



The Northwest Catholic District School Board

Section	Number	
D	1	0

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

Title: Pupil Accommodation Review

Preamble:

When considering the closure or consolidation of schools, the decision must be made with full involvement of the local community and be based on a broad range of criteria regarding quality of education for the school's students. The Board recognizes the vital role schools play in their communities and in student achievement and well-being.

It is the intent to have the Board consider the value of a school to its students and to the local community when considering school closure and consolidation.

Procedures:

A. Establishing a Pupil Accommodation Review (PAR)

- a) The Board may proceed to establish a pupil accommodation review only after undertaking the necessary assessment of long-term capital and accommodation planning options for the school(s).
- b) Prior to establishing a pupil accommodation review, Board administration staff must provide an initial staff report to the Board of Trustees. The initial staff report must contain one or more options to address the accommodation issue(s), with supporting rationale. If more than one option is presented, there must be a recommended option. The report must also include information on actions taken by Board administration staff prior to establishing a pupil accommodation review process and supporting rationale as to any actions taken or not taken.
- c) The option(s) included in the initial staff report must address the following:
 - i. Summary of accommodation issue(s) for the school(s) under review;
 - ii. Where students would be accommodated;
 - iii. If proposed changes to existing facility or facilities are required as a result of the pupil accommodation review;
 - iv. Identify any program changes as a result of the proposed option;
 - v. How student transportation would be affected if changes take place;
 - vi. If new capital investment is required as a result of the pupil accommodation review, how the School Board intends to fund this, as well as a proposal on

- how students would be accommodated if funding does not become available;
 - vii. Any relevant information obtained from municipalities and other community partners prior to the commencement of the pupil accommodation review, including any confirmed interest in using the underutilized space; and,
 - viii. A timeline for implementation.
- d) Identification and consideration of schools will be subject to factors. The factors that may be considered for potential school closure are as follows:
- i. Under capacity enrolment – where a school has enrolment of less than 50% of Ministry rated pupil capacity of the facility;
 - ii. Where sufficient space exists in another school within the school's community and where students would benefit from an enhanced learning environment by being centralized in a centrally located facility;
 - iii. Where the physical condition of the facility is sufficiently poor that it qualifies as a prohibitive to repair school as determined by the Ministry;
 - iv. Where repair and/or utility and operating costs to bring and/or maintain the school to a condition that would provide a reasonable learning environment for students are so prohibitive it is more cost effective to either construct a new facility or consolidate students to an existing school;
 - v. Where a school is unable to be operated due to a health or physical hazard. An example of a health hazard is excessive mold and a physical hazard is fire damage where it is not practical to repair the school; or,
 - vi. Where a school is unable to provide qualified staff.
- e) The Ministry of Education recommends that, wherever possible, schools should only be subject to a PAR once in a five-year period, unless there are circumstances determined by the Board, such as a significant change in enrolment.
- f) The application of the PAR does not apply in the following circumstances:
- i. Where a replacement school is to be built on the existing site, or built or acquired within the existing school attendance boundary, as identified through the Board's existing procedures;
 - ii. Where a replacement school is to be built on the existing site, or built or acquired within the existing school attendance boundary and the school community must be temporarily relocated to ensure the safety of students and staff during the reconstruction, as identified through the Board's existing procedures;
 - iii. When a lease for the school is terminated;
 - iv. When the Board is planning the relocation (in any school year or over a number of school years) of a grade or grades, or a program, in which the enrolment constitutes less than 50% of the school's enrolment; (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);

- v. When a school is being repaired/renovated and the school community must be temporarily relocated to ensure the safety of students during the renovations;
 - vi. 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; or,
 - vii. Where there are no students enrolled at the school at any time throughout the school year.
- g) In the circumstances noted under item (e), the Board is expected to inform school communities about proposed accommodation plans for students before a decision is made by the Board of Trustees. The Board will also provide written notice to each of the affected single and upper-tier municipalities through the Clerks Department (or equivalent), as well as other community partners that expressed an interest prior to the exemption, and their coterminous school boards in the areas of the affected school(s) through the Director of Education, and to the Ministry of Education through the Assistant Deputy Minister of the Financial Policy and Business Division no fewer than 5 business days after the decision to proceed with an exemption. A transition plan will be put in place following the Board of Trustees' decision to consolidate, close or move a school or students in accordance with this section.

