



Policy

Title: Pupil Accommodation Review		Policy #: PO430
Policy Area:	Operations	
Source:	Superintendent of Facilities Services	
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1.0 Introduction

The Durham Catholic District School Board is responsible for deciding the most appropriate pupil accommodation arrangements for delivery of elementary and secondary programs. These decisions are made by the Board of Trustees in the context of carrying out their primary responsibilities of fostering student achievement and spiritual well-being, and ensuring effective stewardship of school board resources including the Board's financial viability and sustainability. In some cases, to address changing student populations, this requires the Board to consider undertaking pupil accommodation reviews that may lead to school consolidations and closures. The Board recognizes a fair and transparent process for undertaking pupil accommodation reviews including community consultation and collaboration among all stakeholders. Wherever practical, pupil accommodation reviews will include a school or group of schools to facilitate the development of viable solutions for pupil accommodation that support the guiding principles.

A pupil accommodation review of a school or schools will only occur in the context of the Board's long-term capital and accommodation planning process and only after the necessary assessment of the options for the school(s) in accordance with that process. This assessment will be made in accordance with Board policy made pursuant to the *Community Planning and Partnership Guideline (CPPG)* issued by the Minister of Education.

This Policy permits the Board to undertake a pupil accommodation review process, a modified pupil accommodation review process in certain cases, or not to undertake any pupil accommodation review processes if an exemption applies, consistent with the *Pupil Accommodation Review Guidelines - 2015 (PARG)* issued by the Ministry of Education.

The Board will share relevant information with those affected by the process. The Board welcomes the opportunity for the public and affected school communities to be heard with respect to pupil accommodation reviews.

2.0 **Definitions**

Accommodation option – The proposed reorganization of a school or schools under review which may result in program changes, grade configuration changes, boundary changes, closure of a school or schools, the repurposing of schools or any combination of the above.

Accommodation review – A process, as defined in this pupil accommodation review policy, undertaken by the Board to determine the future of a school or group of schools.

Accommodation Review Committee (ARC) – A committee, established by the Board that represents the affected school(s) of a pupil accommodation review, which acts as the official conduit for information shared between the Board and the affected school communities.

ARC working meeting – A meeting of ARC members to discuss a pupil accommodation review, and includes a meeting held by the ARC to solicit feedback from the affected school communities of a pupil accommodation review.

Business day – A calendar day that is not a weekend and statutory holiday. It also does not include calendar days that fall within school boards' Christmas, spring, and summer break. For schools with a year-round calendar, any break that is five calendar days or longer is not a business day.

Consultation – The sharing of relevant information as well as providing the opportunity for municipalities and other community partners, the public and affected school communities to be heard.

Facility Condition Index (FCI) – A building condition as determined by the Ministry of Education by calculating the five-year renewal needs and the replacement value for each facility.

Modified Accommodation Review: Where the potential pupil accommodation options available are considered by the Board to be less complex pursuant to this Policy, the Board will undertake a modified pupil accommodation review process which will be shorter in duration.

On-the-ground (OTG) capacity – The capacity of the school as determined by the Ministry of Education by loading all instructional spaces within the facility to current Ministry standards for class size requirements and room areas.

Public delegation – A regular meeting of the Board of Trustees where presentations by groups or individuals can have their concerns heard directly by the Board of Trustees.

Public meeting – An open meeting held by the Board to solicit broader community feedback on a pupil accommodation review.

School Information Profile (SIP) – An orientation document with point-in-time data for each of the school(s) under a pupil accommodation review to help the ARC and the community understand the context surrounding the decision to include specific school(s) in a pupil accommodation review.

2.0 **Definitions** (Cont'd)

Space template – A Ministry of Education template used by the Board to determine the number and type of instructional areas to be included within a new school, and the size of the required operational and circulation areas within a proposed school.

Transition Planning Committee – Following the decision to consolidate and/or close a school, the Board will establish a separate committee to facilitate the transition of students and staff. The transition of students and staff will be carried out in consultation with parents/guardians and staff.

