



# ALGONQUIN AND LAKESHORE CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

## ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

### PUPIL ACCOMMODATION REVIEW (Policy Statement: Pupil Accommodation Review)

#### Purpose

This Policy implements the Pupil Accommodation Review Guidelines (PARG) released by the Ministry of Education on June 26, 2009. A copy of the Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline and the Ministry document entitled "Administrative Review of the Accommodation Review Process" along with this Policy will be posted on the website and will be made available at the head office of the Board.

#### References

*The Education Act*

*Ministry of Education's Pupil Accommodation Review Guidelines (June 26, 2009)*

#### Procedures

This policy applies to all schools within the jurisdiction of the Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic District School Board (hereinafter referred to as the "Board").

The Ministry Pupil Accommodation Review Guidelines states that, "wherever possible, accommodation reviews should focus on a group of schools within a Board's planning area rather than examine a single school". The goal of providing a suitable and equitable range of learning opportunities in a school or a group of schools requires monitoring and active curriculum and programming decisions. Decisions that might require consolidation, closure, or major program relocation should take into account the needs of all the students in all of the schools in a particular group. There may, however, be circumstances in which a single school should be studied for closure.

The PARG also requires that, "school boards are expected to undertake long-term enrolment and capital planning that will provide the context for accommodation review processes and decisions" and that "this planning should 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". Any decisions under this policy should therefore take into account the Board's Long-Term Capital Plan (LTCP).

The following are not actions to which this policy applies:

- Where a replacement school is to be rebuilt by the Board on the existing site, or rebuilt or acquired within the existing school attendance boundary as identified through the Board's existing policies;
- When a lease is terminated;
- 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, where the enrolment constitutes less than 50% of the enrolment of the school; 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;
- When the Board is repairing or renovating a school, and the school community must be temporarily relocated to ensure the safety of students during the renovations;
- 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.

### **Principles**

- The Board recognizes that it has a fundamental duty to provide educational programs, services and adequate accommodation during each school year for the pupils who have a right to attend a school under its jurisdiction.
- The Board acknowledges and accepts that the Catholic School serves as a centre for the local Catholic community and supports Church activities and the local Parish.
- The Board provides for each of its schools the appropriate staff complement to deliver the prescribed programs within economically feasible conditions.
- The Board acknowledges that the optimum use of school facilities may require the consolidation of schools.
- The Board endorses a process for considering the consolidation of schools that includes opportunities for community consultation and participation. The Board agrees with the Ministry of Education's observation in the document entitled *Good Places to Learn: Renewing Ontario Schools* released on February 17, 2005 (Ministry Memorandum 2005:B2) that, "the education program needs of students must lead decisions concerning buildings and grounds", and that "there is a strong link between the standard of the physical environment and good outcomes, such as better student performance and higher teacher retention".

## **Definitions**

**Ministry** - Ministry of Education for the Province of Ontario.

**Accommodation Review Committee (ARC)** - an advisory body established by the Board to conduct a public accommodation review of a school or group of schools, which must include membership drawn from the community.

**Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline (PARG)** - is a Ministry document that provides direction to the school boards regarding the public accommodation reviews undertaken to determine the future of a school or group of schools.

**Administrative Review of Accommodation Review Process** - is a Ministry document that sets out the conditions under which the Ministry may conduct a review of a school board's accommodation review process once the process is complete and once the Board of Trustees have made a decision.

**Average Daily Enrolment (ADE)** - the measure of enrolment used for Ministry funding purposes and which is calculated using two count dates within the school year: October 31st and March 31st. The fulltime equivalent of students enrolled in a board's schools are weighted at 0.5 for each of the count dates.

Junior Kindergarten (JK) and Senior Kindergarten (SK) pupils are counted as half time students. Where a school has implemented the Ministry's Early Learning Program, JK and SK pupils will be counted as full-time students.

**On the Ground Capacity (OTG)** - the rated capacity for a facility as indicated on the Ministry of Education School Facilities Inventory System.

**Operating Costs** - encompasses all of the expenditures required to operate the Board facilities including but not limited to heating, lighting, maintaining and cleaning.

**Long-Term Capital Plan (LTCP)** - the Board's flexible study identifying future school accommodation adjustments that are anticipated based on current and future enrolment projections. The LTCP identifies projects that the Board is considering over a 15 year period.

**Director of Education (Director)** - the Director of Education of the Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic District School Board.

