



Policy 4020
PERMANENT SCHOOL CLOSURES

Adopted: 2003-01-28	Reviewed:	Amended: 2009-04-28 2019-02-05
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SUBJECT: **PERMANENT SCHOOL CLOSURES**

The Board of Education is responsible to provide acceptable facilities for all students. The Board recognizes that program effectiveness must be balanced with operational efficiency, and to this end, school viability will be reviewed annually.

The Superintendent of Schools shall be responsible for the implementation of the School Closure Policy as per the following regulations.



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REGULATIONS

SUBJECT: **PERMANENT SCHOOL CLOSURES**

1. At a regular Board meeting in January, Administration will recommend schools for closure, if any, based upon the following criteria:
 - a. A school, because of age, location or operational costs can be closed and students accommodated in an appropriate environment.
2. In making a closure recommendation, Administration will assess the following factors:
 - a. Program quality or educational experience;
 - b. Safety and equity of access for students being relocated;
 - c. Class size;
 - d. Accommodation and suitability of program offerings available in nearby schools;
 - e. Long term projected enrolments;
 - f. Age, operation, and maintenance costs of the facility;
 - g. Student achievement; and
 - h. Alternate potential use of the facility for generating revenue.
3. Upon receiving a school closure recommendation, the Board shall consider the information provided by Administration and initiate discussion and consultation with parents, staff and the community.
4. The Board should take the following steps to ensure that an open and meaningful public consultation takes place:
 - a. Make available, in writing, a full disclosure of all facts and information considered by the school board with respect to any proposed school closure, including:
 - i) reasons for the proposed school closure;
 - ii) which specific school(s) are being considered for closure;
 - iii) consideration of future enrolment growth in the district of persons of school age, persons of less than school age and adults;
 - iv) educational program/course implications for the affected students;
 - v) how the proposed closure would affect the current catchment area for each school;
 - vi) the general effect on surrounding schools;
 - vii) the number of students who would be affected at both the closed school(s) and the surrounding schools;

- viii) the effect of proposed closures on board-provided student transportation including the amount of time that students spend traveling to and from school;
 - ix) consideration of possible alternative community use for all or part of our schools;
 - x) the proposed effective date of the closure(s);
 - xi) financial considerations;
 - xii) impact on the Board's five-year capital plan;
 - xiii) proposed use of the closed school(s) including potential lease or sale.
- b. Provide an adequate opportunity for affected persons to submit a written response to any proposed school closure and provide information and directions on how to submit a written response to the Board. The information and directions should advise potential correspondents that their written response may be referred to at subsequent public forums respecting the closure.
 - c. Hold at least one public meeting to discuss the proposed closure, summarize written submissions, and listen to community concerns and proposed alternative solutions.
 - d. Maintain records of all consultation, including agendas, minutes, dates of consultation 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 questions asked, and a record of transition plans/activities identified for parent/staff/students at both the school considered for closure and the school to which the students would be moved.

5. Public Meeting

- a. The time and place of the public meeting should be appropriately advertised to ensure adequate advance notification to interested persons in the community. Generally, this will mean a letter to students and parents of students currently attending the school, and a notice in a local newspaper.
- b. The Board should also specifically notify, in writing, any potentially interested local governments, First Nations, business associations, and community associations of the time and place of the public meeting.
- c. Discussions should include the following:
 - i) implications of the closure;
 - ii) implementation plans, including timing of the closure;
 - iii) options that the Board considered as alternative to closure;
 - iv) possible future community growth in the area of the school;
 - v) contents of written submissions presented to the Board.
- d. The Board should keep minutes of the public meeting which include a record of concerns or options raised to the proposal.
- e. Following the public meeting, the Board should give consideration to all public input prior to making its final decision with respect to any proposed school closures.

6. Opportunities for Students Displaced by School Closure

- a. The district will ensure that all district students displaced by a school closure will have opportunities to receive an appropriate education experience in another school in the district.

7. Notification to the Minister

- a. If the Board decides to permanently close a school the Board must, without delay, provide the Minister with written notification of the decision containing the following information:

- i) the school's name
- ii) the school's facility number
- iii) the school's address, and
- iv) the date on which the school will close.

- 8. The power of a board to permanently close a school under the School Act must be exercised only by by-law.

9. Disposition of Equipment and Materials

- a. The Secretary-Treasurer will prepare tentative plans for the disposition of equipment and materials located in school(s) cited for closure.
- b. The Secretary-Treasurer will identify options for Board consideration with respect to the future of buildings and grounds cited for closure.