

Policy Manual – Schools

S.05 School Attendance Boundary Changes - PROCEDURES

Purpose:

The Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board is responsible for the establishment, maintenance and modification/alteration of school boundaries for attendance purposes. School attendance boundaries play a significant role for the Board to operate and maintain the system schools as effectively and efficiently as possible in support of student achievement.

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.

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

1.0 BOUNDARY REVIEW COMMITTEE (BRC)

A BRC will be formed following the Board of Trustees' decision to proceed with a boundary review.

Membership of the BRC membership may include:

- The Trustee(s) of each school(s) under review;
- One parent rep from each of the affected school communities;
- Affected Family of School's Superintendent(s);
- Affected school Principals;
- The Pastor or designate from each of the nearby Parishes;
- Manager of Planning and Accommodation; and
- Manager of Real Estate, Community Partnerships and Transportation.

1.2 The role of the BRC is as follows:

- To act as a conduit for information shared between the school board and the school communities;
- Act as a consultation body, providing advice to the Board;
- Review materials provided by board staff;
- Comment and provide suggestions on the boundary option(s) and materials provided;
- Consider the needs of the entire school system and resist advocating for any particular school or neighbourhood; and,
- Attend public meetings and review public comments.

1.3 Meetings

Meetings of the BRC will be open to the public. Members of the public attending committee meetings are expected to act with decorum and in a manner that respects the work of the committee. Individuals or groups that disrupt the committee proceedings may be asked to leave.

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

2.1 Public Meetings

A public meeting is an open meeting with the purpose of sharing relevant information with members of the public and soliciting feedback. A public meeting may be online or in-person. The meeting may take on a variety of formats including, but not limited to, a survey, presentation, question/answer period, open house, workshop, or small group discussions.

A minimum of one (1) public meeting is required. This meeting will be facilitated by Board staff. The public meeting will be advertised in advance using a variety of methods (e.g. posted on website, notice in school newsletter, notice sent home with students at the affected schools, etc.).

Trustees are encouraged to attend all public meetings.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS AND APPROVALS

3.1 Final Staff Report

Following the public consultation process, staff will submit a final report to the Board of Trustees. This report will include an overview of the process and materials considered, the recommended option, and implementation recommendations.

3.2 Approvals

Once the final staff report is submitted to the Board of Trustees, members of the public may request to register as a delegation to provide their comments directly to the Trustees.

4.0 EXEMPTIONS

In most cases, the final approval of a boundary change rests with the Board of Trustees and would involve a public consultation process. There are, however, two exceptions to this rule.

These exceptions are as follows:

- Where a boundary change is being considered for an area where there is no existing students, the boundary options may be considered by the Board 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, the Board may make a decision or elect to conduct a full review.

Where a boundary change is being considered for an area which was part of an Accommodation Review up to and including five years previous, the change will come to the Board for approval.

4.1 Appeals

The public will have the ability to appeal the decision of senior administration to the Board of Trustees within thirty (30) days of public notification. The Board, upon receipt of an appeal, will have the option of endorsing the decision of senior administration, directing staff to advise on minor modifications, or ordering administration to conduct a full review.

If no appeal is received within thirty (30) days of the notification date the decision of senior administration will be final.