

KAWARTHA PINE RIDGE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

POLICY STATEMENT

Section: **Business and Administrative Services**

- **Administrative Operation**

Policy: **PUPIL ACCOMMODATION REVIEW:
SCHOOL CLOSURE/CONSOLIDATION**

**Policy Code: BA-1.2
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The Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board aims to provide educational programs and services of the highest quality, in facilities conducive to a stimulating learning environment and designed to meet the needs of all pupils, within fiscal parameters.

In addition to facilitating the delivery of our Board mission, the Board will endeavour to optimize the use of its facilities. Various factors beyond the control of the Board impact on this commitment. These factors include declining, increasing, and shifting populations, current funding and operation realities, new provincial legislation and policy, changing educational objectives and physical limitations of buildings.

In order to maintain our commitment, it is necessary to monitor and evaluate all schools on a regular basis. Where enrolment is increasing, the Board must provide adequate student accommodations through boundary changes, and/or additional classroom space, temporary or permanent, and/or blending arrangements. Where enrolment is limited and decreasing, the consequent impact of financial resources, staff, learning resources and program creates difficulties in providing adequate educational programs for students. Under these conditions, the Board will consider boundary changes, blending arrangements, consolidation, closure, alternate use of surplus space or other measures. All reviews of consolidations and/or closures will be conducted within the guidelines and expectations of the Ministry of Education.

The Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board is aware that changes in any school's student accommodation or other status has an impact beyond the school and therefore maintains that the detailed review of any school have a district-wide perspective and include public consultation.

1. Annual Pupil Accommodation Report

- 1.1 Senior staff responsible for student accommodations will maintain and present major updates regarding enrolment trends and accommodation needs based on the Board's capital planning process.
- 1.2 Annually, the senior staff responsible for accommodations, in consultation with the Superintendent of Business and Corporate Services, shall prepare a report for Board consideration addressing upcoming accommodation needs and provisions. This report will be presented to the Board by June 30 of each school year and is available to the public on the Board website.

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2. Criteria for Identifying an Accommodation Review in the Capital Needs Assessment

2.1 Administration shall bring to the attention of the Board, through the Capital Needs Assessment update in the annual enrolment and accommodation needs report, those schools that fall under one or more of the following categories:

2.1.1 Program Viability

Any school, or group of schools, which is deemed not able to offer a viable program in terms of enrolment, class sizes and/or grade configurations. This includes schools that under the normal staffing allocation would require the assignment of more than two grades to one class in elementary schools and multigrade/level/subjects to one class in secondary schools. Schools that are unable to provide an equitable range of learning opportunities for students will also be identified.

2.1.2 Overcrowded

Any school, or group of schools whose Average Daily Enrolment (ADE) exceeds, or is projected to exceed its pupil places as designated by the On The Ground Capacity allocation by 15% or more shall be identified.

2.1.3 Operating/Maintenance Costs

Any school, or group of schools, which is/are deemed to have extraordinary operating and maintenance costs which affect efficiency within the grants provided by the Ministry to the Board. Any school that is experiencing higher building maintenance expense than the average for the system and/or is in need of major capital improvements shall be identified.

2.1.4 Underutilized

Any school, or group of schools whose Average Daily Enrolment (ADE) falls, or is projected to fall below 85% of the pupil places as designated by the On The Ground Capacity allocation.

2.1.5 Other

Any school, group of schools or area which, in the opinion of administration should be considered due to exceptional circumstances. Such exceptional circumstances can include but are not limited to:

- 2.1.5.1 the school is destroyed by fire or other catastrophe;
- 2.1.5.2 the school is unusable due to environmental hazard;
- 2.1.5.3 the school is unusable due to a health hazard.

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Any school, or group of schools, impacted by the above criteria, may be identified for consideration in an individual or group accommodation review.

3. Administration will prepare a full report for schools individually or in groups that are recommended to be considered for the review process as outlined in the Data Collection Report in the administrative regulation supporting this policy.

4. Identification of Schools for the Accommodation Review Process

- 4.1 The Board shall consider the reports of schools that are presented by administration for the review process and decide whether the school(s) proceed in the process by identifying the school(s) specifically for review.
- 4.2 Where the Board identifies a school(s) for the review process, it shall also establish an Accommodation Review Committee to provide input and recommendations.
- 4.3 Where the Board identifies a school(s) for review and establishes a committee in respect of same, the Director shall give notice through the Board meeting media release to:
- 4.3.1 the principal(s) and staff of the identified school(s);
 - 4.3.2 the chairperson(s) of the school council(s) of the identified school(s);
 - 4.3.3 the community, by posting a notice on the Board's website and by such other means, as the Director deems appropriate; and
 - 4.3.4 any other person or body as the Board may direct or the Director may determine;

and shall deliver or otherwise make available a copy of this policy to the said principal(s), chairperson(s) of the school council(s) and other affected parties.