3.0 **Purpose**

The purpose of the Pupil Accommodation Review Policy is to provide a framework for the Durham Catholic District School Board to undertake pupil accommodation reviews to determine the future of a school or group of schools. The pupil accommodation review process ensures that where a decision is taken by the Board regarding the future of a school, that decision is made with the involvement of an informed local community and is based on a broad range of criteria regarding the quality of the learning experience for students. This policy establishes the framework for the creation of detailed administrative procedures including timelines for pupil accommodation reviews and Accommodation Review Committees.

4.0 **Application/Scope**

This policy has been established to align with the Ministry of Education's Accommodation Review Committee Guidelines and as such, focuses on student well-being; academic achievement; and school board financial viability/sustainability. The final decision regarding the future of a school or group of schools rests solely with the Board of Trustees. If the Board of Trustees votes to close a school or schools in accordance with this policy, the Board must provide clear timelines regarding the closure(s) and ensure that a transition plan is communicated to all affected school communities within the Board.

5.0 **Principles**

In alignment with the Ministry of Education's Community Planning and Partnerships Guideline of 2015, the Durham Catholic District School Board must undertake long term capital and accommodation planning, informed by any relevant information obtained from local municipal governments and other community partners, which takes into consideration long term enrollment projections and planning opportunities for the effective use of excess space in all area schools.

6.0 **Requirements**

6.1 After undertaking the necessary assessment of long term capital and accommodation planning options for the school(s), the Board may proceed to establish a pupil accommodation review.

6.0 **Requirements** (Cont'd)

6.2 **Initial Staff Report**

- 6.2.1 Prior to establishing a pupil accommodation review, the initial staff report to the Board of Trustees must contain one or more options to address the accommodation issue(s). Each option must have a supporting rationale. There must be a recommended option if more than one option is presented. The initial staff report must also include the information on actions taken by school board staff prior to establishing a pupil accommodation review process and supporting rationale as to any actions taken or not taken. The Initial Staff Report and the Student Information Profile (SIP) will be made available to the public through the Board's website.
- 6.2.2 The option(s) included in the initial staff report must address the following:
- 6.2.2.1 Summary of accommodation issue(s) for the school(s) under review.
 - 6.2.2.2 The proposed timelines for implementation.
 - 6.2.2.3 Where students would be accommodated.
 - 6.2.2.4 If proposed changes to existing facility or facilities are required as a result of the pupil accommodation review.
 - 6.2.2.5 Identify any program changes as a result of the proposed option.
 - 6.2.2.6 How student transportation would be affected if changes take place.
 - 6.2.2.7 If new capital investment is required as a result of the pupil accommodation review.
 - 6.2.2.8 What sources of funding the Board intends to finance the proposed changes.
 - 6.2.2.9 Any interim student accommodation requirements if funding is not available.
 - 6.2.2.10 Any relevant information obtained from municipalities and other community partners prior to the commencement of the pupil accommodation review, including any confirmed interest in using the underutilized space.

6.3 **Public Consultation**

- 6.3.1 The Board shall ensure that individuals from the school(s) under review and the broader community are invited to participate in the pupil accommodation review consultation.
- 6.3.2 At a minimum, the pupil accommodation review process must consist of the following methods of consultation:
- 6.3.2.1 Accommodation Review Committee (ARC) if applicable.
 - 6.3.2.2 Consultation with municipal governments local to the affected school(s).
 - 6.3.2.3 Public meeting(s).
 - 6.3.2.4 Public delegations.

