



YORK REGION DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Policy and Procedure #463.0, Pupil Accommodation Review

The Pupil Accommodation Review (PAR) policy and procedure addresses the process the Board follows for an accommodation review to determine school(s) consolidation, closure or major program relocation

Who has responsibilities?

- Board of Trustees
- Director of Education
- Associate Directors of Education/Coordinating Superintendents
- Superintendents of Schools
- Planning Services
- Principals
- School Councils
- Parents

How is this policy and/or procedure related to Board priorities?

This policy supports the stewardship of Board resources and supports student achievement by having inviting and innovative physical environments in schools and workplaces.

It is the expectation of the York Region District School Board that all employees, students and persons invited to or visiting Board property; or partaking/volunteering in Board or school-sponsored events and activities will respect the policies and procedures of the Board. The term "parents" refers to both biological/adoptive parents and guardians in all Board policies and procedure



Board Policy #463.0

Pupil Accommodation Review

Policy Statement

The York Region District School Board is committed to providing a suitable and equitable range of learning opportunities in York Region public schools. This requires the Board to consider the curriculum and programming needs for all students within York Region while maintaining Board's financial effectiveness and sustainability. Decisions might require consolidation, closure or major program relocation. A pupil accommodation review could focus on a single or a group of schools. Any decisions under this policy will be made in the context of the Board's Capital Strategy, and in accordance with the [Ministry of Education's Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline](#) (Revised March 2015) and the [Administrative Review of Accommodation Review Process](#).

Application of Policy

This policy does not apply:

- where a replacement school is to be rebuilt by the Board on the existing site, or built or acquired within the existing school attendance boundary as identified through the Board's existing policies;
- where a replacement school is to be built by the Board 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 policies;
- when a lease is terminated;
- when the Board is considering the relocation in any school year or over a number of school years of a grade or grades, or a program;
- where the enrolment in the grade or grades, or program, constitutes less than 50 per cent of the enrolment of the school with such calculation being based on the enrolment at the time of the relocation. If the relocation is to be phased over a number of school years, then the calculation shall be based on the enrolment as of the first phase of the relocation;
- where there are no students enrolled at the school at any time throughout the school year;
- 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; and
- 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. In these circumstances, although the Board is not obligated to undertake a full pupil accommodation review, where appropriate, the Board will provide advance notice of decisions that would affect the accommodation situation of students.

Responsibilities

The Board of Trustees is responsible for:

- determining the situations in which a Pupil Accommodation Review (PAR) should be undertaken to address possible consolidation, closure, or major program relocation;
- ensuring trustee observers for any ARC;
- holding public meetings in accordance with pupil accommodation review timelines; and
- making the final accommodation decision on whether to consolidate, close, or relocate a program for those schools under a pupil accommodation review.

The Director of Education is responsible for:

- implementing and operationalizing the Pupil Accommodation Review policy;
- presenting an initial staff report to the Board identifying a school or group of schools where there may be a need to consider possible consolidation, closure or major program relocation in order to provide a suitable and equitable range of learning opportunities for students or to address issues related to major capital and operating costs; and
- ensuring that a Transition Committee is established should the Board make a final decision to consolidate, close or relocate a major program.

Definitions

Accommodation Review Committee (ARC)

An Accommodation Review Committee is a committee which acts as a conduit for information shared between the Board and the group of schools or single school within a pupil accommodation review in accordance with the application of this policy.

Transition Committee

The Transition Committee is a committee that will plan for and implement the positive integration of students and staff affected by consolidation, closure or program relocation into their new school environment. The committee consists of the appropriate superintendent, and from each affected school the school principal, the school council chair or designate, and any additional members it sees appropriate to participate.

Major Program Relocation

Major program relocation refers to those programs that constitute greater than 50 per cent of a school's enrolment.

Legislative Context

Education Act

Related Policies

[Policy #422.0, Facility Partnerships](#)

Department

Planning and Property Development Services

Policy History

Approved 2008

Replaces: Section 6.8 of Policy #462.0, Student Accommodation

Revised 2010

Working Document October 2015

Revised June 2016

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Board Procedure #463.0

Pupil Accommodation Review

This procedure outlines the process for considering consolidation, closure or major program relocations for York Region public schools.

