



To nurture curiosity, resilience and joy in all

POLICY ~~1330-560~~ SCHOOL CLOSURE

The Board of Education is responsible under the *School Act* for the effective and efficient operation of schools in the District.

The Board may consider closing schools for a variety of reasons, some of which include:

- declining student enrolment such that ~~the a~~ school is no longer educationally, economically or operationally viable;
- restructuring of educational programs, consolidation of operations and relocation of students to other schools in the ~~School~~ District which results in ~~the a~~ school being deemed surplus to the District's educational needs; or
- ~~the a~~ school is being replaced on a new site with a newly constructed school.

The closure of schools ~~has can have~~ significant impacts and therefore the Board will follow a process that provides adequate opportunity to consult with the community and relevant constituencies and those who will be affected prior to any final decision being made.

Guidelines

REGULATIONS

1. Process

1. Consideration of Possible School Closure

1.1. The Board may, by resolution or bylaw passed at an open meeting of the Board, of which at least two weeks' notice to the public of the matter to be considered, determine to consider the closure of one or more schools. Should such a bylaw or resolution pass, the Board will embark on a consultation process to determine whether to move forward with a bylaw to close that or those schools.

~~1.1. First reading of a by-law to consider closure of one or more schools will be voted on at an open meeting of the board, of which parents, staff and the community have received at least two weeks' notice of this agenda item.~~

- ~~1.2. A decision to consider a school closure will be followed by a public consultation period of at least 60 days undertaken by the Board and the Board will give fair consideration to public input prior to making a final decision on any proposed closure of a school. The purpose of the consultative process is to ensure that all points of view and viable options are considered. Fair consideration includes the concept that the proposal to close a school could be changed or reversed.~~
- ~~1.3. The final decision on a school closure will be voted on by giving second and third reading of a bylaw at one or more open Board meetings.~~

2. Public Consultation

- 2.1. There shall be a public consultation period following a decision to consider the closure of a school but preceding the decision whether to close a school or not of at least 60 days undertaken by the Board and its staff. The Board will give fair consideration to public input prior to making a final decision on any proposed closure of a school. The final decision on a school closure will be made at one or more public meetings to consider three readings of a bylaw for that purpose.
- 2.2. The consultation process ~~should~~ shall provide an opportunity for the community and relevant constituencies and particularly those who will be affected by a proposed closure to participate in the process. The Board will take the following steps to ensure that an open, meaningful public consultation will take place:
- 2.3. The Board will make available to the public, in writing, pertinent facts and information that may be considered by the Board with respect to school closure, including but not limited to:
- 2.3.1. reasons for the proposed school closure;
 - 2.3.2. the specific school that is being considered for closure
 - 2.3.3. how the proposed closure would affect the catchment areas of affected schools;
 - 2.3.4. the general effect on surrounding schools;
 - 2.3.5. the number of students who would be affected, at both the closed school and surrounding schools;
 - 2.3.6. the effect of the proposed closure on district-provided student transportation;
 - 2.3.7. educational program/course implications for the affected students;
 - 2.3.8. the proposed effective date for the closure
 - 2.3.9. financial considerations;
 - 2.3.10. impact on the Board's capital plan;
 - 2.3.11. possible alternative community use of all or part of the school; and
 - 2.3.12. proposed use of the closed school(s) including potential lease or sale.

3. Process

3.1. The Board shall follow the following process for considering the closure of a school, with such amendments as may be determined by the Board and its staff to be appropriate in the circumstances.

3.2. The Board will hold at least one public meeting to discuss the proposed closure, summarize written submissions and listen to community concerns and proposed options.

3.3. The Board may hold a second public meeting to discuss the proposed closure, summarize written submissions, and listen to community concerns and proposed options.

3.4. At least one (1) public meeting shall be located at the school designated for closure or a suitable facility in the community the school is located in.

3.5. The time and location of any public meeting will be appropriately advertised to ensure adequate advance notification to affected persons or groups in the community. This will include written notification to students and/or parents/guardians of students currently attending a potentially closed school, a clearly visible notice in any local newspaper and electronic posting on the district's website.

3.6. The Board will summarize the following at the beginning of any public forum::

3.6.1. implications of the proposed closure;

3.6.2. implementation plans, including the timing of the proposed closure;

3.6.3. options that the Board considered as alternatives to the proposed closure;

3.6.4. assessment of projected growth in the area of the school;

3.6.5. summary of written submissions presented to the Board by members of the community;

3.6.6. possible future uses for the school building/property; and

3.6.7. other information considered significant with respect to any school closure decision.