6.0 **Requirements** (Cont'd)

6.4 **Role of the ARC**

- 6.4.1 The Board must establish an ARC that represents the school(s) under review and acts as the official conduit for information shared between the school board and school communities. The ARC may comment on the initial staff report and may, throughout the pupil accommodation review process, seek clarification of the initial staff report. The ARC may provide other accommodation options than those in the initial staff report; however, it must include supporting rationale for any such option.
- 6.4.2 The ARC members do not need to achieve consensus regarding the information provided to the Board of Trustees.
- 6.4.3 The Board's staff resources assigned to the ARC are required to compile feedback from the ARC as well as the broader community in the Community Consultation section of the Final Staff Report to be presented to the Board of Trustees

6.5 **Membership**

- 6.5.1 The membership of the ARC may include:
 - 6.5.1.1 Two (2) parent/guardian representatives from each affected elementary or secondary school as chosen by the school community.
 - 6.5.1.2 One (1) student representative from each affected secondary school as selected by the student council.
 - 6.5.1.3 One (1) parish priest as appointed by the Archdiocese.
 - 6.5.1.4 The principal of each affected elementary or secondary school.
 - 6.5.1.5 One (1) staff member from each affected school as appointed by staff of that school.
 - 6.5.1.6 One (1) appointed community member from each of the municipalities in which the ARC takes place.
- 6.5.2 In addition, Board Trustees may be ad hoc ARC members to monitor the ARC progress.
- 6.5.3 The following staff members may act as staff resources to the ARC:
 - 6.5.3.1 The Superintendent of Education for the Family of Schools or designate who will act as the Chair of the ARC.
 - 6.5.3.2 The Superintendent of Education Business Services.
 - 6.5.3.3 The Superintendent of Education Facilities Services who will act as secretary to the ARC.
 - 6.5.3.4 The Manager of Planning, Admissions and Partnerships.
 - 6.5.3.5 Additional staff members may be requested to provide information to the ARC as required.
- 6.5.4 The ARC will be deemed to be properly constituted even if one or more members resign or do not attend working meetings of the ARC.

6.0 **Requirements** (Cont'd)

6.6 **Formation**

6.6.1 The ARC will be formed following the Board of Trustees' consideration of the initial staff report but prior to the first public meeting. The Board will invite ARC members from the school(s) under review to an orientation session that will describe the mandate, roles and responsibilities, and procedures of the ARC.

6.7 **Terms of Reference**

6.7.1 The Board will provide the ARC with Terms of Reference that describe the ARC's mandate. The mandate will refer to the Board's education and accommodation objectives in undertaking the ARC and reflect the Board's strategy for supporting student achievement and well-being.

6.7.2 The Terms of Reference will clearly outline the Board's expectations of the roles and responsibilities of the ARC; and describe the administrative procedures carried out by the ARC. At a minimum, the ARC will provide feedback on the initial staff report option(s).

6.7.3 The Terms of Reference will outline the minimum number of working meetings of the ARC as articulated in the Pupil Accommodation Review Administrative Procedure (AP430-1).

6.8 **Meetings of the Accommodation Review Committee**

6.8.1 The ARC will meet to review materials presented by Board staff. It is recommended that the ARC hold as many working meetings as is deemed necessary within the timelines established in this policy.

6.9 **School Information Profile (SIP)**

6.9.1 The Board staff will develop School Information Profiles (SIPs) for each school under review at the same point-in-time for comparison purposes. SIPS are orientation documents to help the ARC and the community understand the context surrounding the decision to include the specific school(s) in a pupil accommodation review. The SIP provides an understanding of and familiarity with facilities under review. SIPS will be complete and accurate and will be prepared prior to the commencement of the pupil accommodation review. The SIP template is attached to the Pupil Accommodation Review Administrative Procedure (AP430-1).

6.10 **Consultation with Local Municipal Governments**

6.10.1 Following the Board of Trustees' approval to undertake a pupil accommodation review, the Board shall invite affected municipalities as well as other community partners that expressed an interest prior to the pupil accommodation review to discuss and comment on the recommended option(s) in the Board's Initial Staff Report.

6.0 **Requirements** (Cont'd)

6.10 **Consultation with Local Municipal Governments** (Cont'd)

6.10.2 The invitation for this meeting will be provided through a written notice, and will be directed through the Clerks Department for the affected municipalities.