### **1. Preliminary School Accommodation Review Report**

- 1.1 The Director or designate will present a preliminary report to the Board identifying a school or group of schools in which challenges may be faced in providing a suitable and equitable range of learning opportunities for students, and in respect of which there may be a need to consider the possible consolidation, closure or major program relocation in respect of one or more schools.

A school or group of schools may be considered for study if one or more of the following conditions apply:

- The school or group of schools is unable to provide a suitable and equitable range of learning opportunities for students;
- The school or group of schools has experienced or will experience an adverse impact on learning opportunities for students due to declining enrolment;
- Reorganization involving the school or group of schools could enhance program and learning opportunities for students;
- Teaching/learning spaces are not suitable to provide the programs needed to serve the community and retrofitting may be cost prohibitive;
- Under normal staffing allocation practices, it would be necessary to assign three grades to one class in one or more of the schools;
- One or more of the schools is experiencing higher building maintenance expenses than the average for the system and/or is in need of major capital improvements;
- In respect of one or more of the schools there are safety and/or environmental concerns attached to the building, the school site or its locality;
- The consolidation of schools is in the best interests of the overall school system;
- It has been no less than five years since the inception of a study of the school by an Accommodation Review Committee, except where extenuating circumstances warrant, such as an unexpected economic or demographic shift, or a change in a school's physical condition.

- 1.2 The Preliminary School Accommodation Review Report will include at least one alternative accommodation option. The option(s) will address where students would be accommodated; what changes to existing facilities may be required; what programs would be available to students and address transportation concerns. In the event the option(s) require a new capital investment, the Preliminary School Accommodation Review Report will advise on the availability of funding, and where no funding exists, will propose how students would be accommodated if funding does not become available.

## **2. Decision to Establish and Formation of the ARC**

- 2.1 After reviewing the Preliminary School Accommodation Review Report, the Board of Trustees may direct the formation of an ARC for a single school or group of schools.
- 2.2 Parent(s)/guardian(s), staff and Catholic School Council members of the affected school(s) will be informed in writing within seven (7) days of the Board's decision to form an ARC and the decision will be posted on the Board's website.
- 2.3 All notice periods within the ARC's schedule are based on calendar days. Summer vacation, Christmas break and Spring break, including adjacent weekends are not considered in the required 30, 60 or 90 calendar day periods set out in the PARG.
- 2.4 After the decision has been made to establish the ARC, written invitation will be forwarded to potential ARC members as identified in Appendix 1 – Accommodation Review Committee Terms of Reference, Section 2.0-Membership of the ARC, subsection 2.1.

## **3. Information to the ARC**

- 3.1 In accordance with the PARG, the Board shall provide the ARC with a copy of this policy. The

Terms of Reference (TOR) for the ARC which describes its mandate are attached as Appendix 1.

3.1.1 Prior to the commencement of any ARC, Board staff may revise the Terms of Reference if such revisions are warranted.

3.2 In accordance with the PARG, a School Information Profile (SIP) will be prepared by Board staff for each of the school(s) under review (refer to Form A). The profile will include data that addresses the following considerations about the school:

- Value to the Student
- Value to the School Board
- Value to the Community
- Value to the Local Economy

3.2.1 The completed SIP(s) will be provided to the ARC prior to or at its first working meeting. The SIP will also include in the following:

- The section of the Board's most recent LTCP that deals with the municipality or area under review;
- Relevant background information regarding the school(s) located within the area of the accommodation review.

3.2.2 The ARC will review the completed SIP(s) and have the opportunity to discuss, consult on, modify based on new or improved information and finalize the SIP(s). If there are multiple schools under review, the framework of the SIP must be the same for each school under review.

3.2.3 The ARC is to recognize that the school's value to the student takes priority over other considerations regarding the school.

3.2.4 Prior to the commencement of an ARC, Board staff may revise the questions contained in the SIP if such revisions are warranted.

3.3 In accordance with the PARG, the Board will inform the ARC at the beginning of the process about known or reasonably anticipated partnership opportunities, or lack thereof, as identified as part of the Board's long-term planning process.

#### **4. ARC Accommodation Report**

Through a series of working meetings and a minimum of four (4) public meetings, the ARC will in accordance with the PARG, author an Accommodation Report that will make accommodation recommendation(s) consistent with the objectives and Reference Criteria outlined in the TOR attached to this policy as Appendix 1. The ARC will deliver its Accommodation Report to the Director, who will have the ARC Accommodation Report posted on the Board's website. The ARC will present its Accommodation Report to the Board of Trustees.

