

## **POLICY 15**

# **Pupil Accommodation**

The Renfrew County District School Board recognizes its responsibility to provide adequate accommodation for its students within the parameters of provincial policy and funding, and in accordance with its three key outcomes: excellence in teaching and learning; safe, caring and respectful learning environments; and wise use of resources.

The Renfrew County District School Board provides for a periodic review of its student accommodation needs with an orderly and fair process so that the Board and the school communities are well informed prior to any decision with respect to school closure and consolidation. This policy sets out the process by which the Board will review its school accommodation needs.

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

A School Accommodation Review will be conducted in accordance with following principles:

1. That programs and services for students are preserved or enhanced
2. That schools provide a safe environment conducive to learning
3. That resources made available for education are used to improve the quality of education

## **PLANNING PROCESS**

### **1. Staff Reports**

The Director of Education will review enrolment projections, program and staffing needs, operating costs, school capacity and the condition of school facilities within each planning area (family of schools) on a regular basis. The Director of Education will periodically report to the Board with recommendations regarding the advisability of initiating a school accommodation review.

### **2. Board Decision**

The Board may, prior to initiating an accommodation review, share information contained in the reports from the Director of Education, with employee groups, school councils and municipalities in order to alert its stakeholders about potential accommodation issues and to seek advice.

An accommodation review will normally focus on a group of schools within a planning area rather than a single school. However, geographic circumstances may cause the scope of the review to be limited to a single school.

Where the Board determines it will proceed with an accommodation review, the Board will, by resolution, initiate such review and in so doing define the planning area and the school(s) involved. The Board will give notice that the consultation process will begin in no fewer than sixty (60) days.

## **ACCOMMODATION REVIEW PROCESS**

### **1. Board Appoints Accommodation Review Committee (ARC)**

The Renfrew County District School Board will appoint an Accommodation Review Committee (ARC) in each planning area where it has determined that school consolidation and closure is a possibility. Membership of the ARC will include:

- (a) two Trustees, normally one from the area in which the schools considered for consolidation and closure are situated and one from outside that area;
- (b) one Superintendent, who will act as chair of the committee;
- (c) one Principal or Vice-Principal, not currently assigned to any school in the family of schools where the school(s) under consideration are situated;
- (d) a parent representative from the school council of each school under consideration;
- (e) A representative, having business or municipal experience, from the larger community.

### **2. Responsibilities of Accommodation Review Committee (ARC)**

- (a) To conduct a review of current and proposed school accommodation plans and to make public all information related to the review process.
- (b) To customize the generic School Valuation Framework, make it public, and use it to elicit input on the value of the school(s) to students, the school board, the community and the local economy.
- (c) To seek input from school councils (representing students, parents, guardians, staff and the local community) of the school(s) under review, and to hold no fewer than four public meetings to seek input from a wide range of school and community groups.
- (d) To provide a report of findings with recommendations to Board administration, taking into account the Board's key outcomes of excellence in teaching and learning, safe, caring and respectful learning environments, and wise use of resources.

As Chair of the ARC, the Superintendent will assume the following duties: confirm and circulate meeting agendas; ensure meeting minutes are kept, approved and made public; ensure all relevant information is publicly available; ensure notice is given of public meetings; coordinate the community consultation and public meetings; provide assistance in preparation of the School Valuation Report.

3. **Staff Presents Reports and Information to the ARC**

The ARC will review staff reports and will be presented with potential alternative accommodation plans for the students of the school(s) under review, which take into account the following considerations:

- (a) enrolments, school capacity, school boundaries and attendance areas;
- (b) program implications for students - staffing and resources;
- (c) building condition - operating costs and capital (facility renewal) implications;
- (d) transportation services.

4. **ARC Customizes the School Valuation Framework (SVF)**

The ARC will customize the generic School Valuation Framework (attached) so that it is appropriate to the school(s) under review and will make it public prior to public consultations. The customized SVF must include all four components: value of the school to students, to the school board, to community and to the local economy.