5. Terms of Reference for the Accommodation Review Committee

- 5.1 Purpose

The purpose of the committee is to review the reports and information presented by administration and advise the Board on recommendations for possible outcomes of the accommodation review which are in keeping with the Board's mission, vision and values.

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5.2 Mandate

- 5.2.1 The Accommodation Review Committee shall review the Board's educational and accommodation expectations as outlined in the introduction of this policy and use them as the guiding principles for deliberations.

The Accommodation Review Committee shall consider the report prepared by administration, and use the information to begin weighing the value of the school as reflected in the generic School Information Profile provided in the administrative regulation supporting this policy. The information report will be posted on the Board's website to inform the public.

- 5.2.2 All meetings of the committee shall be open to the public. The committee will consult with school and community groups including school councils, parents, guardians, students, teachers, local community and other interested parties. The consultations shall be based on the School Information Profile(s) created by the Board. The Board and/or the committee may customize the profile as required. The School Information Profile(s) will be applied to each of the schools involved in the review process.

- 5.2.3 Any member of the public may make written submissions to the committee one week prior to a scheduled meeting or advise of their intention to make a presentation. The committee shall acknowledge and consider all submissions received but need not reply to any such submissions or other representations in writing or at all.

- 5.2.4 The committee shall use the School Information Profile(s) and the information received during the public meetings to create the final report of the committee. The Accommodation Review Committee submits the Accommodation Report to the Director of Education. The report will be made available on the Board's website.

- 5.2.5 The Accommodation Review Committee will determine who will present the final Accommodation Report and recommendations to the trustees. In addition to the Accommodation Report, administration shall provide an analysis of the Accommodation Report and submit recommendations to the Board.

- 5.2.6 The committee is dissolved by Board motion.

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5.3 Membership

The composition of the committee shall be determined by the Board and shall include, at least:

- 5.3.1 the trustee(s) representing the jurisdiction in which the identified school is located;
- 5.3.2 one trustee from another jurisdiction within the Board's jurisdiction as approved by Board motion;
- 5.3.3 two senior staff, one being the appropriate Supervisory Officer for the identified school(s);
- 5.3.4 two school council representatives selected by the school council of each identified school;
- 5.3.5 two school council representatives selected by the school council of each identified area school;
- 5.3.6 two secondary students, when the review involves secondary schools, as selected by the principal in consultation with the student leadership group in the school and staff; ideally, these students would be identified through a selection process and be representative of a cross-section of the student population for each school identified for the review process;
- 5.3.7 the principal(s) of the identified school(s) and one staff member from each school; and
- 5.3.8 an attempt will be made to include a community member and one each of business and municipal leaders if they are available.

5.4 Roles and Responsibilities

- 5.4.1 The senior staff responsible for student accommodations will be responsible for facilitating the work of the Accommodation Review Committee.

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5.4.2 The Board will ensure there is support provided to the committee to take minutes. Committee minutes will be provided on the Board's website as will responses to questions raised during the consultation meetings.

5.4.3 Unless the Board decides otherwise, where any person appointed to the committee is unable or unwilling to participate in the work of the committee, or where the school council of the identified school is unable or unwilling to appoint one or more of its representatives in accordance with sections above, the committee shall continue to act and perform its duties under this policy despite the absence of that member(s), and no act or duty performed by the committee shall be deemed invalid by reason only of the absence of that member(s).

5.5 Meeting Framework

5.5.1 The Accommodation Review Committee shall meet on a maximum of four occasions for the purpose of seeking input and community feedback on options for accommodating students who may be affected by a school closure or consolidation.

5.5.2 Where appropriate space allows, meetings of the committee will be held in the school(s) affected by the review.

5.5.3 The committee shall hold one of the designated meetings as an information meeting, open to the public, to present the report and recommendations going to the Board. The committee may alter the final report based on community input at this meeting. All trustees and appropriate senior administration will be invited to attend this meeting.

5.5.4 A minimum of fourteen calendar days notice of the date and location of the information meeting shall be given to the community. The secretary of the committee shall ensure that notification of the public meetings is posted on the Board's website and may determine if further notice should be given.

5.6 Decision Making

The Accommodation Review Committee will complete their decision making process using a consensus model for decisions. All committee members shall have the opportunity to provide input.

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Consensus is defined as meaning both general consent and the process of getting to such agreement. Unanimity is not the goal but rather the opportunity for each committee member to have had the opportunity to express their opinion, be listened to and accept a group decision based on its logic and feasibility considering all relevant factors.

