges facing the board in the coming years are many and varied particularly as a result of declining enrolment and increasing facility renewal needs.

- Funding is provided primarily on a per pupil basis. As enrolment declines, funding levels drop. The board is then forced to find savings in all areas of the budget to offset annual funding shortfalls. Over time continued cost reductions will reduce service levels and impact on student programs.



- Funding for facility maintenance, heating, lighting and cleaning as well as building renovations will also decline. The average age of school facilities in the Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board is 54 years. Government estimates of building renewal needs at this time are \$120 million. Over the next 10 years the amount is projected to almost double to \$236 million while funding levels due to lower enrolments are declining.
- Lower enrolment will mean fewer teachers, fewer educational assistants and fewer support staff in schools. If the same number of facilities is maintained it will be an ongoing challenge to keep existing levels of programs and supervision.

In its 2009 funding allocation, the Ministry of Education instituted a number of financial restraints for school boards. This will place additional financial pressure on the board.

While the Ministry has indicated a commitment to full day, every day early learning education, program implementation would be gradually phased in beginning in 2010. It is anticipated this will take several years and administration believes that adequate program space is available.

Administration recommends that an Accommodation Review Committee (ARC) be formed so that all possible pupil accommodation options for the two schools can be considered. The ARC would review and consider the value of each option to students, the community, the board and local economy as outlined in Ministry of Education guidelines and board policy.

### **Recommendation**

Moved:

Seconded:

**That the Student Enrolment/School Capacity Committee recommend that the Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board create an Accommodation Review Committee for Athol Central Public School and South Marysburgh Central School in Prince Edward County as contained in the Student Enrolment/School Capacity Committee Report No. B-2 dated September 21, 2009.**

Respectfully submitted,

**Kathy Soule, Director of Education and Secretary of the Board  
On behalf of Senior Administration**

Ministry of Education

Ministère de l'Éducation

Office of the ADM  
Business & Finance Division  
900 Bay Street  
20<sup>th</sup> Floor, Mowat Block  
Queen's Park  
Toronto ON M7A 1L2

Bureau du sous-ministre adjoint  
Division des opérations et des finances  
900, rue Bay  
20 étage, Édifice Mowat  
Queen's Park  
Toronto ON M7A 1L2



**MEMORANDUM TO:** Directors of Education  
Partnership Table Members  
Association of Municipalities of Ontario

**DATE:** August 17, 2009

**SUBJECT:** Encouraging Facility Partnerships

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The Ministry of Education has been working to address a number of the recommendations of the Declining Enrolment Working Group in order to improve support for school boards and students and make the best use of our schools, which are valuable public assets.

As you are aware, partnerships between school boards and their communities can bring significant benefits to boards, students and communities. In order to encourage more sharing of schools, the ministry has developed a Facility Partnerships Policy that is outlined in the attached draft memorandum to school boards. This new policy seeks to encourage school boards to work with their community partners in order to maximize opportunities to share facilities when building new schools and undertaking significant renovations, and when considering the use of unoccupied space in schools.

The ministry is looking for your feedback about this new policy. Feedback should focus on how to make this policy more effective so boards and communities can promote the goals of improving student achievement and making the best use of public assets. After reviewing the feedback, the ministry will update and send the memo in its final form. The ministry will review the impact of this new policy through the course of the year to determine appropriate revisions to policy directions and/or regulations to support effective implementation.

Boards, sector organizations and other stakeholders are encouraged to communicate their comments on this policy to the ministry at [BSB.GPL@Ontario.ca](mailto:BSB.GPL@Ontario.ca) with the subject line Facility Partnerships Feedback, by October 9, 2009.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Naylor".

for  
Nancy Naylor  
Assistant Deputy Minister  
Business and Finance Division

**MEMORANDUM TO:** Directors of Education

**FROM:** Nancy Naylor  
Assistant Deputy Minister

**DATE:** TBA 2009

**SUBJECT:** Encouraging Facility Partnerships

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The purpose of this memo is to outline a new policy to encourage school boards to work with their community partners in order to share facilities to the benefit of boards, students and the community, and to optimize the use of public assets owned by school boards.

This memo explains the objectives and parameters of the new policy, which focuses on opportunities to share facilities with community partners when building new schools and undertaking significant renovations, and when considering the use of unoccupied space in schools. This policy is consistent with the legal framework outlined in the *Education Act* regarding the disposition of both surplus and non-surplus property and the joint use of schools.

### Overview

Cooperative and collaborative partnerships are part of the foundation of a strong, vibrant and sustainable publicly funded education system. Around the province, school boards have successful facility partnerships with co-terminous boards, colleges and other entities that enable them to reduce facility costs and/or improve educational opportunities. The Ministry is encouraging boards and their community partners to build on that success in a way that is transparent, sustainable and supports student achievement.

It is the responsibility of all levels of government to make the best use of public assets. The twin challenges of declining enrolment and the need to make the best use of education funding to support student achievement both create an incentive to maximize the use of our school board facilities. At the same time, they provide an opportunity to strengthen the role of schools in communities and provide a place for programs and services to locate that may facilitate the coordination of, or improve access, to services.

