

SCHOOL CLOSURES

The Board believes that one of its major responsibilities is to strive to provide school facilities throughout the District that will allow for operational efficiency and program effectiveness for all students. In keeping with the intent of its philosophies, objectives and major responsibilities, it may from time to time have to consider consolidation or closure of schools.

The Board will receive, as a committee-of-the-whole, by its last meeting in November, data pertinent to the educational and economic impact of declining and/or shifting enrollment on the organization of the schools. Should the data indicate an area to be studied for reorganization, the Board will initiate a process of discussion and consultation with parents, staff, and the community not later than January 15 in accordance with this policy. The Board will then make a decision on the reorganization of schools based on the preceding process by March 1 so that any school closure necessary would be effective June 30 that same year.

Specifically,

1. The Superintendent will recommend annually to the Board at the last meeting in November, consideration of schools for closure based upon the following criterion:

A school is operating at less than 50% of student capacity as established by the Ministry of Education, or a school, because of age, location or operational costs can be closed and students accommodated in an appropriate environment or because the cumulative student capacity within an area is less than 65% of Ministry capacity.

The Superintendent, in making a recommendation for consideration for closure, will assess the following factors:

- 1.1 Students will suffer no decline in program diversity or educational experience;
- 1.2 Safety of access for students being relocated;
- 1.3 Class size;
- 1.4 Accommodation and suitability of program offerings available in nearby schools;
- 1.5 Student decline will continue;
- 1.6 Age and operation and maintenance costs of the facility;
- 1.7 Alternate potential uses of a facility could create additional revenue for the District or could improve community services;
- 1.8 The parental and community support for the school.

In making its decision, the Board shall consider only the aforementioned factors.

2. The Board will consider the information provided by the Superintendent and either,
 - 2.1 conclude that no action or further study is required, or
 - 2.2 instigate discussion and consultation with parents, staff and the community.
3. Discussion and consultation must be initiated by January 15 and concluded not later than March 1 and will include:
 - 3.1 advertising a public meeting or meetings in the District to explain the proposed reorganization and invite interested members of the public to submit their suggestions to the Board,
 - 3.2 one or more circulars to employees and an invitation to the C.T.A. and CUPE Local 561, for their input,
 - 3.3 one or more circulars to the parent community, the Parent Advisory Council, the District Parent Advisory Council, and the affected municipal councils in the District.
4. By March 1, the Board will consider the information received and decide if a facility is to be closed or reorganized on June 30 of the same year or the following September.
5. The alternate use of a closed facility will be considered in accordance with Administrative Procedure 561 – Use of Surplus School Facilities.

Legal Reference: Section 73, 96, 100, School Act
Ministerial Order

Board Minutes

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