

## **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 guiding principles: 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.

## **PRINCIPLES**

A School Accommodation Review will be conducted in accordance with the 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. Planning will take into account opportunities for partnerships with other school boards and appropriate public organizations that are financially sustainable, safe for students, and protect the core values and objectives of the board. 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 less than thirty (30) calendar 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) one superintendent, who will act as Chair of the committee;
- (b) one principal or vice-principal, not currently assigned to any school in the family of schools where the school(s) under consideration are situated;
- (c) a parent representative from the School Council of each school under consideration;
- (d) a representative, having business or municipal experience, from the larger community.

Membership may include:

- (e) two trustees, normally one from the area in which the schools considered for consolidation and closure are situated and one from outside that area.

### **2. Terms of Reference**

Senior Administration will provide the ARC with a Terms of Reference that describes 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. The Terms of Reference will contain Reference Criteria that frame the parameters of ARC discussion. The Reference Criteria include the educational and accommodation criteria for examining schools under review and accommodation options. Examples may include:

- (a) enrolments, school capacity, school utilization, school boundaries and attendance areas;
- (b) program implications for students – staffing and resources;

- (c) building condition – operating costs and capital (financial renewal) implications;
- (d) transportation services;
- (e) financial analysis.

The Terms of Reference will identify ARC membership and the role of voting and non-voting members, including board and school administration. The Terms of Reference will also describe the procedures for the ARC, including meetings; material, support, and analysis to be provided by board administration; and the material to be produced by the ARC.

The board will inform the ARC at the beginning of the process about partnership opportunities.

### **3. School Information Profile (SIP)**

Board administration will develop a School Information Profile (SIP) to help the ARC and the community understand how well schools meet the objectives and the Reference Criteria outlined in the Terms of Reference. The School Information Profile includes data for each of the following four considerations about the school(s): value of the school to students, to the school board, to community and to the local economy. It is recognized that the school's value to the student takes priority over other considerations about the school. A School Information Profile will be completed by board administration for each of the schools under review. If multiple schools within the same planning area are being reviewed together, the same Profile must be used for each school. The completed School Information Profile(s) will be provided to the ARC to discuss, consult on, modify based on new or improved information, and finalize.

### **4. 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 discuss, consult on, modify and finalize one School Information Profile based on new or improved information.
- (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 guiding principles 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 Information Profile.

##### **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 Information Profile 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. ARCs and board administration are to respond to questions they consider relevant to the ARC at meetings or in writing appended to the minutes of the meeting and made available on the board's website.

##### **6. ARC Finalizes Accommodation Report and Recommendations**

The ARC will produce an Accommodation Report that will make accommodation recommendation(s) consistent with the objectives and Reference Criteria outlined in the Terms of Reference. The report will include a summary of findings and recommendations regarding the future of the school(s) being reviewed.

The ARC will share the Accommodation 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 intention to conduct an accommodation review of a school or schools has been announced by the school board, there must be **no less than 30 calendar days notice** prior to the first of a minimum of four public meetings.

Beginning with the first public meeting, the public consultation period must be no less than 90 calendar days.

After the ARC completes its Accommodation Report it is to make the document publicly available and submit the document to the school board administration. After the submission of the Accommodation Report, there must be **no less than 60 calendar days notice** prior to the meeting where the Board of Trustees will vote on the recommendations.

Summer vacation, Christmas break and Spring break, including adjacent weekends, must not be considered part of the 30, 60 or 90 calendar day 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 2009:B7 - Pupil Accommodation Review Guidelines*

Attachment:

*School Information Profile*

Ministry Links:

*Pupil Accommodation Review Guidelines*

[http://bmemos.edu.gov.on.ca/Memos/B2009/B-07.pdf\\_12E%20Attach%20Pupil%20Accommodation%20Review%20Guidelines.pdf](http://bmemos.edu.gov.on.ca/Memos/B2009/B-07.pdf_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 INFORMATION PROFILE

#### **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.