As the committee works towards consensus, the needs of all students in the school(s) being reviewed are to be considered objectively and fairly, based on the School Information Profile(s) and the Board's education and accommodation expectations outlined in the Terms of Reference.

When an Accommodation Review Committee is unable to reach consensus on recommendations to be made to the Board, the issues, concerns and factors contributing to the impasse will be noted in the final report to the Board.

5.7 Meeting Agenda and Protocols

The Accommodation Review Committee will use the procedures outlined in the administrative regulations supporting this policy for meetings.

6. School Accommodation Review Procedures

- 6.1 Accommodation reviews may be introduced at any time during the year, however, timelines and procedures will be determined as outlined in the administrative regulation accompanying this policy.
- 6.2 Trustees will review the Accommodation Report from the Accommodation Review Committee and the information presented by senior administration in order to make a final decision on the school closure and/or consolidation. The decision by the Board concerning the recommendation to close the designated school shall be made at a meeting(s) of the full Board in open session.
- 6.3 Where the Board decides to close the identified school(s), the closure shall usually be effective as of September 1 of the next school year in which the Board makes such decision, unless the Board, in its sole discretion, determines otherwise.

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- 6.4 Where a school has been identified for the review process pursuant to this policy and where any step remaining in the process contemplated by this policy has been prevented by reason of any extraneous circumstances or other events, such that the school cannot be closed by September 1 of the next school year in which it was identified for review leading to closure, the Board may decide, in its sole discretion, to continue the process in the subsequent school year and, in that event, the Board may decide, in its sole discretion, not to repeat any step in the process already conducted; provided that all steps contemplated by this policy shall be completed before the closure of the school.
- 6.5 Where the Board decides to close the identified school(s), notice of the Board's decisions shall be given through the Board meeting media release to:
- 6.5.1 the principal(s) and staff of the identified and receiving school(s);
- 6.5.2 the chairperson(s) of the school council(s) of the identified and receiving school(s); and
- 6.5.3 the community, by posting a notice on the Board's website or by other appropriate means as the Director may determine.
- 6.6 Where the Board decides to close the identified school(s), the Board may authorize an Accommodation Review Committee consisting of a local trustee, local superintendent of student achievement, principal(s), teachers, school council members and parents, to plan and implement appropriate procedures for a smooth transition for students, staff and parent(s)/guardian(s).
- 6.7 Where the Board decides not to close the identified school(s), the Board shall determine the actions, if any, required.

7. School Closure in Extreme Circumstances

Despite any other provision in this policy or any policy of the Board, in unusual and extreme circumstances such as problems with safe use of a facility, the Board may close a school and forthwith advise the public of its decision and the reasons therefore.

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8. Miscellaneous

- 8.1 Where the time limited by this policy for doing anything expires or falls on a school holiday within the meaning of Regulation 304 of the Revised Regulations of Ontario, 1990, the time so limited extends to the next day following that is not a school holiday. When calculating the timeframe for the review process, December/Christmas, March breaks and summer holidays shall not be included in the calculations.
- 8.2 The Board may decide to extend any time period prescribed by this policy on such terms as it deems appropriate, by formal motion.
- 8.3 Secondary schools identified for closure may need to remain open for a year in addition to the above due to the schedules for the completion of option sheets and collective agreement staffing data.
- 8.4 A copy of this policy shall be posted on the Board's website along with the Ministry of Education Pupil Accommodation Review Guidelines and Administrative Review of Accommodation Review Process.
- 8.5 It would be expected, in normal circumstances, that once a school was reviewed, it would not be reviewed again for five years.

9. When a school that has no identifiable school community is to be identified for review, an Accommodation Review Committee will be formed consisting of:

- 9.1 trustee(s) from the Associated School Grouping which includes the designated school;
- 9.2 one trustee from another area of the Board's jurisdiction;
- 9.3 two senior staff, one being the appropriate Superintendent of Student Achievement; and
- 9.4 an attempt will be made to include members of the former school community as well as business and municipal leaders.

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10. Application of Accommodation Review Guidelines

The Ministry of Education Accommodation Review Guidelines and Board policy regarding School Reviews do not apply in the following circumstances:

- 10.1 Where a replacement school is to be rebuilt by the Board on the existing site or located within the existing school attendance boundary as identified through the Board's existing policies;
- 10.2 When a lease is terminated;
- 10.3 When a board is considering the relocation of a grade or grades, or a program, where the enrolment in the grade or grades, or program, 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 years;
- 10.4 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; and/or
- 10.5 Where a facility has been serving as a holding school for a school community whose permanent school is over capacity and/or under construction or repair.

Established: January 20, 2000

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June 23, 2005
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