



YORK REGION DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Policy and Procedure #462.0, Student Accommodation-Sites and Facilities

Application

The Student Accommodation – Sites and Facilities policy and procedure outlines how the Board provides students with suitable accommodation for learning through the implementation of its capital strategy.

Stakeholder Groups with Responsibilities Under this Policy

- Board of Trustees
- Director of Education
- Associate Directors of Education
- Planning Services
- Plant Services

Relationship to Board priorities

This policy and procedure supports student achievement and well being by ensuring physical environments in schools are welcoming and inviting. It also demonstrates stewardship of Board resources through establishing high standards of practice and accountability.

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Board Policy #462.0

Student Accommodation- Sites and Facilities

Policy Statement

The York Region District School Board provides students with suitable accommodation for learning. The Board believes that through the implementation of its capital strategy, which addresses the creation of new pupil places and renewal of existing pupil places, students will be accommodated in facilities that support student learning.

Legislative Context

[Education Act](#)
[Planning Act](#)

Responsibilities

The Board of Trustees is responsible for:

- reviewing the Student Accommodation – Sites and Facilities policy in accordance with the priorities in the [Trustees' Multi-Year Plan](#) and the approved policy review cycle;
- understanding and communicating with members of the community about the Student Accommodation – Sites and Facilities policy, as required; and
- reviewing and approving;
 - an annual capital strategy, including funding,
 - real property transactions, site acquisition and disposition of sites,
 - tenders for new schools, replacements schools and additions, and
 - site designations and draft plan conditions for new school sites.

The Director of Education is responsible for:

- implementing and operationalizing the Student Accommodation - Sites and Facilities policy.

The Associate Director(s) are responsible for:

- making decisions about leasing space for education, programs and services.

Planning Services is responsible for:

- developing and implementing an annual capital strategy;
- determining capacities for all schools;
- planning and developing the prospectus for new schools;
- overseeing land use planning; and
- preparing and implementing all real property transactions.

Plant Services is responsible for:

- overseeing the construction of new and replacement schools, and additions to existing schools;
- maintaining school buildings; and
- ensuring that new school construction occurs in a timely manner to meet accommodation needs.

Related Policy

[Policy #463.0, Student Accommodation Review](#)

Policy History

Approved 1998
Revised 1999
Revised 2003
Revised 2008 (student accommodation review portion removed)
Revised 2009
Revised 2011
Working Document March 2014
Revised November 2015

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Board Procedure #462.0 Student Accommodation- Sites and Facilities

This procedure outlines how students are provided with suitable accommodation for learning within the framework of the Board's capital strategy.

Definitions

Acquisition of optimal elementary and secondary school sites

Optimal elementary school sites:

- have a minimum site size of 2.4 ha (six acres);
- are located on a minor collector;
- have a frontage of not less than 140 metres; and
- have a maximum crossfall of two per cent over the site.

Optimal secondary school sites:

- have a minimum site size of 6.47 ha (16 acres);
- are located close to an arterial road with access from a minor collector;
- have a frontage of not less than 200 metres; and
- have a maximum crossfall of three per cent.

Both elementary and secondary optimal sites:

- have all land usable and well drained;
- have stable subsurface and bearing capacity;
- have a site configuration that allows adequate and separate areas for bus loading and parking;
- have appropriate length to width ratio;
- are free from;
 - excessive noise created by traffic on railway lines, arterial roads and airports,
 - potentially toxic and hazardous substances, noxious gases and fumes,
 - all contamination and environmental hazards, and
 - dangers to students' safety, such as high voltage power transmission lines, and major distribution lines providing natural gas, retention ponds, woodlots and commercial areas;
- are adjacent to neighbourhood parks;
- are in close proximity to libraries, community centres and other educational facilities to enhance service delivery and reduce service duplication; and
- are within the Board's policy for walking distance to students served.