B. The Accommodation Review Committee

- a) The Board must establish an Accommodation Review Committee (ARC) that represents the school(s) under review and acts as the official conduit for information shared between the Board and the school communities. The ARC may comment on the initial staff report and may, throughout the PAR process, seek clarification of the initial staff report. The ARC may provide other accommodation options than those in the initial staff report; however, it must include supporting rationale for any such option. The ARC members do not need to achieve consensus regarding the information provided to the Board of Trustees.
- b) The ARC should be formed following the Board of Trustees' consideration of the initial staff report but prior to the first public meeting. The Board will invite ARC members from the school(s) under review to an orientation session that will describe the mandate, roles and responsibilities, and procedures of the ARC.
- c) The Board administration staff assigned to the ARC is required to compile feedback from the ARC as well as the broader community in the Community Consultation section of the final staff report to be presented to the Board of Trustees.
- d) The membership of the ARC will include parent/guardian representatives from each of the schools under review, chosen by their respective school communities. The ARC will also include representatives from the respective Parish communities and from the local First Nation communities with which the Board has tuition fee agreements.

- e) Trustees are not required to serve on the ARC.
- f) Participation on the committee will not be considered where a conflict of interest exists.
- g) The Board will provide the ARC with Terms of Reference that describe 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 and well-being.
- h) The Terms of Reference will clearly outline the Board's expectations of the roles and responsibilities of the ARC and describe the procedures of the ARC. At a minimum, the ARC will provide feedback on the initial staff report option(s).
- i) The Terms of Reference will outline the minimum number of working meetings of the ARC. The ARC will meet to review materials presented by Board administration staff. The ARC will hold as many working meetings as is deemed necessary within the timelines established in this procedure

C. School Information Profile

- a) Board administration staff is required to develop a School Information Profile (SIP) for each school identified for review under (A) above as orientation documents to help the ARC and the community understand the context surrounding the decision to include the specific school(s) in a pupil accommodation review. The SIP provides an understanding of and familiarity with the facilities under review.

The SIP is expected to include data for each of the following two considerations about the school(s) under review:

- Value to the student; and
 - Value to the School Board.
- b) A SIP will be completed by School Board staff for each of the school(s) under review. The minimum data requirements and factors that are to be included in the SIP are listed in Section VIII of the Ministry of Education Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline. This includes a Facility Profile, Instructional Profile, and Other School Use Profile.
- c) Each school under review will have a SIP completed at the same point-in-time for comparison purposes. The Ministry of Education expects the Board to prepare SIPs that are complete and accurate, to the best of the School Board's ability, prior to the commencement of a pupil accommodation review.
- d) The Board may introduce additional items that could be used to reflect local circumstances and priorities, which may help to further understand the school(s) under review.

D. Consultation with Local Municipal Governments

- a) Following the Board of Trustees' approval to undertake a pupil accommodation review, School Boards must invite affected single and upper-tier municipalities as well as other community partners that expressed an interest prior to the PAR to discuss and comment on the recommended option(s) in the Board's initial staff report.
- b) The invitation for this meeting will be provided through a written notice, and will be directed through the Clerks Department (or equivalent) for the affected single and upper-tier municipalities.
- c) The affected single and upper-tier municipalities, as well as other community partners that expressed an interest prior the PAR, must provide their response on the recommended option(s) in the Board's initial staff report before the final public meeting. The Board must provide them with advance notice of when the final public meeting is scheduled to take place.
- d) The Board must document its efforts to meet with the affected single and upper-tier municipalities, as well as other community partners that expressed an interest prior to the PAR; and provide any relevant information from this meeting as part of the final staff report to the Board of Trustees.

