



Boundary Review Process

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Memo To: All Stakeholders
From: Director of Education

ACCESSIBILITY:

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PURPOSE:

The purpose of this administrative procedure is to outline the process to be followed when conducting a Boundary Review.

School boards are responsible for managing their school capital assets in an effective manner. They must respond to changing demographics and program needs while ensuring continued student achievement and well-being, and the financial viability/sustainability of the school board.

A Boundary Review is conducted when the school board is proposing the relocation (in any school year or over a number of school years) of students or grades, in which the number of students or enrolment of the grades is less than 50% of the school's enrolment. This calculation is based on the enrolment at the time of the relocation, or the first phase of relocation carried over a number of school years.

REFERENCES:

- [APF008 – Pupil Accommodation Review Process](#)
- APF018 – Holding Zones and Holding School Designations
- [General Board Operational and Procedural By-law](#)

FORMS:

- N/A

REPORTS:

- N/A

APPENDICES:

- N/A



COMMENTS AND GUIDELINES:

The Boundary Review Process will ensure that the public has opportunity to comment on the proposed boundary solution, the impact on affected students has been considered, and that decisions are based on an efficient and equitable use of system resources.

Where possible, Boundary Reviews will consider a logical grouping of schools including proposed new construction in a board defined review area.

The decision to proceed with a boundary review will be made by the Board of Trustees following the review of an Initial Boundary Review Report. This staff report may, but is not required to, include boundary options.

A Boundary Review is not required to address the accommodation of optional programs, such as French Immersion. However, French Immersion attendance areas may be considered if French Immersion is offered in a review area school(s).

RATIONALE FOR A BOUNDARY REVIEW

There are many reasons a Boundary Review process may be initiated. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Enrolment exceeds capacity
- Enrolment is below capacity causing an inefficient use of board resources
- Excessive transportation costs
- Site and building limitations
- Accommodation of special programs

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

A Boundary Review shall align with the following guiding principles.

- Catholic presence in each community
- Student well-being
- Academic achievement
- School board financial viability / sustainability

A Boundary Review is an administrative process involving a Staff Committee responsible for proposing solutions to identified accommodation issues. A Boundary Review may be undertaken when the board identifies an accommodation issue from time to time.

BOUNDARY REVIEW PROCESS

The Staff Committee will be comprised of the following:

- Executive Superintendent of Corporate Services
- Superintendent(s) of Learning for the schools under review
- Planning Department representative(s)
- Facilities Services Department representative(s)
- Administrators of the schools under review
- Student Transportation Services of Waterloo Region representative(s) as required
- Other staff as needed, i.e. Student Support and Program Services representative(s)

The Staff Committee will consider the following parameters:

- Many WCDSB elementary schools are JK-8, however, the board may consider alternative grade configurations.
- Many WCDSB secondary schools are 9-12, however, the board may consider alternative grade configurations.
- Facilities should not limit students from fully experiencing the curriculum.
- Physical accessibility in new and existing facilities should be maximized.
- All capital projects (i.e., new schools, additions) require Ministry and Board approval.

The Staff Committee shall have regard for:

- Providing the highest quality learning environment possible.
 - Consider program environments and how they support student achievement.
- Ensure an efficient use of system resources by balancing enrolment and facilities.
 - Maximize the use of Board-owned facilities over the long term.
 - Minimize the use of non-permanent accommodation (portables) as a long-term strategy while recognizing that it may be a necessary short-term solution.
- Provide a long-term (5 years +) accommodation solution.
- Create boundaries that maximize the number of students that can walk to school.
 - Consider the Board's existing transportation policy and how it may be impacted by or limit accommodation scenarios.
- Provide logical attendance boundaries.
 - Follow logical divides such as major roads, physical barriers, etc.
 - Recognize existing neighbourhoods wherever possible.
- Reduce operating costs (e.g., maintenance, operations, transportation, etc.)
- Develop accommodation options with consideration for Ministry of Education capital funding formulas and the Board's long term capital plan.

REPORTS

Two (2) staff reports shall be prepared and presented to the Board of Trustees for their decision:

1. A Boundary Review is initiated by the Initial Boundary Review Report
2. The Final Boundary Review Report will be presented to the Board of Trustees

Initial Boundary Review Report

The Initial Boundary Review Report will be presented by Board Staff and will include:

- identification of school or group of schools to be included in the Boundary Review
- rationale for the need for a School Boundary Review and rationale for exemption from APF008 - Pupil Accommodation Review Process
- background information including goals, objectives, and constraints
- relevant information from municipalities and other community partners including any confirmed interest in using underutilized space
- Staff Committee composition
- alternative options with analysis may be presented, where appropriate
- identification of a preferred option with justification for the preferred option
- Staff Committee analysis of the capital, renewal, or alterations costs of implementing the preferred option
- proposed timeline for implementation of the recommended boundary changes
- Communications Plan

Final Boundary Review Report

The Final Boundary Review Report will be presented by Board Staff and will include the following:

- summary of information contained in the Initial Boundary Review Report
- summary of comments and questions received during the public consultation phase
- final Staff Committee recommendation(s) and justification for the recommendation(s)
- timeline for implementation of the recommended boundary change(s)
- timeline for the implementation of the recommended capital, renewal or alterations projects required
- critical path resolution of the identified accommodation issue
- Communications Plan

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

All data, reports, submissions, parent / ratepayer comments received during the boundary review process are subject to Freedom of Information/Protection of Privacy legislation. All written public comments received by staff will be

distributed to the Board of Trustees in their entirety. Public comments received throughout the process may be shared with the public and may become part of the public record.

