



Policy Section: **Facilities and Equipment**

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Policy Name: School Viability and Closure

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Policy Statement

It is the policy of the Keewatin-Patricia District School Board to consider the potential closure of schools when circumstances indicate that the viability of one or more schools is in question. Prior to making any decision to close a school, the Board 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 Board 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 Board's decision on school closure.

Rationale

1. The Keewatin-Patricia District School Board must ensure all operations of the Board are carried out using the most efficient and effective methods available.
2. The Keewatin-Patricia District School Board 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 to the community beyond instruction, schools may cease to be viable educational, physical and/or financial entities.

Guidelines

The Board will conduct pupil accommodation reviews in accordance with the Ministry of Education's "Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline" as amended from time to time. The Ministry's Guideline revised as of April 2018 applies 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 Guideline, the Ministry's Guideline will prevail.

Cross Reference:
MOE Administrative Review Accommodation Review Process
MOE Pupil Accommodation Review Guidelines
Policy 807, Facility Partnerships
Policy 202, Electronic Meetings

Date Approved: November 12, 1998
Dates Reviewed: Nov. 12/02; May 9/06; Jan. 16/07; Feb 13/07; Mar 4/08; May 11/10
Last Revised: May 13/14;
June 12/18

Review by: 2022

1. The identification of schools for potential closure will normally come from the Board'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 enrolment in a school being less than 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/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;
 - 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 Board 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 Board's website, advertisements in the Board newsletter and newspaper(s) having circulation in the catchment area of the school, letters to the school principal and school council chair, letters to parents and students.



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3. An Accommodation Review Committee shall be appointed by the Board to study and make recommendations to the Board with respect to the accommodation needs of pupils residing within a defined area that may include one or more schools that have been identified for potential closure as well as other schools that may be impacted by potential closures (e.g. through consolidation or boundary changes.)

The Accommodation Review Committee shall have broad 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 of themselves to act as Chair of the Committee.

The Accommodation Review Committee membership shall include a minimum of:

Voting Members

- a) One (1) or more School Council members from each school being studied;
- b) One (1) or more Community Representatives including Parents, Municipal Representatives, Business Leaders, and Citizens residing within the catchment area of the school(s) being studied.

Non-voting Members

- a) One (1) or more Trustees;
- b) One (1) or more Supervisory Officers;
- c) One (1) or more Principals or Vice-Principals;
- d) One (1) or more additional Board 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 Board.
5. The Director of Education or designate shall be responsible for tracking the retention and academic achievement of pupils from schools that have closed.

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