



<b>Adopted</b>	September 25, 2000
<b>Last Revised</b>	April 23, 2012
<b>Review Date</b>	April, 2015

---

## **STUDENT ENROLMENT/SCHOOL CAPACITY**

---

### **PURPOSE**

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

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."

The Board is committed to the following:

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.

## 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 each school in the review area based on their value to the student, the school board, the community and the local economy. The School Information Profile(s) 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 administration that clarifies the mandate of the ARC; the parameters and criteria that will guide the development and recommendations of accommodation options; describes 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 - website.

### **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 in the review area 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/business/community members;
  - 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 municipal, business and community members**

Advertisements will be placed in the local media and on the district website inviting municipal, business and community members 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 Grade 7 and above. 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**

A public information session will be held following the Board's decision to form an ARC and prior to confirming committee membership and structure of the ARC. 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.

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 website. 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 two 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 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 and present 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 website 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 14 days 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, municipal, business and community members 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 ARC is encouraged 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

Information relevant to the accommodation review will be made public by posting on the district website. School board staff will respond to reasonable requests for additional information from the ARC.

### **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.

### **2.8 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 no sooner than 90 days and no later than 110 days after the beginning of the ARC's first public meeting. The ARC report will be posted on the district website.

## **3. Consideration of the ARC report**

### **3.1 Report to the SE/SCC**

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

The ARC will present its final report to the SE/SCC. Administration will examine the ARC report and present its analysis and recommendations to the SE/SCC. The report may include as appendices the information package provided to the ARC, minutes of the ARC meetings, recorded questions and responses, attendance registers and any other 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.

### **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's 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 14 days notice of the SE/SCC public meeting for community input will be provided via school newsletters, letters to the school community, the district 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 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 website.

**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 to prepare its recommendation to the Board regarding the school accommodation recommendations.

**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 ARC report and 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 will be provided through school newsletters, letters to the school community, the district 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 website.

**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.

## 3.7 Timelines

Action	By whom	When	Provision
Presentation of the preliminary report to the SE/SCC	Administration	Discretion	1
Board decision to establish an ARC	Board	Discretion	2
Notice of Board decision to establish an ARC	Administration	Within one week of the decision	2
Notice of the first ARC public meeting	Staff	At least 30 days prior to the meeting	2.4
Delivery of an information package to ARC	Staff	No later than ARC's first public meeting	2.6
First ARC public meeting	ARC	As scheduled by ARC	2.4
Notice of second ARC public meeting	Staff	At least two weeks prior to the meeting	2.4
Second ARC public meeting	ARC	As scheduled by ARC	2.4
Notice of third and fourth ARC public meeting	Staff	At least two weeks prior to the meeting	2.4
Third and fourth ARC public meeting	ARC	As scheduled by ARC	2.4
Delivery of ARC's report to the Director of Education	ARC	Not earlier than 90 days and not later than 110 days after the beginning of ARC's first public meeting. The ARC report will be posted on the public website immediately following delivery of the report.	2.8
SE/SCC meeting to receive report and recommendations from Administration and the ARC	Administration / ARC	Not less than 30 days after the ARC report was delivered to the director of education.	3.1
Public notice of the Board meeting to decide accommodation	Administration	Not less than 60 days prior to the regularly scheduled Board meeting at which the Board will make its decision regarding the school accommodation recommendations.	3.5
Public notice of SE/SCC meeting for public input	Staff	A minimum of two weeks prior to the public meeting.	3.2
SE/SCC meeting for public input	Board members	As scheduled by the Board but no sooner than 30 days after the ARC's and Administration's report and recommendations are presented to the SE/SCC in public session.	3.2
Administration's follow-up report on accommodation	Administration	Following the SE/SCC meeting for public input and prior to the SE/SCC follow-up meeting and, no sooner than 15 days prior to the Board meeting to determine accommodation recommendations.	3.3
SE/SCC follow-up meeting	Board members	As scheduled by the Board, following the release of Administration's follow-up report and prior to the public Board meeting to determine accommodation recommendations.	3.4
Public Board meeting to determine accommodation recommendations	Board members	Regularly scheduled Board meeting to occur no less than 60 days after the presentation of the ARC's report and Administration's report, 30 days after the SE/SCC meeting for public input and 15 days following the release of Administration's follow-up report.	3.5