## **5. Director's Report**

- 5.1 Administrative Council will review the recommendation(s) contained in the ARC Accommodation Report, and Board staff will prepare the Director's Report which will be presented to the Board of Trustees in public session at a regularly scheduled meeting or a special meeting.
- 5.2 The Director's Report will include the ARC Accommodation Report as an appendix.
- 5.3 The recommendation(s) accompanying the Director's Report may be one or more of the following:
- To maintain the school(s) and to continue to monitor it/them;
  - To reorganize the school(s), it/their program(s) or it/their grade structures, including any renovations or repairs that may be required;
  - To change the boundaries of the school(s);
  - To consolidate and/or close one or more of the schools
- 5.4 The Director's Report and recommendation(s) shall be made public and copies provided to the ARC a minimum of fourteen (14) calendar days prior to the Board Meeting for Public Input as outlined in Section 7.0 of this policy.
- 5.5 The Director's Report and recommendation(s), as well as the ARC Accommodation Report will be presented to the Board of Trustees in public session at a regularly scheduled meeting or a special meeting not less than thirty (30) calendar days after the ARC Accommodation Report has been delivered to the Director.

## **6. Board Meeting for Public Input**

- 6.1 In addition to the public input sought through the work of the ARC, the Board will hold a Meeting for Public Input no sooner than thirty (30) calendar days after the Director's Report is presented to the Board in public session. This is to provide an opportunity for the public to make formal representations to the Board concerning the Director's Report and the ARC Accommodation Report. The Meeting for Public Input may be scheduled as part of the Board's regularly scheduled meeting or a special meeting. On the date that the Board schedules the Board Meeting for Public Input, it will also schedule the Board Meeting to Decide on School Accommodation Review referred to in Section 9.0 of this policy.
- 6.2 A minimum of fourteen (14) calendar days notice of the Board Meeting for Public Input shall be provided via school newsletters, letters to the school community, Parish bulletins (where possible), the Board's website and advertisements in local community newspapers and shall include date, time, location, purpose, contact name and email address.

## **7. Director's Follow-Up Report to the Board**

- 7.1 Following the Board Meeting for Public Input, the Director will prepare a Follow-Up Report to the Board, reporting on and responding to the representations made by the Public for the next regularly scheduled meeting or special meeting. If warranted, the Director may revise the earlier recommendation(s) to the Board of Trustees.

- 7.2 The Director's Follow-Up Report to the Board will include copies of the presentations made by the public during the Board Meeting for Public Input and those received directly, as well as the Minutes of the Board Meeting for Public Input.
- 7.3 The Director's Follow-Up Report to the Board will be released publicly and be posted on the Board's website.

## **8. Board Meeting to Decide on School Accommodation Review**

- 8.1 Public notice of the meeting, at which the Board of Trustees will make its decision regarding the school accommodation review, will be provided through school newsletters, letters to the school community, Parish bulletins (where possible), the Board's website and advertisements in local community newspapers, and shall include date, time, location, purpose, contact name and email address, at least sixty (60) calendar days prior to the date of the Board meeting.
- 8.2 The Board of Trustees will make its decision regarding the school accommodation recommendation(s) addressed in the ARC Report, the Director's Report and the Director's Follow-Up Report to the Board at a regularly scheduled Board meeting or special meeting. This meeting will not occur sooner than sixty (60) calendar days after the presentation of the Director's Report, thirty (30) calendar days after the Board Meeting for Public Input and fifteen (15) calendar days after the Director's Follow-Up Report to the Board is released publicly in accordance with the PARG.
- 8.3 The Board of Trustees may make any accommodation decision that it deems advisable in relation to the school(s) under review by an ARC regardless of an ARC's recommendation(s).
- 8.4 If the Board of Trustees' decision is consolidation, closure or major program relocation, the following school year will be used to plan for and implement the Board's decision, except where the Board in consultation with the affected community, decides that earlier action is required. The Board decision will set clear timelines regarding consolidation, closure, or major program relocation.
- 8.5 Within fourteen (14) calendar days of the Board of Trustees' decision, Parent(s)/Guardian(s), Staff and School Council members of the potentially affected school(s) will be informed in writing, by the Board of its decision regarding the school consolidation, through their respective school(s), via school newsletters, letters to the school community, Parish bulletins (where possible) and the Board's website.

