

## **SCHOOL REVIEW PROCESS FOR PERMANENT CLOSURE**

### **POLICY**

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#### **1.0 PRINCIPLES**

- 1.1 The Halifax Regional School Board has a responsibility to manage the use of its schools effectively.
- 1.2 The Halifax Regional School Board will examine the feasibility of reviewing schools that prove to be inefficient regarding effective education across the whole region, economic constraints, and the aging of physical plants.
- 1.3 The Halifax Regional School Board shall involve school community members in the school review process.
- 1.4 This policy shall not apply to the closure of a school or schools replaced by a newly constructed facility, built to house students from the school or schools to be closed.

#### **2.0 POLICY FRAMEWORK**

- 2.1 The Halifax Regional School Board is committed to ensuring the review of facilities for permanent closure is in accordance with the Nova Scotia Education Act.

#### **3.0 AUTHORIZATION**

- 3.1 The Superintendent is authorized to develop and implement procedures in support of this policy.

# **SCHOOL REVIEW PROCESS FOR PERMANENT CLOSURE PROCEDURES**

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### **1.0 IDENTIFICATION OF SCHOOLS FOR REVIEW**

- 1.1 Staff will identify schools to be considered for review.
  - 1.1.1 Staff will prepare an Identification Report, by the end of March, containing data, statistics and any additional information supporting the reasons for identification for review including:
    - 1.1.1.1 Condition of the school facility to be reviewed;
    - 1.1.1.2 Condition of the receiving school facility;
    - 1.1.1.3 Factors relating to student transportation;
    - 1.1.1.4 Geographic isolation of the public school, if any.
    - 1.1.1.5 Future enrolments;
    - 1.1.1.6 Area developments.
- 1.2 The Identification Report will be presented to the Governing Board at a public Board meeting held prior to April 30.
- 1.3 The Governing Board will make the decision if a school is to participate in the review process at a public Board meeting.

## **2.0 IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT**

- 2.0 Staff will prepare a comprehensive Impact Assessment Report for any schools identified for review, containing data, statistics and any additional information regarding the impact of a potential school closure including:
  - 2.0.1 Capability to deliver the public school program;
  - 2.0.2 Educational benefits to students, including access to services and programs;
  - 2.0.3 Time and distance involved in transporting students to the receiving school;
  - 2.0.4 Ability of students to continue to access and participate in extracurricular activities;
  - 2.0.5 Impact on the receiving school;
  - 2.0.6 Capital construction planning for the school region;
  - 2.0.7 Property services efficiencies that would be gained;
  - 2.0.8 Operational and capital requirements arising from maintaining the status quo;
  - 2.0.9 Efficiencies in educational staffing that would be gained;
  - 2.0.10 Community usage of the school over the last year;
  - 2.0.11 Alternatives available to the community with respect to facilities available for community or regional use;
  - 2.0.12 Any other impact on the community.
- 2.2 The Impact Assessment Report will be presented by staff to the Governing Board at a public Board meeting before the end of September.

## **3.0 STUDY COMMITTEE**

- 3.1 Any school identified for review will establish a Study Committee, prior to October 7, consisting of the members of the School Advisory Council.

- 3.2 The Study Committee shall:
  - 3.2.1 Hold their first meeting prior to October 21;
  - 3.2.2 Hold at least one public meeting;
  - 3.2.3 Prepare a written response to the Governing Board, no later than Feb. 1, regarding the Impact Assessment Report.

#### **4.0 PUBLIC HEARING**

- 4.1 Upon receiving a response from the Study Committee, the Governing Board shall:
  - 4.1.1 Table the Study Committee's response at a public Board meeting no later than February 28;
  - 4.1.2 Hold at least one public meeting, prior to March 24, to provide the public with an opportunity to respond to the Impact Assessment Report and the Study Committee's response.

#### **5.0 DECISION BY GOVERNING BOARD**

- 5.1 After a public hearing, no later than March 31, the Governing Board shall make a decision with respect to the outcome of the school review process at a public Board meeting.
- 5.2 A decision of the Governing Board made in accordance with the Education Act shall not be altered by the Minister of Education.
- 5.3 If the Governing Board decides to permanently close a school, it is to be closed no later than five years following the decision.
- 5.4 When a school has been reviewed for possible closure and the decision of the Governing Board has been that the school shall not be closed, no subsequent recommendation to review that school for possible closure shall be made for at least four years from the date of the Governing Board's decision. Exceptions may be made (a) when a subsequent review within less than four years was an explicit part of the decision of the Governing Board, or (b) when significant and demonstrable changes have occurred, such as a precipitous drop in enrolment, which warrant an earlier review.

## **6.0 POLICY REVIEW**

- 6.1 This policy will be reviewed every three years or in the event there are changes to the regulations of the school review process under the Education Act.