Attendance Area (also referred to as a School Boundary) (from [Policy #108.0, Student Accommodation – Attendance Areas and Student Transfers](#))

Each school has a defined attendance area, appropriately sized to accommodate sustainable student enrolment. Attendance areas are subject to change based on enrolment trends, construction of new schools, program changes and alignment of elementary and secondary boundaries.

The following are additional considerations which may affect where students attend school: programs for exceptional student, optional programs, student transfers, and students directed to attend a school other than the community school because of overflow, enrolment pressure, primary class size, a holding school situation, school capacity and/or exceptional circumstances.

The physical school boundary is defined by geographical features including, but not limited to, roads, railway tracks, rivers and land parcels.

Responsibilities

The Director of Education shall:

- allocate staff and resources to support the Student Accommodation – Sites and Facilities Revisions procedure.

The Associate Directors of Education shall:

- before leasing non-Board properties for education, program and services, ensure that the cost/benefit to the Board is known, and can be authorized under Board policy.

Planning Services shall:

- in considering **disposition of Board property**;
 - pursue property disposition only when long-term projections of student enrolment and/or student accommodation indicate, to the satisfaction of the Board, that a property is surplus to the Board's needs, and
 - consider land exchange and other disposition alternatives before considering the sale of property;
- upon approval to dispose of properties, ensure that sites are sold at fair market value;
- maintain an **inventory of all school buildings and sites**, including the legal description of the site, the year of purchase, the year of building construction, the number and type of classrooms, and the gross floor area;
- review building and site inventories at least once every three years, including;
 - all sites and buildings used for purposes other than educational, and
 - all school sites with easement restrictions, including,
 - all closed schools in the context of system accommodation capacity to determine viability for reopening the facility for the primary purpose built,
 - schools not viable for reopening, to determine disposition or retention on a business-case basis, and
 - all sites without facilities to determine use, disposition or retention on a business-case basis;
- reduce reliance on portable classrooms for student accommodation;
- sell by public tender portable structures not required for long-term student accommodation;
- develop the **prospectus** for new schools to provide permanent accommodation for approximately 400-600 students (elementary) and 1,000 -1,400 students (secondary), noting that number of pupil places provided in new schools may on occasion vary outside these ranges, depending on the community served;
- in consultation with appropriate staff members, regularly update the approved building prospectus to ensure that all new facility construction meets current approved program requirements, including student safety;

- **for land use planning purposes;**
 - participate in provincial, municipal and regional land use planning initiatives to maintain and improve rights of property use to ensure adequate student accommodation as required by legislation, and
 - pursue alternate uses of school properties that reflect principles of sound land use planning, are sensitive to possible effects on adjacent uses, and optimize financial benefit to support the Board's educational objectives;
- **when considering school sites;**
 - locate schools central to an attendance area, wherever possible,
 - support shared use sites and facility partnerships to improve service delivery, reduce duplication of public facilities and maximize the effective use of available dollars,
 - work with coterminous school boards to achieve successful school site locations,
 - encourage planning and service delivery with the Region and municipalities, and
 - support reasonable neighbourhood use of school sites pending development for school purposes;
- **when facilitating programs;**
 - provide accommodation to students within their local community school before accommodating other programs,
 - within the resources available, provide school accommodation for unique programs to meet the educational needs of students,
 - regularly review all programs that serve more than one attendance area to ensure the most effective use of existing school accommodation,
 - consider and evaluate the impact on system-wide student accommodation requirements, financial and transportation considerations and program needs, and
 - provide continuing educational opportunities for students who leave school before graduating or are unable to take advantage of the regular program, where possible;
- **when considering the management of property;**
 - identify and seek appropriate changes in government regulations that will enhance the effective use of Board property to support the operation of the education system;
- **when acquiring land for schools use;**
 - maximize Education Development Charge revenue, as appropriate, to cover land acquisition costs,
 - ensure the acquisition of optimal elementary and secondary school sites, and
 - conduct appraisals or other appropriate techniques to determine land values for each site acquisition;
- **when acquiring land for schools in a new subdivision;**
 - identify the need and location for a school site(s) early in the planning process,
 - locate at least one elementary school site in the first phase of development within the plan,
 - require the owner to submit a Phase 1 environmental assessment to the Board before draft plan approval, where appropriate,
 - encourage municipalities to prepare and circulate utility phasing plans to the Board identifying the proposed location of utilities on school sites before any subdivision approvals,
 - encourage municipalities to locate school sites adjacent to municipal parkland,
 - confirm through draft plan conditions the size, shape and location of school sites,
 - secure the school site(s) by entering into an agreement of purchase and sale or option agreement with the vendor before the registration of the subdivision, where possible,
 - advise developers that topsoil shall not be stored on a school site without notifying the Board, and
 - require the vendor to agree in the subdivision agreement, in wording satisfactory to Board and at no cost to the Board to:
 - grade the site to conform to the overall grade plan of the subdivision and in doing so compact, fill with clean material and replace any topsoil disturbed in the grading process and at the same time sod and/or seed the same lands,
 - provide a letter of credit, or equivalent, regarding the removal of the topsoil,