## **9. Administrative Review of Accommodation Review Process**

- 9.1 An individual or group may seek a review of the Board's accommodation review process in accordance with the Ministry's document entitled "Administrative Review of Accommodation Review Process" which is appended to this Policy as Appendix 3 and posted on the Board's website and available at the Catholic Education Centre upon request.
- 9.2 In accordance with the Administrative Review of Accommodation Review Process, an individual or group seeking a review of the Board's accommodation review process is required to demonstrate the support of a portion of the school community through the completion of a petition signed by a number of supporters equal to at least 30% of the affect school's student

headcount (i.e., If the headcount is 150, then 45 signatures would be required). Parents/Guardians of students and/or other individuals that participated in the accommodation review process are eligible to sign the petition.

**10. Table of ARC Timelines and Milestones**

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>BY WHOM</b>	<b>TO WHO</b>	<b>WHEN</b>	<b>PROVISION</b>
Presentation of the Preliminary School Accommodation Review Report to the Board	Director	Board	As a result of the School Accommodation Utilization Review	1.0
Decision to establish an ARC	Trustees	Public/ Board	As a result of the Preliminary School Accommodation Review Report	2.0
Notice of Board decision to establish an ARC	Director	Public/ Board	Within 7 days of decision*	2.2
Establishment of the membership of the ARC	Director	Public/ Board	Following the decision to establish an ARC	2.4
Delivery of School Information Profile Package to ARC	Staff	ARC	Prior to or at the first working meeting	3.2
Notice of first ARC Public Meeting	ARC	Public	At least 30 days prior to the meeting*	Appendix 1 – 8.3
First ARC Public Meeting	ARC	Public	As scheduled by ARC	Appendix 1 – 8.3
Notice of second ARC Public Meeting	ARC	Public	At least 14 days prior to the meeting*	Appendix 1 – 8.3
Second ARC Public Meeting	ARC	Public	As scheduled by ARC	Appendix 1 – 8.3
Notice of third ARC Public Meeting	ARC	Public	At least 14 days prior to the meeting*	Appendix 1 – 8.3
Third ARC Public Meeting	ARC	Public	As scheduled by ARC	Appendix 1 – 8.3
Notice of the fourth ARC Public Meeting	ARC	Public	At least 14 days prior to the meeting*	Appendix 1 – 8.3
Fourth ARC Public Meeting	ARC	Public	As scheduled by ARC	Appendix 1 – 8.3
Delivery of the ARC Accommodation Report	ARC	Director	Not earlier than 90 days not later than 120 days after ARC's first Public Meeting*	Appendix 1 - 9.1.3

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>BY WHOM</b>	<b>TO WHO</b>	<b>WHEN</b>	<b>PROVISION</b>
Presentation of the Director's Report and the ARC Accommodation Report	Director/ ARC	Public/ Board	Not less than 30 days after the ARC Accommodation Report was delivered to the Director*	5.5
Board Meeting for Public Input	Director	Public/ Board	As scheduled by the Board but not sooner than 30 days after the Director's Report and recommendation(s) are presented to the Board of Trustees in public session*	6.1
Notice of Board Meeting for Public Input	Director	Public/ Board	A minimum of 14 days notice of the Public Meeting*	6.2
Board Meeting for Public Input	Director	Public/ Board	Next regularly scheduled or special meeting	6.1
Director's Follow-Up Report to the Board	Director	Public/ Board	Following the Board Meeting for Public Input at a regularly scheduled or special meeting	7.1
Notice of Board Meeting to Decide on School Accommodation Review	Director	Public/ Board	60 days prior to the Board Meeting to Decide on School Accommodation Review*	8.1
Board Meeting to Decide on School Accommodation Review	Trustees	Public/ Board	At a regularly scheduled or special meeting which will not occur sooner than 60 days after the presentation of the Director's Report to the Board, 30 days after the Board Meeting for Public Input, and 15 days after the Director's Follow-Up Report to the Board is released publicly*	8.2
Notice of Decision on School Accommodation Review	Director	Public/ Board	Within 14 days of decision*	8.5

\*Calendar days, excluding from the calculation school holidays such as summer vacation, Christmas and Spring break, including adjacent weekends.

**Appendices**

Appendix 1: Terms of Reference

Appendix 2: Ministry of Education Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline

Appendix 3: Ministry of Education Administrative Review of Accommodation Review Process

**Forms**

Form A: School Information Profile (SIP)

**Associated Documents**

Approved: April 24, 2007

Revised: February 8, 2011