6.10.3 The affected municipalities, as well as other community partners that expressed an interest prior to the pupil accommodation review, must provide their response on the recommended option(s) in the Board's initial staff report before the final public meeting. The Board must provide them with advance notice of when the final public meeting is scheduled to take place.

6.10.4 The Board must document their efforts to meet with the affected municipalities, as well as other community partners that expressed an interest prior to the pupil accommodation review; and provide any relevant information from this meeting as part of the Final Staff Report to the Board of Trustees.

6.11 **Public Meetings**

6.11.1 Once the Board has received an initial staff report and has approved the initiation of a pupil accommodation review, the Board must arrange to hold a minimum of two public meetings for broader community consultation on the initial staff report. Board staff are expected to facilitate the public meetings to solicit broader community feedback on the recommended option(s) contained in the initial staff report.

6.11.2 The public meetings are to be announced and advertised publicly by the Board through an appropriate range of media as determined by the Board.

6.11.3 At a minimum, the first public meeting must include the following:

6.11.3.1 an overview of the ARC orientation session;

6.11.3.2 the initial staff report with recommended option(s); and

6.11.3.3 a presentation of the SIPs.

6.12 **Final Staff Report**

6.12.1 At the conclusion of the pupil accommodation review process, Board staff will submit a Final Staff Report to the Board of Trustees which must be available to the public as determined in the Board's policy, and posted on the Board's website.

6.12.2 The Final Staff Report must include a Community Consultation section that contains feedback from the ARC and any public consultations as well as any relevant information obtained from municipalities and other community partners prior to and during the pupil accommodation review.

6.0 **Requirements** (Cont'd)

6.12 **Final Staff Report** (Cont'd)

6.12.3 Board staff may choose to amend their proposed option(s) included in the initial staff report. The recommended option(s) must also include a proposed accommodation plan, prepared for the decision of the Board of Trustees, which contains a timeline for implementation.

6.13 **Delegations to the Board of Trustees Meeting**

6.13.1 Once Board staff submits the Final Staff Report to the Board of Trustees, the Board must allow an opportunity for members of the public to provide feedback on the Final Staff Report through public delegations to the Board of Trustees. Notice of the public delegation opportunities will be provided based on board policy.

6.13.2 After the public delegations, board staff will compile feedback from the public delegations which will be presented to the Board of Trustees with the Final Staff Report.

6.14 **Decision of the Board of Trustees**

6.14.1 The Board of Trustees will be provided with the Final Staff Report, including the compiled feedback from the public delegations, when making its final decision regarding the pupil accommodation review.

6.14.2 The Board of Trustees has the discretion to approve the recommendation(s) of the Final Staff Report as presented, modify the recommendation(s) of the Final Staff Report, or to approve a different outcome.

6.14.3 The Ministry has encouraged school boards not to make final pupil accommodation review decisions during the summer holiday period (typically from July 1 to the day after Labour Day).

6.15 **Transition Planning**

6.15.1 The transition of students should be carried out in consultation with parents/guardians and staff. Following the decision to consolidate and/or close a school, the Board will establish a separate committee to address the transition for students and staff.

6.16 **Timelines for the Accommodation Review Process**

6.16.1 The pupil accommodation review process must comply with the following minimum timelines:

6.0 **Requirements** (Cont'd)

6.16 Timelines for the Accommodation Review Process (Cont'd)

6.16.1 (Cont'd)