Revision dates: September 22, 2007 (Appendix C only)  
April 23, 2007  
October, 2009

**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 178 – Accommodation Review Committee (ARC)
- Administrative Procedure 187 – School Openings, Closings and Rededications
- Administrative Procedure 555 - Maximizing Use of School Space
- Administrative Procedure - 560 Disposal of Real Property
- Administrative Procedure 570 – Facility partnerships

## **Appendix A**

### **Ministry of Education Pupil Accommodation Review Guidelines**

**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.

## **Appendix B**

### **Ministry of Education Administrative Review of Accommodation Review Process**

## 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.

---

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

## **Appendix C**

### **School Information Profile**

---

## Appendix C

### School Information Profile

The School Information Profile will be completed by board administration for each school in the group of schools being studied. The completed School Information Profile will be provided to the ARC to discuss, consult on, modify based on new or improved information and finalize. The School Information Profile will include the following factors which are to be considered for each individual school. The ARC may add other information to the School Information Profile. The profile framework may be revised from time to time by administration.

#### 1. Value to the students

- Junior Kindergarten to Grade 12 remains in each family of schools.
- The range of program availability:
  - i. Continuity of education.
  - ii. Accommodation of vulnerable students, Special Education services.
  - iii. Specialized programs such as: Extended French, International Baccalaureate, English as a second language, Gifted.
  - iv. Programs offered: French Immersion, Special Education, primary literacy, social skills, and college, university and workplace pathway programs.
- Do specialized teaching spaces exist within the school such as design and technology spaces, Arts programs, regional specialized programs and/or family studies classrooms?
- Learning resources available in the school: specialized rooms for program delivery.
- Students' performance in Reading, Writing and Math:
  - i. EQAO: school, board and provincial averages.
  - ii. Retention, graduation and drop-out rates at the secondary level.
- Suitability of facilities to age of students and program needs.
- Playground: size and condition.
- Health and safety: well water; air quality; compliance with fire and electrical codes; proximity to hazards; yard and bus supervision; student proximity to school; length of bus ride.
  - i. The perceptions of students, staff and parents/guardians about their school based upon the annual school effectiveness surveys.
- Is the school accessible for students with disabilities?
  - i. What are the alternative arrangements?
- What is the level of student and staff involvement in extra-curricular activities offered by the school?
- Will participation in extra-curricular activities be affected if the school closes and students are moved elsewhere?
- Multi-grade classrooms
- Student access to community facilities
- Consideration of services provided before and after school such as breakfast programs and early childhood programs.

#### 2. Value to the school system

- Junior Kindergarten to Grade 12 remains in each family of schools.
- Would consolidation, closure or program relocation provide students with access to varied and/or better programs?
- Would consolidation, closure or program relocation reduce the probability that the students will be in classes with two or more grades?
- Is the school experiencing declining enrolment? (consider demographic projections)
- If it is an elementary school:

- i. Is it the main feeder school to the local secondary school?
  - ii. What is the relationship of the school to the family of schools?
- Does the school offer summer school programs that cannot be easily relocated?
- Is the school an exemplar to other schools both academically, administratively and through its offering of extra-curricular activities?
- Would consolidation, closure or program relocation involving the school realize operating efficiencies for the school board?
  - i. School administration (principals, secretaries).
  - ii. Teachers.
  - iii. School operations (heating, lighting, cleaning).
  - iv. School renewal.
  - v. Transportation costs.
- What are the revenue implications of consolidation, closure or program relocation involving the school?
- What are the additional expenditures, if any, at schools which will accommodate students displaced as a result of consolidation, closure or program relocation involving the school?
  - i. School operations (heating, lighting, cleaning and routine maintenance).
  - ii. School administration.
  - iii. School renewal.
- Long term growth potential within community and future value of school site.

