

# Policy 12

## SCHOOL CONFIGURATIONS

The Board understands the important role a school plays in the community. It also recognizes its responsibility in effectively accommodating and supporting student learning needs and programming and providing well-maintained and well-utilized school facilities. The Board may consider the configuration of one (1) or more schools and/or school attendance areas.

In either case, the Division's facility planning processes and expertise in education guides the development of a *School Reconfiguration Report* to be tabled with the Board.

When considering a change to the configuration of one (1) or more schools and/or school attendance areas, the Board will consult and communicate with the parents and the broader community, as outlined in the [Education Act](#).

In some instances, Policy 13 – *School Closure* and Policy 12 – *School Configurations* may occur concurrently.

**Reconfiguration** means the addition or removal of one (1) or more grades to or from another school. It can also refer to changes in school attendance areas.

### Specifically

In accordance with the Education Act, the Board may, only by resolution, transfer students from one school building to another school building, permanently or temporarily.

1. Board decisions regarding the transfer of students from one school building to another school building or will be determined by one (1) or more of the following governance responsibilities:
  - 1.1. Student Learning and Programming
  - 1.2. Stewardship of System Resources
  - 1.3. Staff and Student Health and Safety
2. These governance responsibilities will consider one (1) or more of the following:
  - 2.1. Consideration of future growth or decline in student enrolment;
  - 2.2. Trends and/or projections for enrolment in a school or within grades in a school;
  - 2.3. Feasibility of programming;
  - 2.4. Improving school facility utilization;
  - 2.5. Fiscal accountability, sustainability, and efficiency;
  - 2.6. Health and/or safety concerns;
  - 2.7. Community considerations.

## **School Reconfiguration Report**

The Superintendent may be requested to prepare a *School Reconfiguration Report* by the Board through a motion at a regular meeting of the Board. Alternatively, the Superintendent may bring forward a *School Reconfiguration Recommendation Report* for the Board's consideration.

3. A *School Reconfiguration Report* prepared by the Superintendent shall include a plan of proposed reconfiguration(s) and/or attendance boundary(ies) as well as the following:
  - 3.1. Factors precipitating the proposed school configuration;
  - 3.2. Consideration of future growth or decline in student enrolment;
    - 3.2.1. Effect on enrolment and attendance area of other impacted schools;
    - 3.2.2. Number of students to be relocated to another school or schools;
  - 3.3. Program implications for each impacted school;
  - 3.4. Effect on the Board's long-range capital plan;
  - 3.5. Transportation factors including ride times;
  - 3.6. Effect on system operations;
  - 3.7. Possible alternative educational or community uses for all or part of the school building;
  - 3.8. A community engagement and consultation process and timeline.

Whether initiated by the Board or brought forward by the Superintendent, the *School Reconfiguration Report* will be received by the Board through a Notice of Motion at a regular meeting of the Board.

## **Notice of Motion – School Reconfiguration**

In the event that the Board decides to proceed with the proposed *reconfiguration* following its review of the Superintendent's *School Reconfiguration Report*, the matter shall be raised by way of a Notice of Motion made at a regular meeting of the Board.

The Notice of Motion signals the beginning of the Division's public consultation process on the reconfiguration of one (1) or more schools and/or school attendance areas.

No decision with respect to school reconfiguration and/or attendance areas will be made until the completion of the procedures outlined in sections 4, 5 and 6 of this policy and at least twelve (12) weeks have passed since the date of this Notice of Motion.

4. The Notice of Motion shall include:
  - 4.1. The school(s) affected by the school reconfiguration and/or attendance areas;
  - 4.2. The date upon which the Board plans to vote on the motion, no later than March 31<sup>st</sup> of the calendar year in which the change is proposed to take place.

### **Notification of School Reconfiguration**

Where a Notice of Motion is tabled to consider the proposed reconfiguration and/or attendance areas, the Board shall, in writing, notify the parents of every student enrolled in the school(s) and/or any affected school, and other person, municipality, or community organization, who, in the opinion of the Board, will be significantly affected by the reconfiguration.

5. The Notification shall provide the following information:
  - 5.1. The *School Reconfiguration Report* prepared by the Superintendent pursuant to section 3 of this policy;
  - 5.2. The community engagement and consultation timeline: the date, time, format and location of the public meeting(s) organized and convened by the Board for the purpose of discussing the information provided to the parents/guardians in the *School Reconfiguration Report*;
  - 5.3. The date upon which the Board plans to vote on the motion.

### **Public Meeting – School Reconfiguration**

6. Where a Notice of Motion is tabled to consider the reconfiguration of one (1) or more schools and/or school attendance areas, the Board shall:
  - 6.1. Organize and convene a public meeting(s) where the *School Reconfiguration Report* is presented by the Superintendent or designate;
  - 6.2. Prioritize attending the meeting(s) with a minimum of three (3) trustees attending;
  - 6.3. Ensure that minutes of the public meeting(s) are prepared;
  - 6.4. Provide an opportunity for the Council of the municipality in which the school is located to provide a statement to the Board of the impact the configuration may have on the community;
  - 6.5. Establish a date by which formal written submissions relating to the proposed configuration will be received for its consideration;
  - 6.6. Consider the meeting minutes and the formal written submissions related to the proposed configuration that it receives throughout the engagement and consultation process.

### **Board Decision on School Reconfiguration**

The Board shall, by resolution, decide whether to proceed with the school reconfiguration.

If the decision of the Board is to reconfigure one (1) or more schools and/or school attendance areas, the Board shall forthwith notify the Minister in writing of the decision.

All reconfiguration procedures shall be initiated and completed no later than April 1<sup>st</sup> of the school year that precedes the school year in which the change(s) would take place.

The reconfiguration plan decided and voted upon by resolution of the Board may extend and be implemented beyond one school year.

Legal Reference: Relevant Legislation & Guidelines

Final reading; November 29, 2023

# Appendix A

## CONSIDERATIONS FOR A SCHOOL RECONFIGURATION REPORT

The following considerations help guide decision making and will be included in the *School Reconfiguration Report*. As *School Reconfiguration Reports* are developed, the considerations will be in response to the local context. This is not an exhaustive list.

### **Enrolment / School Programs / Student Experience**

- Impact of a phased approach.
- Impact on regional programs.
- Balance of overall enrolment ensures student access to programs, resources and extracurricular opportunities.
- Student Experience - options should demonstrate an effort to reduce the number of school moves students have experienced.

### **Impact on Neighbourhoods**

- Maintain neighbourhoods to the extent possible.
- Minimize impact on existing school families.

### **School Attendance Areas**

- Stable, long-term school attendance areas -- Projections should show long term stability and result in avoiding the need for additional school attendance area changes in the short term.
- Fiscally Responsible - ensure that options strive to reduce unnecessary costs.
- Redistribute enrolment to match school capacity and accommodate growth, over and underutilization of buildings avoided to the extent possible.
- Use natural school attendance areas to the extent possible.
- Grandfathering (Not recommend).

### **Transportation**

- Maximize modes of active transportation to minimize motorized transportation impacts.