- 6.16.1.1 Following the date of the Board of Trustees' approval to conduct a pupil accommodation review, the board will provide written notice of the Board of Trustees' decision within five (5) business days to each of the affected municipalities through the Clerks Department (or equivalent), other community partners that expressed an interest prior to the pupil accommodation review; and include an invitation for a meeting to discuss and comment on the recommended option(s) in the Board's Initial Staff Report. The Board must also notify the Director of Education of the coterminous school board and the Ministry of Education through the office of the Assistant Deputy Minister of the Financial Policy and Business Division.
- 6.16.1.2 The affected municipalities, as well as other community partners that expressed an interest prior to the pupil accommodation review, must provide their response on the recommended option(s) in the Board's Initial Staff Report before the final public meeting.
- 6.16.1.3 Beginning with the date of the Board of Trustees' approval to conduct a pupil accommodation review, there must be no fewer than thirty (30) business days before the first public meeting is held.
- 6.16.1.4 There must be a minimum period of forty (40) business days between the first and final public meetings.
- 6.16.1.5 The Final Staff Report must be publicly posted no fewer than ten (10) business days after the final public meeting.
- 6.16.1.6 From the posting of the Final Staff Report, there must be no fewer than ten (10) business days before the public delegations.
- 6.16.1.7 There must be no fewer than ten (10) business days between public delegations and the final decision of the Board of Trustees.

6.17 Modified Accommodation Review Process

- 6.17.1 In certain circumstances, where the potential pupil accommodation options available are deemed by the Board to be less complex, the Board may find it appropriate to undertake a modified pupil accommodation review process.
- 6.17.2 The following factors must be considered by the Board to conduct a modified pupil accommodation review process. The conditions for conducting a modified pupil accommodation review process must be based on two or more of the following factors:
 - 6.17.2.1 There are no more than three schools in the accommodation review.

6.0 **Requirements** (Cont'd)

6.17 Modified Accommodation Review Process (Cont'd)

6.17.2 (Cont'd)

- 6.17.2.2 The entire student population of a school that is subject to a pupil accommodation review process can be accommodated in another school without a boundary change.
- 6.17.2.3 The distance between Catholic elementary or secondary school within the review is less than five (5) kilometres.
- 6.17.2.4 The utilization rate of one of the Catholic schools to be included within the review is less than 60% of the On-the-ground capacity of the school.
- 6.17.2.5 The number of students enrolled at one of the schools is less than 125 students.
- 6.17.2.6 The Board is planning the relocation of a program, in which the enrolment constitutes more than or equal to 50% of the school's enrolment.

6.17.3 The guiding principles of this Guideline apply to the modified pupil accommodation review process.

6.17.4 Even when the criteria for a modified pupil accommodation review are met, the Board may choose to use the standard pupil accommodation review process.

6.18 Implementing the Modified Accommodation Review Process

6.18.1 The Initial Staff Report will explain the rationale for exempting the school(s) from the standard pupil accommodation review process, in accordance with this policy.

6.18.2 The Initial Staff Report and SIPs must be made available to the public, as determined in the Board's policy, and posted on the Board's website.

6.18.3 A public meeting will be announced and advertised through an appropriate range of media as determined by the Board.

6.18.4 Following the public meeting, Board staff will submit a Final Staff Report to the Board of Trustees which must be available to the public as determined in this policy and administrative procedure and posted on the Board's website. The Final Staff Report must include a Community Consultation section that contains feedback from any public consultations as well as any relevant information obtained from municipalities and other community partners prior to and during the modified pupil accommodation review.

6.18.5 Once Board staff submit the Final Staff Report to the Board of Trustees, the Board must allow an opportunity for members of the public to provide feedback through public delegations to the Board of Trustees. Notice of the public delegation opportunities will be provided based on this policy and administrative procedure AP430-1 Pupil Accommodation Review.

6.0 **Requirements** (Cont'd)

6.18 **Implementing the Modified Accommodation Review Process** (Cont'd)

6.18.6 After the public delegations, Board staff will compile feedback from the public delegations which will be presented to the Board of Trustees with the Final Staff Report.

6.18.7 The Board of Trustees has the discretion to approve the recommendation(s) of the Final Staff Report as presented, modify the recommendation(s) of the Final Staff Report, or to approve a different outcome.

6.18.8 The Ministry has encouraged school boards not to make final pupil accommodation review decisions during the summer holiday period (typically from July 1 to the day after Labour Day).