Following the presentation of the Initial Boundary Review Report and the Board of Trustees approval to conduct a School Boundary Review, Board Staff will provide written notice to:

- The affected school communities.
- The Ministry of Education through the Assistant Deputy Minister of the Financial Policy and Business Division.

The Initial Boundary Review Report and a copy of APF017 Boundary Review Process will be posted on the board's website following the Board of Trustees' decision to proceed.

Representatives of the Staff Committee will attend the Catholic School Advisory Council(s) of school or group of schools to present information in the Initial Boundary Review Report. The intent of the school level meetings is to obtain input directly from affected school communities.

The Staff Committee will facilitate a Public Information Session to share information in the Initial Boundary Review Report. The intent of the Public Information Session is to respond to questions of clarification and receive feedback on the recommended option(s).

A Public Information Session is an open meeting for the purpose of sharing relevant information with members of the public and soliciting feedback. A Public Information Session may take on a variety of formats including, but not limited to; an open house, presentation, question/answer period, workshop, or small group discussions.

The Staff Committee will solicit public input via other means, including surveys and an email address dedicated to a specific Boundary Review process.

The Staff Committee will consider input received from the public prior to preparation of the Final Boundary Review Report.

Once the Final Boundary Review Report is submitted to the Board of Trustees, members of the public may register as a delegation to provide their comments directly to the Trustees. Delegations must adhere to the [General Board Operational and Procedural By-law](#).

Trustee Participation

Upon approving the start of a Boundary Review, the Chair of the Board of Trustees will select two (2) Trustees from the municipal area where a review is undertaken to attend the Catholic School Advisory Council (CSAC) meetings where information in the Initial Boundary Review Report is presented, and input is collected by the Staff Committee.

Trustees may attend any open Public Information Session during a Boundary Review Process.

BOARD OF TRUSTEE DECISION

At a board meeting where the Board of Trustees considers the Final Boundary Review Report and recommendation(s):

- recommendation(s) may be accepted by the Board of Trustees by resolution and the boundary change(s) implemented as set out in the Final Boundary Review Report, or
- recommendation(s) may be referred to Board Staff for additional action as directed by the Board of Trustees, or
- a decision may be deferred for additional consideration by the Board of Trustees.

Where a proposed decision differs from the recommendations of the Final Staff Report, sufficient time should be provided to staff to evaluate the merits and feasibility of the alternative proposal. The public should also be given the opportunity to comment prior to the decision being finalized.

TRANSITION PLANNING

A transition plan will be put in place following the Board of Trustees decision to change boundaries, which may be informed by Transition Planning Framework For School Communities ([APF008-CX: Appendix C](#)).

A Transition Planning Committee will be formed prior to the boundary change(s) taking effect.

The Transition Planning Committee, which will include the Superintendent of Learning acting as the Chair, and Administrator(s) of the affected schools may also include parents / guardians and students, as appropriate. The Transition Planning Committee may solicit input from Board Staff who support equity initiatives, as required.

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

A Communications Plan will form an appendix to the Initial Boundary Review Report and Final Boundary Review Report.

The Initial Boundary Review Report will be posted on a dedicated boundary review webpage after direction is received from the Board of Trustees to proceed with the review process.

Information on the boundary review will be shared via board and school social media and other means advising affected school communities of the review and directing how to access Boundary Review information.

Information prepared by the Staff Committee for presentation at the Public Information Session will be posted on the board's website.

Comments received at the Public Information Session will be posted on the board's website.

Board Staff will issue a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document as needed to respond to enquiries and input received.

The Final Staff Report will be made available to the public and posted on the board's website.

All reports, information and comments posted on the board's website will be available in accessible formats on request.

EXEMPTIONS

In most cases, the approval of a boundary change rests with the Board of Trustees and would involve a public consultation process. There are, however, exceptions which would allow senior administration to be the decision-making body. These exceptions are as follows:

- Where a boundary change is being considered for an area where there are no existing students, the boundary options may be considered by senior administration and a decision reached by them without community consultation.
- Where there are relatively few students affected by a proposed boundary change, the families of those students will be consulted directly and given an opportunity to comment on the boundary options being considered.
 - Following this consultation, senior administration may make a decision or may conduct a full review.
 - Where a boundary change is being considered for an area which was part of a Pupil Accommodation Review or Boundary Review up to and including five years previous, the change will be recommended to the Board of Trustees for approval.
- Where a Holding Zone is designated in accordance with APF018 Holding Zones and Holding School Designations to address interim pupil accommodation arrangements for an area of future residential development.

Communication

Where senior administration is the decision-making body, the proposed boundary change will be communicated directly to the affected school community. In addition, the details of the boundary change will be posted on the Board's website.