

## **Policy Statement**

It is the policy of the Keewatin-Patricia District School Board (KPDSB) to consider the potential closure of schools when circumstances indicate that the viability of one (1) or more schools is in question. Prior to making any decision to close a school, the KPDSB will undertake a comprehensive review of relevant information and opinions. Such reviews will include a determination of the value of the school to the students, the community, the school system, and the local community. The KPDSB will consult with the school community in the review process and provide opportunities for members of the school community to express their views prior to the KPDSB's decision on school closure.

## **Rationale**

1. The KPDSB must ensure all of its operations are carried out using the most efficient and effective methods available.
2. The KPDSB is an advocate of community consultation and all stakeholders will be provided ample opportunity for input into the decision making process.
3. Although schools may have an importance in the community beyond instruction, schools may cease to be viable educational, physical, and/or financial entities.

## **Guidelines**

The KPDSB will conduct pupil accommodation reviews in accordance with the Ministry of Education's (the Ministry('s)) Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline as amended from time to time. The Ministry's Guidelines as of April 2018 apply to accommodation reviews effective April 27, 2018.

The following guidelines are intended to provide additional direction. Where there is a conflict between the following guidelines and the Ministry's Guidelines, the Ministry's Guidelines will prevail.

1. The identification of schools for potential closure will normally come from the KPDSB's Long-Term Capital Plan. However, schools may also be identified for potential closure outside the Long-Term Capital Plan for any of the following reasons:
  - a) Underutilization – normally defined as enrollment in a school being less than fifty percent (50%) of the Ministry rated pupil capacity of the building;
  - b) Program Viability – unsuitability of the school with respect to the grade groupings, class sizes, delivery of curriculum, or learning opportunities;
  - c) Physical Condition – a school that requires excessive amounts of money to bring the building to a reasonable standard as an environment for learning and working. The Ministry of Education's Prohibitive to Repair Standard may provide guidance in this respect;
  - d) Operating and Maintenance Costs – a school that has excessive operating and maintenance costs relative to Ministry funding or system average costs;
  - e) Exceptional Circumstances – a school that is:
    - i) Destroyed by fire or other catastrophe;
    - ii) Unusable due to environmental hazard; and/or
    - iii) Unusable due to a health hazard.
  - f) Community Request – a request from a community organization or individual to purchase the school for an alternative purpose.
2. Schools to be studied for potential closure will normally be identified by KPDSB motion in the month of May, however, schools may be identified at other times of the year if circumstances warrant. Notice of identification for potential closure shall be given by any of the following means: posting on the KPDSB's website, advertisements in the KPDSB newsletter and newspaper(s) having circulation in the catchment area of the school, letters to the school Principal and School Council Chair, and/or letters to parents/guardians and students.
3. An Accommodation Review Committee shall be appointed by the KPDSB to study and make recommendations to the KPDSB with respect to the accommodation needs of pupils residing within a defined area that may include one (1) or more schools that have been identified for potential closure as well as other schools that may be impacted by potential closures (i.e., through consolidation, boundary changes, etc.).

The Accommodation Review Committee shall have KPDSB representation from the community. The number of voting members on the Committee shall be equal to, or greater than, the number of non-voting members on the Committee. The voting members shall select one (1) of themselves to act as Chair of the Committee.

The Accommodation Review Committee membership shall include a minimum of:

a) Voting Members

- i) One (1) or more School Council members from each school being studied; and
- ii) One (1) or more Community Representatives including parents/guardians, municipal representatives, business leaders, and citizens residing within the catchment area of the school(s) being studied.

b) Non-Voting Members

- i) One (1) or more Trustees;
- ii) One (1) or more Supervisory Officers;
- iii) One (1) or more Principals or Vice-Principals; and
- iv) One (1) or more additional KPDS Employees (teaching and non-teaching)

4. The Director of Education, or Designate, shall develop an implementation plan in respect of any school closure approved by the KPDSB.
5. The Director of Education, or Designate, shall be responsible for tracking the retention and academic achievement of pupils from schools that have closed.