Several of the Declining Enrolment Working Group recommendations focussed on the importance of encouraging more partnerships between boards and community partners for the benefit of boards and students. This new facility partnership policy responds to those recommendations and to a broader public imperative to use our education infrastructure wisely. The Declining Enrolment Working also identified key principles for partnerships that have guided this policy. The report can be viewed at:

The intent of this new facility partnership policy is to:

- improve services and supports available to students;
- strengthen relationships between schools boards and community partners and the public;
- maximize the use of public infrastructure through increased flexibility and utilization; and
- provide a foundation for improved service delivery for communities through stronger links among programs and services.

The policy has five components:

1. The identification of facility partnership opportunities in board planning
2. The development or re-examination of board facility partnership policies
3. Processes to notify community partners
4. The consideration of opportunities for co-building with community partners
5. The consideration of opportunities for sharing unused space in schools with community partners

Boards currently have the authority to co-build schools with other entities and enter into a variety of facility partnerships as outlined in paragraph 44 of subsection 171 (1), paragraph 4 of subsection 171.1 (2), and sections 183, 194 and 196 of the *Education Act*. Boards will continue to follow Ontario Regulation 444/98 regarding the disposition of surplus assets, including schools or parts of schools, where appropriate. Through the above sections of the *Education Act*, boards are also currently able to make available space that has not been declared surplus through a license or joint use agreement. Boards may choose to do this in open and operating schools where enrolment may fluctuate due to population, boundary or program changes or where the space is small. The notification process outlined in this policy is intended to complement the circulation process prescribed in Ontario Regulation 444/98 in order to increase the frequency of co-building, the joint use of schools and the use of currently unused space in schools.

This policy is not intended to address space that is or will be used for Community Use of Schools, which is space that may only be available after school hours. It is expected that boards will retain space for Community Use of Schools where needed. Boards may consider their Outreach Coordinators that are engaged in the promotion of Community Use of Schools as a valuable resource for their facility partnership initiatives, including community meetings and outreach to community partners.

This memo focuses on facility partnerships and does not deal with the service or program partnerships between boards and community organizations or other entities. Strong partnerships between boards and service providers can and do exist without co-location. At the same time, experience demonstrates that the sharing of facilities may create opportunities for coordination and collaboration in service and program delivery, so boards are encouraged to build relationships with their facility partners.

## **1. Facility Partnerships and Board Planning**

School boards are expected to have capital plans that address the future needs of their students, including enrolment projections, operational funding projections, school capacity, renewal needs, potential consolidations and the construction of new schools or additions, including significant renovations.

Through this planning process, boards forecast where new schools or additions may be needed; which schools will remain well-utilized; which schools may have unused space for the next 2-5 years; and which schools may be candidates for closure or long-term lease opportunities. This information will assist boards in identifying facilities that may be suitable for facility partnerships with respect to new construction, and unused space in schools and in administrative buildings.

Boards are to create a list of space that is suitable for community facility partnership and a list of potential co-building opportunities based on their facility partnership policies (see below). This is the information that will be provided to potential partners through Ontario Regulation 444/98 and through the new notification process outlined below.

## **2. Facility Partnership Policies**

Boards are expected to develop partnership policies that will identify:

- Partnership principles and criteria
- How available space in schools will be selected
- What entities will be selected for the notification list
- How potential partners will be notified of available space and construction plans
- How entities will be selected for partnerships, including prioritization, if applicable.

At a minimum, board partnership policies are expected to reflect the Ministry's guideline outlined in Appendix A attached.

The Ministry encourages the sharing of facilities and co-building, between co-terminous school boards where boards are able to better utilize existing space and protect the integrity of their programs. Regarding new construction, boards typically work together on a case-by-case basis, sometimes facilitated by the Ministry. The memo assumes that board-to-board facility sharing remains a priority for our school boards, since school facilities are best suited for use by students.

## **3. Notification Process**

Boards are to post on their website information regarding their intention to build new schools and additions, undertake significant renovations and the availability of space in existing schools. This information should be reviewed or updated at least once a year in the case of space in existing schools, and as needed in the case of co-building opportunities. Boards are expected to notify potential partners on their notification list about this information and follow the process outlined in Ontario Regulation 444/98, where required. Boards are also expected to post on their website the name and contact information of someone at the board who will respond to questions throughout the year. Boards may want to consider identifying their Outreach Coordinators as this contact person.

Boards are expected to establish an accessible way to notify entities on the notification list when this information is updated. For example, they may email entities on the list and inform them of the updated information on the website, or send them the updated information.

Boards are expected to hold a community meeting at least once a year to discuss potential facility partnership opportunities with the community and to listen to what needs or plans community partners may have. Boards are expected to notify the entities on

their notification list and the general public about the meetings. Boards that cover a large geography may want to consider holding meetings in more than one community. The Ministry recognizes that this process will be most effective when community partners notify boards in a timely manner when they are looking for space or considering new construction.

The Ministry expects that a board's first public meeting will be held prior to March 31, 2010 and that the first information regarding available space is posted on board websites as soon as possible but no later than February 28, 2010.