E. Public Meetings

- a) Once the Board has received an initial staff report and has approved the initiation of a PAR, the Board must arrange to hold a minimum of two public meetings facilitated by Board administration staff to solicit broader community feedback on the recommended option(s) contained in the initial staff report.
- b) The public meetings are to be announced and advertised publicly by the Board through an appropriate range of media as determined by the Board.
- c) At a minimum, the first public meeting must include the following:
 - i. An overview of the ARC orientation session;
 - ii. The initial staff report with recommended option(s); and,
 - iii. A presentation of the SIPs.
- d) The Board will ensure that all information relevant to the review is made available to the public by posting it in a prominent location on the Board's website or in print, upon request. The initial staff report and School Information Profiles must be included. Where relevant information is technical in nature, it is to be explained in plain language.
- e) The public meetings must be held at the school(s) under review, if possible, or in a nearby facility if physical accessibility cannot be provided at the school(s), with the option to attend by video-conference or teleconference. 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

F. Completing the Accommodation Review

- a) At the conclusion of the PAR process, Board administration staff will submit a final staff report to the Board of Trustees, which will be made available to the public by posting it in a prominent location on the Board's website or in print, upon request.
- b) The final staff report must include a Community Consultation section that contains feedback from the ARC and any public consultations as well as any relevant information obtained from municipalities and other community partners prior to and during the PAR.
- c) Board administration staff may choose to amend its proposed option(s) included in the initial staff report. The recommended option(s) must also include a proposed accommodation plan, prepared for the decision of the Board of Trustees, which contains a timeline for implementation.
- d) Once Board administration staff submits the final staff report to the Board of Trustees, the Board must allow an opportunity for members of the public to provide feedback on the final staff report through public delegations to the Board of Trustees. Notice of the public delegation opportunities will be provided based on Board Governance By-Laws. After the public delegations, Board administration staff will compile feedback from the public delegations which will be presented to the Board of Trustees with the final staff report.
- e) The Board of Trustees will be provided with the final staff report, including the compiled feedback from the public delegations, when making its final decision regarding the pupil accommodation review.
- f) The Board of Trustees has the discretion to approve the recommendation(s) of the final staff report as presented, modify the recommendation(s) of the final staff report, or to approve a different outcome.
- g) The Ministry of Education encourages the Board not to make final PAR decision during the summer holiday period.

G. Transition Planning

- a) The transition of students should be carried out in consultation with parents/guardians and staff. Following the decision to consolidate and/or close a school, the Board is expected to establish a separate committee to address the transition for students and staff.

H. Timelines for an Accommodation Review Process

- a) Following the date of the Board of Trustees' approval to conduct a PAR, the Board will provide written notice of the Board of Trustees' decision within five business days to each of the affected single and upper-tier municipalities through the Clerks Department (or equivalent), other community partners that expressed an interest prior to the PAR; and include an invitation for a meeting to discuss and comment on the recommended option(s) in the Board's initial staff report.

The Board must also notify the Director(s) of Education of its coterminous School Boards and the Ministry of Education through the office of the Assistant Deputy Minister of the Financial Policy and Business Division.

- b) The affected single and upper-tier municipalities, as well as other community partners that expressed an interest prior to the PAR, must provide their response on the recommended option(s) in the Board’s initial staff report before the final public meeting.
- c) Beginning with the date of the Board of Trustees’ approval to conduct a PAR, there must be no fewer than 30 business days before the first public meeting is held.
- d) There must be a minimum period of 40 business days between the first and final public meetings.
- e) The final staff report must be publicly posted no fewer than 10 business days after the final public meeting.
- f) From the posting of the final staff report, there must be no fewer than 10 business days before the public delegations.
- g) There must be no fewer than 10 business days between public delegations and the final decision of the Board of Trustees.

Cross Reference to Administrative Procedures/Governance Policies		Date of Implementation April 17, 2007	Legal/Ministry of Education Reference
Section	Number		Education Act s.8(1) paragraph 26
D	13	Date of Last Review October 2015	Ministry of Education Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline March 2015
			Ministry of Education Community Planning and Partnerships Guideline March 2015