### 3. Value to the community

- Is the school the only school in the area under study?
- Do community members believe that the school contributes to the identity of the community?
- What is the community's perception of the school?
- What is the role of parents in keeping the school open:
  - What is the school council's view of the school and its role/commitment to keeping the school open?
  - What type of activities have parents/parent council been involved in to support the school in the past (i.e., fundraising)?
- Is the school facility used for other purposes:
  - Sports, recreation and fitness?
  - Non-profit and community groups for youth and adults?
  - Community meetings/events? If yes, how many Community Use of Schools agreements have been signed?
  - Community and social service provision (i.e., child care)? If yes, how many child care spaces are available and operating in the facility?
  - How many community and not-for-profit groups currently use the facility?
  - Intensity and diversity of use by community groups?
- Is there another community centre or space in the area that could be used for similar purposes?
- Impact on local employment opportunities.
- User satisfaction, as reported on a facility condition survey.
- To gauge community perception of value of tax dollars at work, what is the community's perception of the value of any upgrades that may have been made to the school in the last few years (i.e., retrofits, additions, and repairs)?
- How would a school closure impact the social fabric of the community in the long term (i.e., would it result in divisive or negative relationships among community members)?
- Consider significance as a designated heritage resource and the need to conserve the facility.
- Impact of school use on community facilities such as arenas, pools, tracks.

**4. Value to the local economy**

- Does the school play an important role in attracting and/or keeping investment in the community, thereby increasing/retaining commercial, industrial, residential municipal tax base?
- What would be the effect of consolidation, closure or program relocation on the local economy: diversification, sustainability of employment opportunities, effect on local businesses?
- Are there spin-off economic benefits of having the school (i.e., opening and sustaining of small business and services)? What would happen to these spin-offs if there was consolidation, closure or program relocation?
- Does the school play a key role in attracting families to the community?
- Does the presence of the school affect real estate values?
- What impact may consolidation, closure or program relocation have on municipal revenues/assessment?
- Is there realistic potential for growth in the immediate area?
  - Municipal official plan and zoning bylaws
- What would be the impact of consolidation, closure or program relocation on the employment situation of school staff (i.e., teachers, support staff, custodians, cafeteria staff)? This is particularly relevant in areas where the school is the main employer within the community.
- Does the school offer co-operative education programs or adult learning programs?
- Does the school offer training opportunities or partnerships with businesses?

## **Appendix D**

### **Resource Guide**

---

## Resource Guide for Accommodation Review Committees

The following are questions for ARCs to consider in addition to the School Information Profile factors listed in Appendix C.

- 1) Does the school or group of schools currently provide the range of mandatory programs required to meet the Ministry of Education policies and ensure program quality for all students of Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board who reside in the catchment area?
- 2) Does the school or group of schools currently provide the range of optional programs required to ensure an appropriate education and program quality for all the students? What optional programs cannot be offered currently that are available in other Board schools?
- 3) Is the option of the schools or size of schools supported by the funding guidelines of the Student-Focused Funding Model or are there other sustainable sources of revenue to support the operation?
- 4) Do enrolment projections and development plans indicate that the enrolments will be high enough for the next five years to keep the organization viable?
- 5) Is there a proposed organization of all or some of the existing schools that could result in each remaining school being able to provide the range of mandatory programs required to meet the Ministry of Education policies and ensure program quality for the Board's students who reside in the existing or proposed catchment area?
- 6) Is there a proposed organization of all or some of the existing schools that could result in each remaining school being able to provide the range of optional programs required to ensure an appropriate education and equity for all the students? What optional programs could be offered in the proposed organization that are available in other Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board schools?
- 7) Can the proposed school organization result in an equivalent or improved environment for the students from a health and safety perspective?
- 8) What busing would be required under the proposed organization? If there are increased busing costs, can these be offset by reduced operating and administrative resource costs?
- 9) What are the financial benefits of the proposed organization that would enable the Board to maintain or improve the student learning environment? Would the operation of the proposed school organization be supported by the funding guidelines of the Student-Focused Funding Model or are there other sustainable sources of revenue to support the option of this organization?
- 10) What would the capital requirements of the proposed organization be in terms of renewal, additions, new schools or program enhancements? Would they be supported by the funding guidelines of the Student-Focused Funding Model or are there other sustainable sources of revenue to support the capital requirements, such as the shared use of a building or site?

