

SCHOOL VIABILITY

Background

The Board of Education, in its efforts to provide meaningful learning experiences that reflect what is best for students and to assist students in developing their full potential, recognizes that it needs to maintain viable schools and classrooms.

It is the responsibility of the Board of Education, pursuant to *The Education Act, 1995* to make decisions regarding grade discontinuance or school closure.

To that end, the Board believes:

- It is of the utmost importance to maintain the ability to provide for quality educational opportunities for all students in Good Spirit School Division.
- School reviews shall follow a clearly delineated, transparent and fair process.
- Appropriate and meaningful consultation with the community at various stages of the process is vital.

The Education Act, 1995 requires the Board of Education to adopt criteria for the review of schools where there may be potential closure or discontinuance of grades. The criteria set by the Board are based on essential characteristics of an educational program that would meet educational standards expected by the Board within budgetary considerations.

Procedures

1. Identification of schools eligible to be placed in review
 - 1.1 By October 15 in each school year the Director or designate shall:
 - 1.1.1 Make an assessment of all schools in the division based on the school review criteria established in Board Policy;
 - 1.1.2 Compile a list of all those schools which meet the criteria established by the Board; and
 - 1.1.3 Provide a list of such schools for:
 - 1.1.1.1 The Board;
 - 1.1.1.2 The Chair of the School Community Council; and
 - 1.1.1.3 The principals of the schools.

2. Preliminary review by Director and Administrative Council
 - 2.1 At the beginning of each school year the Director and Administrative Council shall review the list of schools identified as schools eligible to be placed in review.
 - 2.2 Any school that meets the criteria for school review established in Board Policy shall be reviewed by the Director and Administrative Council who shall, by October 15:
 - 2.2.1 Make a recommendation to the Board as to whether or not each school should be placed in review.
 - 2.2.2 As much as possible, utilize objective data to make the determination; and
 - 2.2.3 Provide the Board with:
 - 2.2.3.1 The list of schools identified;
 - 2.2.3.2 The reasons for the determination; and
 - 2.2.3.3 A summary of any feedback received from the community.
3. Motion to Place School in Review
 - 3.1 After review of the information provided by the Director and Administrative Council, the Board shall determine for each school whether or not to place the school in review and shall, prior to October 15, make a motion to place the school in review for those schools where such review is appropriate.
4. School Review Process
 - 4.1 By November 1, the Board shall appoint a School Review Committee for each school placed in review.
 - 4.2 The Director shall ensure that the notices required under legislation are provided and shall ensure that communications between the Board and School Review Committee are facilitated.
 - 4.3 Reviews will be conducted by the Board of Education sitting as a committee of the whole and its Senior Administrative Staff.
 - 4.4 The review will incorporate input received from the School Community Council and/or the community in which the school being reviewed is located as well as the School Review Committee.
5. Motion of Consideration
 - 5.1 The Board shall determine for each school whether or not to consider closure of the school or discontinuance of grades and shall make a motion to consider grade discontinuance or school closure for those schools where such consideration is appropriate.
 - 5.2 In deciding whether or not to make a motion to consider possible grade discontinuance or school closure the Board shall take into account the following matters:
 - 5.2.1 The criteria established under Board Policy 17;

- 5.2.2 Community input provided to the Board;
 - 5.2.3 The interests of the students in the school division; and,
 - 5.2.4 The interests of the students in the school.
6. Consultations with School Community Councils and Staff
- 6.1 After a motion to consider closure of a school or discontinuance of grades has been passed, in addition to the requirements under *The Education Act, 1995*, designated representatives from the Board, will:
 - 6.1.1 Meet with the School Community Council at a mutually agreeable time and place; and,
 - 6.1.2 Meet with the staff of that School Community Council at a mutually agreeable time and place in order to provide them with information and allow them to provide relevant information to the Board.
7. Public Consultations
- 7.1 Public consultations and meetings provided for under legislation shall be arranged by the Director or designate together with such other forms of consultation as may be determined from time to time by the Board or the Director.
8. Final Motion to Close
- 8.1 The Board shall determine for each school whether or not to close the school or discontinue grades and shall make a motion to close the school or discontinue grades by April 30.
 - 8.2 In deciding whether or not to make a motion to close a school or discontinue grades the Board shall take into account the following matters:
 - 8.2.1 The criteria established under Board Policy 17;
 - 8.2.2 The feedback and input provided to the Board during the review process and the consultation process;
 - 8.2.3 The interests of the students in the school division; and
 - 8.2.4 The interests of the students in the school.
9. Implementing the Discontinuance or Closure
- 9.1 Once a decision to discontinue a grade or close a school has been made the Director shall ensure that proper processes, consistent with legislation, are put in place for meaningful and relevant consultation with the School Community Council and any other groups the Director or designate determines will be affected by the closure.
10. Consent by School Community Council
- 10.1 If at any time a School Community Council consents to school closure or grade discontinuance, the Board may proceed directly to implementing the closure or grade discontinuance.

10.2 If a School Community Council consents to a school closure or grade discontinuance the Director will ensure that appropriate consultation with community and staff takes place.

Reference: Section 85, 86, 87 and 88 Education Act
Board Policy 17

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