Responsibilities

The Board of Trustees shall:

- determine the situations in which a Pupil Accommodation Review (PAR) should be undertaken to address possible consolidation, closure, or major program relocation, based on the recommendation of the Director of Education;
- determine if the standard pupil accommodation review timeline, or the optional modified timeline which does not require an ARC committee and one (1) public meeting will be utilized;
- appoint one (1) or more trustees to act as observers on the ARC, one of whom should be the trustee for the study area;
- ensure that recommendations made in the Board reports are presented to the Board in public session, and that the public is given an opportunity to make delegations to the Board concerning the final staff Board report and the matters that are addressed in them;
- make its decision regarding the school accommodation recommendations in the final staff Board report at a regularly scheduled Board meeting, which will not occur sooner than;
 - a minimum of one hundred (100) business days after the presentation of the initial staff report following the [standard pupil accommodation review timeline](#) excluding from the calculation school holidays such as summer vacation, Christmas break and spring break, or
 - a minimum of sixty (60) business days after the presentation of the initial staff Board report following the optional [modified pupil accommodation review timeline](#) excluding from the calculation school holidays such as summer vacation, Christmas break and spring break, and
 - a minimum of twenty (20) business days after the Board's final staff report is released publicly excluding from the calculation school holidays such as summer vacation, Christmas break and spring break; and
- disband the ARC once the final decision has been made.

The Director of Education shall:

- present an initial staff report to the Board identifying a school or group of schools where there may be a need to consider possible consolidation, closure or major program relocation in order to provide a suitable and equitable range of learning opportunities for students or to address issues related to major capital and operating costs; such initial staff report shall be developed with the involvement of Board staff responsible for a school or group of schools;
- within five (5) days of the Board's decision to undertake a pupil accommodation review, inform through written notice to the upper and lower tier municipality(ies), community partners that expressed an interest prior to the pupil accommodation review, coterminous school boards, and the Ministry of Education of the initiation of the pupil accommodation review;
- establish a Transition Committee, should the Board make a final decision to consolidate, close or relocate a major program, to ensure that parents and students are consulted on the integration of students and staff into their new school(s) in order to ensure a positive and supportive process for the students and parents of the respective school communities; and
- receive written input from the public at any time during the pupil accommodation review process.

The Associate Director/Coordinating Superintendents of Education shall:

Prior to the Pupil Accommodation Review

- on behalf of the Director of Education, prepare an initial staff 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, where there may be a need to consider the possible consolidation, closure or major program relocation in respect of one or more schools, based on one or more of the following considerations;
 - 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,
 - 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, and/or
 - it has been no less than five years since the inception of a pupil accommodation review of the school, except where extenuating circumstances warrant, such as an unexpected economic or demographic shift, or a change in a school's physical condition;
- include information on actions taken by school Board staff prior to establishing a pupil accommodation review process and supporting rationale as to any actions taken or not taken in the initial staff report;
- invite municipalities and other community partners to a meeting to comment on the initial staff report, share relevant planning information, and require final comments prior to the final public meeting;
- complete a School Information Profile for each of the schools under review and make it available to the public and post on the Board's website. If multiple schools within the same planning area are being reviewed together, the same profile must be used for each school;
- identify in the initial staff report whether a standard timeline or optional modified timeline will be used. The modified timeline would be used on an assessment of the following factors;
 - distance to the nearest available accommodations;
 - utilization rate of the facility,
 - number of students enrolled at the school, and
 - when the Board is planning the relocation (in any school year or over a number of school years) of a program, in which the enrolment constitutes more than or equal to 50 per cent 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);
- include the following matters in the initial staff report;
 - summary of accommodation issues(s) for the school(s) under review;
 - where students would be accommodated,
 - if proposed changes to existing facility or facilities are required as a result of the pupil accommodation review,
 - identify any program changes as a result of the proposed option,
 - how student transportation would be affected if changes take place,

- if new capital investment is required as a result of the pupil accommodation review, how the Board intends to fund this, as well as a proposal on how students would be accommodated if funding does not become available, and
- 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;