5. **ARC Shares Information and Seeks Input through Community Consultation and Public Meetings**

The ARC will ensure that all information relevant to the accommodation review is made public, including staff reports and information used to determine the value of the school(s) to students, the school board, the community and the local economy. Technical information is to be explained in plain language.

The ARC consultation period must be a minimum of ninety (90) days.

The ARC will consult with school councils and a wide range of school and community groups, using the School Valuation Framework to elicit input on the value of the school(s), and seeking feedback on options for accommodating students who would be affected by school closure.

The ARC will hold no fewer than four public meetings, located where possible at the school(s) under review, with notice and relevant information publicized in advance. At least three meetings are held for the purposes of seeking input prior to drafting a report - the final meeting is to present the ARC report with recommendations.

Meetings are to be structured to encourage an open and informed exchange of views and minutes reflecting the full range of views expressed at the meeting are to be kept and made publicly available. There must be a process in place to respond to questions raised at the meetings that cannot be answered at the meetings.

## 6. **ARC Finalizes School Valuation Report and Recommendations**

The ARC will complete a School Valuation Report for each school being reviewed, using the customized School Valuation Framework and taking into consideration the needs of all students attending schools that would be impacted by a decision to close and consolidate schools. The value of the school to the students is to be weighed above the other considerations. The report will include a summary of findings and recommendations regarding the future of the school(s) being reviewed.

The ARC will share the School Valuation Report with the community at a public meeting and may incorporate feedback from the meeting into the report.

The ARC will submit the final version of its report to school board administration, at which time it will be made accessible to trustees and the public and there will be notice of the meeting date at which the Board will make its determination. There must be no fewer than sixty (60) days notice.

## 7. **Staff Reports**

School board staff will review and analyze the ARC report and present the findings and recommendations to the Board along with staff proposals and recommendations, all of which will be considered by the Board, or a committee of the Board, in open session.

The Board, prior to making its determination, will make public the information contained in the staff reports and provide opportunity for input.

## 8. **Board Decision**

The Board will make the final decision regarding school consolidation and school closure in open session at a meeting of the Board. A resolution to close a school will include a clear timeline for closure.

# TRANSITION PROCESS

## 1. **Board Appoints Transition Team**

A transition team will be formed in each planning area where a school is being closed and students are to be accommodated at nearby schools. Membership of each transition team will include at a minimum:

- (a) the Superintendent of the schools, as chair;
- (b) the Principal or Vice-Principal of the school being closed and of the school(s) accommodating the students;

- (c) a staff member from the school being closed and of the school(s) accommodating the students so that both teaching and support staff are represented;
- (d) a parent from the school council of the school being closed and of the school(s) accommodating the students.

Others (e.g. additional staff or parent representatives, student representative, plant department representative) may be included at the discretion of the chair of the transition team.

## 2. **Responsibilities of Transition Team**

- (a) To seek input and provide advice and assistance with regard to facilitating interaction of students and families from the closing and receiving schools, and to do so within available budget.
- (b) To provide advice to senior administration regarding the disposition of materials and equipment from the school being closed to the receiving school(s).
- (c) Through the Superintendent, to report on activities and to advise the Board of matters needing its consideration and the team's advice, if any, on such matters.

Transition teams will meet a minimum of three times and may meet more frequently at the discretion of the Superintendent as chair.

## **ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS**

### 1. **Summary of Minimum Timelines**

After the Board has publicly announced its intention to conduct an accommodation review of a school or schools, there must be at least sixty (60) days' notice prior to the first public meeting of the ARC.

Beginning with the first public meeting of the ARC, the public consultation period must be no fewer than ninety (90) days.

After the submission of the School Valuation Report, there must be at least sixty (60) days' notice prior to the meeting at which the Board makes its determination on the matter of school consolidation.

School holidays (summer, Christmas and March break) are excluded from the time periods.

## 2. **Where School Accommodation Policy Does Not Apply**

This policy applies to schools offering elementary or secondary regular day-school programs and does not apply to adult, alternative or continuing education sites.