3.7. Minutes will be kept of any public meeting to record concerns or options raised regarding the proposed closure.

3.8. The Board will provide an adequate opportunity (no less than 21 calendar days) for affected persons members of the community to submit a written response to any proposed school closure.; Information and directions on how to submit a written response to the Board shall be articulated provided. The information and directions should shall advise

potential correspondents that their written response may be referred to at subsequent public forums made public as part of the closure process, respecting the closure, unless the correspondent specifically states in the written response that the correspondent wishes his or her name and address to remain confidential, and that is permitted by the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

3.9. Records will be maintained of all consultation, including: advertising, agenda, minutes, dates of consultations, working group and public community consultation meetings, copies of information provided at these meetings, names of trustees/district staff who attended these meetings, a record of individuals attending public community consultation meetings, a record of questions asked, and responses given and any other related correspondence to and from the Board.

4. Decision

~~2.1.~~

~~2.2.~~

~~2.3. The time and place of public meetings should be appropriately advertised to ensure adequate advance notification to affected persons in the community. Fourteen (14) days advance notification shall be provided. Generally, this will mean a letter will be sent to homes of students in both the school being considered for closure and the school(s) receiving new students via Canada Post. A notice shall be placed in a local newspaper as well as notice to local governments and to all users of the school space who have ongoing written agreements or leases.~~

~~2.4.~~

~~2.5. At least one (1) public meeting shall be located at the school designated for closure or a suitable facility in the community the school is located in.~~

~~2.6.~~

~~2.7. The Board should take the following steps to ensure that an open and meaningful public consultation has taken place:~~

~~2.8.~~

~~2.9. Make available at a public meeting, a full disclosure of all facts and information considered by the school board with respect to any proposed school closure including:~~

~~2.10. —~~

~~2.11. — which specific school(s) are being considered for closure;~~

~~2.12. — the proposed effective date of the closure(s);~~

~~2.13. — reasons and implications for the proposed school closure~~

~~2.14. — how the proposed closure would affect the current catchment area for each school;~~

~~2.15. — the general effect on surrounding schools;~~

~~2.16. — the number of students who would be affected at both the closed school(s) and surrounding schools;~~

- ~~2.17. consideration of future enrolment growth of persons of school age, of less than school age and adults;~~
- ~~2.18. the effect of proposed closures on board-provided student transportation;~~
- ~~2.19. educational program/course implications for the affected students;~~
- ~~2.20. financial considerations;~~
- ~~2.21. impact on the Board's five year capital plan;~~
- ~~2.22. possible alternative community use of all or part of the school;~~
- ~~2.23. proposed use of the closed school(s) including potential lease or sale.~~

~~2.24.1.1. Provide an adequate opportunity (no less than 21 calendar days) for affected persons to submit a written response to any proposed school closure; information and directions on how to submit a written response to the Board shall be articulated. The information and directions should advise potential correspondents that their written response may be referred to at subsequent public forums respecting the closure, unless the correspondent specifically states in the written response that the correspondent wishes his or her name and address to remain confidential.~~

~~2.25. —~~

~~2.26. — Hold a second public meeting to discuss the proposed closure, summarize written submissions, and listen to community concerns and proposed options.~~

~~2.27. —~~

~~2.28. — Maintain records of all consultation, including: advertising, agenda, minutes, dates of consultations, working group and public community consultation meetings, copies of information provided at these meetings, names of trustees/district staff who attended these meetings, a record of individuals attending public community consultation meetings, a record of questions asked, and responses given and any other related correspondence to and from the Board.~~

~~2.29. —~~

~~2.30. — The information gathered during the consultation process will be considered by the Board prior to making a final decision. The Board may vote to close the school, not to close the school, or on an alternate option make another decision, based on the results of the consultation process, which may include engaging in further consultation on other options other than the school closure under consideration. Additional consultation may be undertaken if the recommendations on closure are substantially different from those originally proposed.~~

~~4.1. —~~

3.5. Notification to the Minister

~~3.1.~~ If the Board decides to permanently close a school under Section 73 of the School Act, the Board must, without delay, provide the Minister with written notification of the decision containing the following information:

~~3.2.5.1.~~

~~5.1.1.~~ the school's name;

~~3.2.1.~~ —

~~3.2.2.~~ the school's facility number;

~~5.1.2.~~ —

~~3.2.3.~~ the school's address; and

~~5.1.3.~~ —

~~3.2.4.5.1.4.~~ the date on which the school will close.