During the Initial Phases of the Pupil Accommodation Review

- identify the ARC members, ensuring that the committee consists of the superintendent(s) of education for the area of study, staff from Planning and Property Development Services, staff from each affected school, including the principal, and parent/guardian representatives;
- determine if other persons should be invited to be members of the ARC;
- inform the ARC about whether or not partnership opportunities with groups and agencies external to the Board are suitable and available as per Board [Policy #422, Facility Partnerships](#);
- prepare a terms of reference for the ARC which includes the mandate of the ARC, roles and responsibilities of ARC members including Board staff, and procedures for the ARC;
- ensure that the public is given sufficient notice of public meetings through a variety of means (e.g. school newsletters, letters to the school community, the Board's website and advertisements in local community newspapers, including date, time, location, purpose, contact name and number);
- ensure that all public information on the application of this policy and procedure is made available to the public through a variety of means (e.g. school newsletters, letters to the school community, the Board's website).
- ensure that notice of the first public meeting is provided no less than thirty (30) business days in advance of the meeting excluding from the calculation school holidays such as summer vacation, Christmas break and spring break;
- ensure that a minimum of two (2) weeks notice is provided for other public meetings;
- ensure that an information package is provided to the ARC, no later than at the commencement of the ARC's first working meeting;
- ensure that Board staff respond to reasonable requests for additional information from the ARC and append responses to the minutes of the meetings at which the questions prompting the responses were raised;
- ensure that detailed minutes of the ARC meetings and other information such as the information package for the ARC, are posted on the Board's website;
- hold at least two (2) public meetings for the standard timeline, or at least one (1) public meeting for the optional modified timeline in accessible facilities presenting;
 - an overview of the ARC orientation session,
 - the initial staff report with recommended option(s), and
 - the School Information Profile(s);

During the Final Phases of the Pupil Accommodation Review

- ensure that a final staff Board report is prepared and submitted to trustees that includes feedback from the ARC, public consultations, relevant information from municipalities and other community partners, recommended option(s) including a proposed accommodation plan and timeline for implementation;
- ensure that public notice of the meeting at which the Board will make its decision regarding the school accommodation recommendations in the staff final Board report is provided to the public at least twenty (20) business days prior to the date of the Board meeting, excluding from the calculation school holidays such as summer vacation, Christmas break and spring break;
- ensure that the final staff report and recommendations are presented to the Board in public session not less than ten (10) business days after the Board meeting for public delegation opportunities; and

- plan for and implement the Board's decision during the following school year should the Board decide to consolidate, close or relocate a program, except when the Board's decision set clear timelines otherwise.

Superintendent(s) of Schools shall:

- within five (5) days of the Board's decision to undertake a pupil accommodation review, inform through a variety of means (e.g. school newsletters, letters to the school community, the Board's website), parents, staff and school council members of the affected schools;
- if appointed, assume the position of Chair of the ARC;
- inform parents, staff and school council within five (5) days, in writing, through their respective schools, of the Board's decision;
- if appointed, assume the position of Chair of the Transition Committee; and
- identify a secretary and resource person(s) for the Transition Committee.

The Accommodation Review Committee shall:

- once constituted, invite the community to participate in the public input process (the ARC will be deemed to be properly constituted whether or not all of the listed members are willing and able to participate);
- ensure that timelines are adhered to;
- meet as often as required;
- act as the official conduit for information shared between the Board and school communities;
- continue to hold meetings and conduct business whether or not a quorum of members is present;
- continue to conduct regular business with a full understanding that consensus may not always be reached with respect to decisions within the ARC's mandate;
- provide feedback on the initial staff report option(s);
- have the opportunity to create alternative accommodation options with supporting rationale, other than those previously identified by Board staff, based on the final School Information Profile(s) and the Terms of Reference; and
- provide information to the affected school communities on an ongoing basis.

The Chair of the Accommodation Review Committee shall:

- convene and chair meetings;
- in cooperation with the Associate Director/Coordinating Superintendent of Education, ensure that the ARC carries out its mandate; and
- call the first public meeting of the pupil accommodation review no earlier than thirty (30) business days after the date of its appointment, excluding from the calculation school holidays such as summer vacation, Christmas break and spring break.

Principals of the affected schools shall:

- participate in the pupil accommodation process as required;
- contact the Coordinating Superintendent, Business and Chief Financial Officer to make the necessary financial arrangements and obtain a budget allocation (up to \$250) should a closing ceremony be recommended by the transition committee.

The Transition Committee shall:

- plan for and implement the positive integration of students and staff affected by consolidation, closure or program relocation into their new school environment;
- operate within the timelines specified and as often as required;
- determine whether a school closing ceremony is appropriate;
- design the format and program, if a closing ceremony is recommended; and
- report to the Director and through the Director to the Board on the progress of transition planning.

Procedure History

Approved 2008

Revised 2010

Working Document October 2015

Revised June 2016

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