In the following circumstances, this policy does not apply:

- where a replacement school is to be rebuilt by the Board on the existing site or within the existing school attendance boundary;
- when a lease for space is terminated;
- when grades or programs are relocated and the enrolment in these grades or program constitutes less than 50% of the total school enrolment;
- when students must be temporarily relocated to ensure safety during a school renovation; and
- where a facility has been serving as a holding school while the permanent school was under construction or repair.

## 3. **Review of Process**

An individual or group may seek a review of the Board's school accommodation process in accordance with the Ministry of Education document, *Administrative Review of Accommodation Review Process*.

Legal Reference:

*Ministry Memorandum 2006:B12 - Pupil Accommodation Review Guidelines*

Attachment:

*School Valuation Framework*

Ministry Links:

*Pupil Accommodation Review Guidelines*

[http://bmemos.edu.gov.on.ca/Memos/B2006/B\\_12E%20Attach%20Pupil%20Accommodation%20Review%20Guidelines.pdf](http://bmemos.edu.gov.on.ca/Memos/B2006/B_12E%20Attach%20Pupil%20Accommodation%20Review%20Guidelines.pdf)

*Administrative Review of Accommodation Review Process*

[http://bmemos.edu.gov.on.ca/Memos/B2006/B\\_12E%20Attach%20Administrative%20Review%20of%20Accommodation.pdf](http://bmemos.edu.gov.on.ca/Memos/B2006/B_12E%20Attach%20Administrative%20Review%20of%20Accommodation.pdf)



## RENFREW COUNTY DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

*Excellence in Teaching and Learning  
Safe, Caring and Respectful Learning Environments  
Wise Use of Resources*

### **SCHOOL VALUATION FRAMEWORK**

#### **Value to Student**

***(The valuation assessment is to weigh the value of the school to the student above all other considerations)***

- Quality of the learning environment at the school: school climate and culture; availability of specialized teaching and support staff; class sizes - triple grading avoided.
- Student outcomes at the school: academic achievement and character development.
- Range of course or program offerings: e.g. FSL, special education, literacy, character education, secondary program pathways.
- Range of extracurricular activities and extent of student participation.
- Adequacy of the school's physical space to support learning for all students: e.g. library, computer lab, gymnasium, special education rooms, subject specific rooms.
- Adequacy of the school's grounds for healthy physical activity and extracurricular activities.
- Accessibility of the school for students with disabilities.
- Safety of the school, including yard and bus safety.
- Proximity of the school to students/length of bus ride to school: reasonable ride times for JK-12.

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

- Student outcomes at the school: e.g. EQAO results, graduation rates.
- Range of program or course offerings: e.g. preserving or enhancing mandatory programs, innovative or optional programs, literacy intervention, student support.
- Availability of specialized teaching spaces to support programming: e.g. special education, technological studies, adult learning.
- Condition and location of school: maintenance and repairs; health and safety - well water, air quality, compliance with fire, electrical, TSSA codes, proximity to hazards, location of school office; accessibility - elevator, ramps, single level construction.
- Value of the school if it is the only school within the community: sustaining JK-12 programs.
- 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, availability of grants to offset costs).
- Human resources: professional learning community, administration and support staff, parent involvement, school council, community partners.

#### **Value to the Community**

- Facility for community use: actual level of use.
- Range of program offerings at the school that serve both students and community members: e.g. fitness and nutrition programs.
- School grounds as green space and/or available for recreational use.
- School as a partner in other government initiatives in the community: e.g. joint use agreements, emergency evacuation site.
- Value of the school if it is the only school within the community: availability of alternative sites for community use, involvement of community in school and school staff in community - social interaction (carnivals, fun nights).

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

- School as a local employer.
- Availability of cooperative education and future employment opportunities in community.
- Availability of training opportunities or partnerships with business.
- Attracts or retains families in the community: demographics, enrolment projections.
- Value of the school if it is the only school within the community: part of rural infrastructure, potential alternate uses (e.g. child care).
- Community economic development planning: sustainability, diversification, growth.