- remove topsoil within 30 days of notice by the school Board or the Board will act upon the letter of credit to do the work; in removing the topsoil, fill with clean material, replace any topsoil disturbed in the grading process and at the same time sod/seed the same lands to specifications determined by the Board,
- construct a galvanized chain link fence, Type II 1 1/2" mesh, 1.8 metres in height, along all school site boundaries wherever the property adjoins residential lots and other uses as determined by the Board (all other school property boundaries shall have temporary post and wire fencing installed),
- construct fences when access to the school property or adjacent properties is constructed,
- erect and maintain a sign on the public school site when the relevant access roads are constructed, indicating that the date has not been set for the construction of the school,
- remove all trees and buildings on the school site where appropriate and permitted,
- to provide a geotechnical investigation and environmental site assessments conducted by a qualified engineer:
 - for an elementary school site a minimum of eight boreholes shall be required, and
 - for a secondary school site a minimum of sixteen boreholes shall be required,
- submit a letter from a qualified consultant concerning the suitability of the site for school construction purposes to the Board, relating to soil bearing factors, surface drainage, topography and environmental contaminants, and the availability of natural gas, electrical, water, storm sewer and sanitary sewer services before final approval,
- agree that the services referred to above shall be installed to the mid-point of the frontage of the public school site and positioned as designated by the Board,
- before final approval, submit to the Board for review and approval, an initial set of engineering plans and subsequently, a copy of the final engineering plans as approved by the municipality which indicate the storm drainage system, utilities and the overall grading plans for the complete subdivision area, and
- prior to final approval, have the local hydro authority confirm in writing to the Board that adequate electrical capacity will be supplied to the school site frontage by the developer at no cost to the Board; and
- **when reviewing property easements;**
 - consider requests across Board property only in instances where the services to be located in the easement directly benefit a Board facility, will benefit a new Board facility when it is constructed, or are in the best interests of the community,
 - recommend final approval of an easement to the Board of Trustees, subject to the requesting authority paying all of the Board's costs associated with the easement, including legal and survey costs, and where deemed appropriate, and
 - when a permanent easement is granted, recover capital costs for the land where deemed appropriate.

Plant Services shall:

- examine options and methods for school construction to ensure the most effective use of available resources including: multi-use, tilt-up construction, construction management, stipulated sum, guaranteed fixed price, design/build, repeat design and prototype;
- recommend approval of all new construction projects to the Board of Trustees based on the outcome of the selected construction option and the approved public tender process;
- include appropriate energy management controls in all new school construction plans;
- ensure schools designs are energy efficient, while balancing life cycle costs and sustainability;
- monitor energy management in all existing facilities;

- provide security surveillance monitoring of all Board facilities;
- require that all vacant school sites (purchased or optioned) are maintained to the Board standard or to the Board requirements as set out in the contractual agreements made with land owners; and
- maintain an inventory of portable classrooms, including the age, use and history of condition of each portable.

Related Procedure

[Procedure #463.0, Student Accommodation Review](#)

Procedure History

Approved 2009

Revised 2011

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