- 11) Do alternative organizations of all or some of the schools offer better long term opportunities to provide quality educational services and accommodation for students within current fiscal realities?
- 12) What effects would the proposed organization have on community activities of a social, educational, cultural or recreational nature?
- 13) What are the possible alternative uses for any building recommended for consolidation or closure?

**Information package to be prepared by administration**

Administration will prepare an information package for the ARC to utilize for consideration in the review process and for preparation of the report. Information will include but not necessarily be limited to:

- The most recent Long Term Capital Plan of the Board to provide a context for the accommodation review;
- Background information regarding the schools located within the area of the accommodation review. This information is to include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following:
  - Organization and programming information for each school under study;
  - Maps of the area;
  - Enrolment and capacity information for each school in the review area;
  - Information outlining where students attending each school in the review area reside;
  - Demographic projections concerning future enrolments at schools within the review area;
  - Information on transportation;
  - Floor plans of schools under study;
  - Site plans of schools under study;
  - Data on portables;
  - Expenditures and revenues for each school in the review area with particular emphasis on school operations (i.e. heating, lighting, cleaning, routine maintenance), school administration;
  - Information regarding renewal needs of each school in the review area;
  - Information regarding the current community use of each school in the review area; and
  - Tenant information/agreements and other relevant information.
- Alternate accommodation plans for the students in the schools located within the area of the accommodation review including suggestions as to where the students could be accommodated, what changes to existing facilities might be required, what programs could be available to the students, and associated transportation requirements.

**ARC report**

In preparation of the report, the ARC should ensure the following issues are addressed:

- The implications for the program for students both in the school under consideration for consolidation, closure or program relocation and in the school(s) where programs may be affected.
- The effects of consolidation, closure or program relocation on the following:
  - The attendance area defined for the schools;
  - Attendance at other schools;
  - The need and extent of busing.

- 
- The financial effects of consolidating or not consolidating the school, including any capital implications.
  - Savings expected to be achieved as a result of the consolidation, closure or program relocation:
    - School operations (heating, lighting, cleaning, routine maintenance);
    - Expenditures to address school renewal issues which will no longer be required.
  - Revenue implications as a result of the consolidation, closure or program relocation.
  - Additional expenditures, if any, at schools which will accommodate students displaced as a result of a consolidation, closure or program relocation decision taken by the Board:
    - School operations (heating, lighting, cleaning, routine maintenance);
    - School administration;
    - School renewal;
    - Transportation.
  - Net savings/costs associated with:
    - Teaching staff;
    - Paraprofessionals;
    - Student transportation.
  - The possible alternative use or disposition of an empty building.

### **Integration Committee**

The Board may establish an integration committee to plan and implement the positive integration of students and staff affected by consolidation, closure or program relocation into their new school environment. The following is intended as a guideline to assist the committee.

### **Composition of the Integration Committee**

The Integration Committee may consist of the following persons:

- The appropriate school superintendent.
- From each affected school:
  - The school principal;
  - The school council chairperson or designate;
  - Additional members as determined by the principal.

### **School closure ceremony**

The Integration Committee may determine whether a school closing ceremony is appropriate and design the format and program.

### **Timelines**

The Integration Committee will advise board administration on the progress of integration planning.