6.18.9 A transition plan will be put in place following the decision to consolidate and/or close a school through a Transition Committee.

6.19 **Timelines for the Modified Accommodation Review Process**

6.19.1 The modified pupil accommodation review process must comply with the following minimum timelines:

6.19.1.1 Following the date of the Board of Trustees' approval to conduct a modified pupil accommodation review, the Board will provide written notice of the Board of Trustees' decision within five (5) business days to each of the affected municipalities through the Clerks Department (or equivalent), other community partners that expressed an interest prior to the modified pupil accommodation review; and include an invitation for a meeting to discuss and comment on the recommended option(s) in the Board's Initial Staff Report. The Board must also notify the Director of Education of their coterminous school Board and the Ministry of Education through the office of the Assistant Deputy Minister of the Financial Policy and Business Division.

6.19.1.2 The affected municipalities, as well as other community partners that expressed an interest prior to the modified pupil accommodation review, must provide their response on the recommended option(s) in the Board's Initial Staff Report before the final public meeting.

6.19.1.3 The Board must hold at least one public meeting. Beginning with the date of the Board of Trustees' approval to conduct a modified pupil accommodation review, there must be no fewer than thirty (30) business days before this public meeting is held.

6.19.1.4 The Final Staff Report must be publicly posted no fewer than ten (10) business days after the final public meeting.

6.0 **Requirements** (Cont'd)

6.19 Timelines for the Modified Accommodation Review Process (Cont'd)

6.19.1 (Cont'd)

6.19.1.5 From the posting of the Final Staff Report, there must be no fewer than ten (10) business days before the public delegations.

6.19.1.6 There must be no fewer than ten (10) business days between public delegations and the final decision of the Board of Trustees.

6.20 Exemptions

6.20.1 This policy applies to schools offering elementary or secondary programs. However, there are specific circumstances where the Board is not obligated to undertake a public accommodation review. These include:

6.20.1.1 Where a replacement school is to be built by the Board on the existing site, or built or acquired within the existing school attendance boundary, as identified through the Board's policy.

6.20.1.2 Where a replacement school is to be built by the Board on the existing site, or built or acquired within the existing school attendance boundary and the school community must be temporarily relocated to ensure the safety of students and staff during the reconstruction, as identified by the Board, including in its relevant policies.

6.20.1.3 When a lease for the school is terminated.

6.20.1.4 When the Board is planning the relocation (in any school year or over a number of school years) of grades or programs, in which the enrolment constitutes 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 a relocation carried over a number of school years).

6.20.1.5 When the Board is repairing or renovating a school, and the school community must be temporarily relocated to ensure the safety of students during the renovations.

6.20.1.6 Where a facility has been serving as a holding school for a school community whose permanent school is over-capacity and/or is under construction or repair; or

6.20.1.7 Where there are no students enrolled at the school at any time throughout the school year.

6.0 **Requirements** (Cont'd)

6.20 **Exemptions** (Cont'd)

6.20.2 In the above circumstances, the Board is expected to inform school communities about proposed accommodation plans for students before a decision is made by the Board of Trustees. The Board will also provide written notice to each of the affected municipalities through the Clerks Department (or equivalent), as well as other community partners that expressed an interest prior to the exemption, and the coterminous school board in the areas of the affected school(s) through the Director of Education, and to the Ministry of Education through the Assistant Deputy Minister of the Financial Policy and Business Division no fewer than 5 business days after the decision to proceed with an exemption.

6.20.3 A transition plan will be put in place following the Board of Trustees' decision to consolidate, close or move a school or students in accordance with this section through a Transition Committee.

7.0 **Sources**

- Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline (PARG) (Ministry of Education, March 2015)
- Community Planning and Partnership Guideline (Ministry of Education, March 2015)

8.0 **Related Policies and Administrative Procedures**

- Public Delegations Policy (PO219)
- Pupil Accommodation Review Administrative Review (AP430-1)