#### **4. Co-building with Community Partners**

The construction of new schools, major additions and renovations represents a significant public investment in a long-term asset. It is also an opportunity to leverage other infrastructure investments, by co-building with entities that provide services and programs for children, their families and the broader community. For example, a municipality may seek to build an adjoining community centre or child-care centre.

The Ministry's objective is to give potential partners enough time to evaluate their own need for a new facility and identify funding sources. As part of the board planning process, when considering building a new school or undertaking a major addition or renovation, boards are expected to notify the entities on their notification list 1 to 3 years prior to the potential construction date. The notification should be supported by a board resolution. Boards should provide as much information about their plans and the site as possible, to support potential partners in determining the project's suitability for their purposes. Examples of information would be size and location of the site; size, grades and facilities of the school; timeline; and any anticipated site or facility restrictions.

Once notified, entities may express their interest in co-building with the board. The board will then evaluate the expressions of interest to determine whether there is a suitable partner(s) and select partner(s) based on their partnership policy. The board may then enter into an agreement. The Minister's approval may be required depending on the provision under the *Education Act* authorizing the agreement.

The Ministry prefers that boards and facility partners have ownership of their respective portions of the facility, where the portions are sizeable. For example, a small child-care centre may be a tenant of the board, while a municipality may own the community centre space.

Boards will not need to have an identified source of funding or Ministry approval when they notify their partners of their plan or intention to build. Requests for Ministry funding and requests for transfer from reserve approvals are expected to reflect that boards have already solicited interest from partners.

Community partners are encouraged to notify boards of their consideration or plan to build their own new facilities at least during the annual community meeting. An accommodation review process, where an Accommodation Review Committee may be considering options that include the construction of new facilities, is another opportunity for community partners to identify their plans.

#### **5. Sharing Unused Space in Existing Schools with Community Partners**

As outlined above, as part of facility planning, boards are expected to identify unused space in schools that is suitable for use by other entities, based on their partnership

policy. If available for the long-term, boards may consider declaring it surplus and circulating it through Ontario Regulation 444/98. If the board does not believe the space is surplus for the long-term, the Ministry's expectation is that it will be offered through the new notification process outlined in this memo.

In determining a facility's suitability for partnership, the Ministry's expectation is that boards will review facilities that are 60 percent utilized or less for two years and/or have 200 or more unused pupil places. Boards will review these, and potentially other facilities, for their suitability for partnerships, based on their partnership policies and will finalize the list of space. Where the space is surplus, the space must be circulated through Ontario Regulation 444/98.

Where the space is not surplus, boards are expected to provide entities on its notification list with the list of available space and a description of the space (location, facility amenities, required renovations, etc). This notification should be supported by a board resolution. Entities may express their interest in using the space. Boards will then evaluate the expressions of interest to determine whether there is a suitable partner(s) and select partner(s) based on their partnership policy. Boards then may enter into a license or joint use agreement. The Minister's approval may be required depending on the provision under the *Education Act* authorizing the transaction. Boards are expected to include facility partnership information in school information profiles when undertaking accommodation review processes.

### **Funding and Cost-Recovery**

School boards will be expected to remove the capacity of space occupied by community partners from their on-the-ground capacity. The Ministry expects that rent or fees will cover the operations and capital cost of using the space borne by the board, net of available top-up funding. In co-building, partners will be required to pay for their share of construction.

Where there are additional costs to perform minor renovations to protect student safety, provide appropriate washrooms, and otherwise make the space suitable for use by facility partners, the Ministry expects that cost to be borne by the partners.

### **Providing Feedback**

For questions about this memo, please contact Amy Olmstead at 416-326-9921 or [Amy.Olmstead@Ontario.ca](mailto:Amy.Olmstead@Ontario.ca) or Nancy Whynot at 416-325-4030 or [Nancy.Whynot@Ontario.ca](mailto:Nancy.Whynot@Ontario.ca).

Sincerely,



for

Nancy Naylor  
Assistant Deputy Minister

## Ministry of Education Facility Partnerships Guideline for Boards

A board's Facility Partnerships Policy should reflect the following considerations at a minimum:

### Facility suitability:

- Schools and administration buildings should be considered.
- The current and future use and occupancy for providing educational programming.
- The impact of full-day learning for four and five year olds.
- The ability to separate the leased space from the school and other factors that make the school suitable for sharing during the school day.
- Zoning restrictions and other considerations regarding appropriate site use.

### Partner suitability:

- Health and safety of students must be protected.
- Partnership must be appropriate for the school setting.
- Partnership must not compromise the student achievement strategy.
- Partner should expect to pay the full operational and capital cost.

### Notification list for transactions that do not involve surplus property:

- List will reflect the entities listed in Ontario Regulation 444/98 – Disposition of Surplus Real Property. Boards are not required to prioritize their notification list.
- If child care operators and government-funded agencies ask, they will be added to the notification list.
- Boards may circulate to any other entity based on their facility partnership policy.
- Boards may enter into partnerships with non-profit and for-profit entities.
- Ineligible entities are those that provide competing education services such as tutoring services, JK-12 private schools or private colleges, and credit offering entities that are not government-funded, are not eligible partners.