

SCHOOL CLOSURE OR REORGANIZATION

The Board of Trustees shall make the final decision regarding any school closure in accordance with the Ministerial Guidelines. A recommendation for reorganization is not bound by these Ministerial Guidelines.

In accordance with Manitoba Education Policy Statement Regarding Guidelines for School Closure and Divisional Policy FCB, the Board of Trustees requires the following procedures to apply when a school is being considered for possible closure:

1. Preliminary Investigation by the Superintendent

Upon the recommendation of the Finance and Planning Committee of the Board of Trustees, and with the direction of the Board, a preliminary investigation shall be commenced through the Superintendent's Department to determine whether it is advisable to undertake a full investigation and consultation process of possible closure or reorganization of one or more identified school building(s) within the Division.

The regulation is designed to provide for an orderly, positive and logical examination of the educational programs, community demographics and financial considerations of school(s) under investigation. With respect to a preliminary study, the Superintendent will consider all of the following criteria in determining the viability of the operation:

Demographics

- Geographic location and proximity to neighbouring schools;
- Population and enrolment patterns and projections;
- Divisional K-S4 Class Size Guidelines;
- Catchment area of affected school(s);
- Students relocated because of school closure or reorganization; and
- Schools of Choice enrolment.

Educational and Social

- The effect on the community, such as community use of school buildings and grounds, child care facilities, and joint use agreements;

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- The effect on student placement options, peer relationships, and student/teacher relationships;
- The effect on teacher collaboration and professional development; and
- Implications for teaching and non-teaching staffing allocations.

Financial

- Cost implications with respect to staffing, operation and maintenance of the school, and transportation of students; and
- Alternative use for the school or proposed disposal if it were to close.

Facilities

- Capacities of school(s) under review;
- Age and condition of the school facility; and
- Provincial funding based on age of school and square footage.

2. Board Motion – Formal Identification

Upon the receipt and consideration of a report from the Superintendent identifying a school as a candidate for closure or reorganization, the Board of Trustees will direct the Superintendent by way of motion to proceed to a full investigation.

When it has been determined that a school should be considered a candidate for closure or reorganization, public notification shall be conveyed to parents and community at large. The notification shall provide an outline of the public consultation process to be followed by the Division.

The Division, through the Superintendent, will also prepare an informational report for community members with respect to the educational, financial, and community implications of the possible closure or reorganization.

3. Full Investigation by the Superintendent

In conducting a full investigation or formal review for school closure, the Division, through the Superintendent, will be guided by Manitoba Education Policy Statement Regarding Guidelines for School Closure. Critical to the process is the sharing of information and a comprehensive consultation process with affected parents and residents.

In conducting a full investigation or formal review for school reorganization, the Division is not bound by the Ministerial Guidelines to school closure and will establish a process and timeline appropriate for this purpose.

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The consultation process for school closure or reorganization will include public meeting(s) with representatives of the Board of Trustees and Senior Administration to provide information to the community and to receive community input. Following public meeting(s), opportunities will be provided to parents and residents for further responses in writing.

4. Final Report and Board Decision

The Superintendent shall submit a final report with recommendations to the Board of Trustees. Upon receipt of the report, the Board shall ensure parents and residents have access to the report.

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If the Board of Trustees approves a resolution for school closure or reorganization, the Superintendent will be directed to develop a plan of action, in collaboration with Divisional and school staff, in order to ensure a smooth transition. The plan of action should carefully consider the needs of students, staff and parents.

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