



1. Rationale

The Pupil Accommodation Review Policy fulfills the requirements of the *Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline* of the Ministry of Education (dated June 26, 2009). The policy applies to schools offering elementary and secondary day-school programs.

The Simcoe County District School Board recognizes the importance of the quality of the learning environment for students. Factors such as changing demographic patterns, increases and decreases in enrolment, environmental restrictions, facility conditions, partnership opportunities, and the Ministry of Education funding model, affect the ability of the Board to operate and maintain its schools effectively and efficiently to support student achievement. A review of these factors may result in the need to develop alternative solutions to student accommodation within a planning area or adjacent planning areas.

2. Policy

- 2.1 It is the policy of the Simcoe County District School Board to provide a comprehensive range of educational opportunities equitably distributed across a broad and diverse geographical area through sustainable community schools.
- 2.2 It is the policy of the Simcoe County District School Board to support the achievement of students through the operation of schools in an effective, efficient and economical manner.
- 2.3 It is the policy of the Simcoe County District School Board to have a transparent accommodation review process

3. Definitions

In this policy:

- 3.1 “Accommodation review area” means the combined attendance areas of the group of schools involved in an accommodation review. An accommodation review area may include parts of one or more planning areas.
- 3.2 “Accommodation Review Report” means the report prepared by the Accommodation Review Committee.
- 3.3 “Attendance area” means the area enclosed within a school’s attendance boundary. A school accommodates the students who live within its attendance area. If a district or county program(s) is also located in the school then students registered in that program(s) may live outside the school’s attendance area. The board’s policies regarding School Attendance Areas are detailed in Board Policy 2317.



- 3.4 “Closure” means the cessation of the use of part or all of a school building for instructional purposes for students of the Board.
- 3.5 “Consolidation” means the reorganization of students into one or more neighbouring school(s), and/or into a new school(s).
- 3.6 “Day” means a calendar day, and includes weekends and statutory holidays and professional development days. Summer vacation, Christmas break and Spring break, including adjacent weekends, are not considered as part of the 30, 60, or 90 calendar day periods. For schools with a year-round calendar, a holiday that is nine calendar days or longer, including weekends, is not considered part of the 30, 60, or 90 calendar day periods. The approved school year calendar is used in the calculation of calendar day periods. If the time limit for filing a notice or document or calling a meeting falls on a day other than a “school day” the notice or documentation shall be filed or a meeting called on the next “school day”.
- 3.7 “Parent/guardian” means a parent/guardian of an elementary school student or a secondary school student who is a minor and who is enrolled in a SCDSB school as a pupil of the Board.
- 3.8 “Planning area” means each of the areas as delineated in the background study used in the preparation of the board’s Education Development Charge By-law. There are separate elementary and secondary planning areas.
- 3.9 “Public consultation period” means the period between the first public meeting and the fourth (or final) public meeting held as part of the accommodation review process.
- 3.10 “Public consultation process” means the opportunities for members of the public to be involved in the accommodation review process through public meetings and feedback forms.
- 3.11 “Reference Criteria” means the educational and accommodation criteria for examining schools under review and accommodation options.
- 3.12 “School” means a facility that accommodates a body of elementary school students or secondary school students that is organized as a unit for educational purposes under the jurisdiction of the Board, and includes the teachers and other staff members associated with the unit and the land and premises used in connection with the unit.
- 3.13 “School Day” means a day that is within a school year that is not a school holiday.



- 3.14 “School Capacity” means the number of spaces available for students within the school considering the Ministry Rated On-the-Ground Capacity (OTG), washroom capacity, Reasonable Land Use Capacity (septic limits), and unique site restrictions. The Ministry Rated Capacity (OTG) means the number of student places assigned by the Ministry of Education and does not include portables.
- 3.15 “Staff Report” means the administration’s analysis of the final Accommodation Review Report and any additional staff findings and recommendations.
- 3.16 “Terms of Reference” means the formalized framework in which an Accommodation Review Committee conducts an accommodation review and encompasses, but is not limited to, committee mandate, governance, membership, and the reference criteria.

4. Guidelines

4.1 Establishment of an ARC

- 4.1.1 The Simcoe County District School Board examines long-term enrolment projections, facility condition, program delivery, and opportunities for partnerships with other organizations through the Capital Plan. The Capital Plan may recommend changes to attendance areas, the construction of new schools, additions to existing schools, the renewal/upgrading of facilities, the use of classrooms and portables, partnerships, or an accommodation review process for school closure/consolidation.
- 4.1.2 Where an accommodation review has been approved by the Board, the review will focus on a group of schools within a planning area rather than examine a single school. Wherever possible schools should only be subject to an accommodation review once in a five-year period unless there are exceptional circumstances as deemed by the Board.

4.2 Composition of the Accommodation Review Committee (ARC)

- 4.2.1 The Board will appoint an Accommodation Review Committee (ARC) drawn from the school community and the broader community, to lead the accommodation review process.
- 4.2.2 Voting members of the ARC will include the following representatives from each school:
- Two (2) parents/guardians, from the attendance area of each school, appointed by the school council;



- One (1) student appointed by student council (where a secondary school is under review);
- One (1) community representative who is a public school supporter from each municipality within the accommodation review area appointed by the municipal council.

4.2.3 Non-voting members of the ARC will include the following representatives from each school:

- Local trustee(s);
- The principal;
- The superintendent(s) of education K-12;
- The director of education or designate who will chair the ARC.

4.2.4 Unless the Board decides otherwise, where any person appointed to the ARC is unable or unwilling to participate in the work of the ARC, the ARC shall continue to perform its duties under this policy despite the absence of that member(s), and no act or duty performed by the ARC shall be deemed invalid by reason only of absence of that member(s).

4.3 Duties of the Director of Education or Designate

4.3.1 An ARC will be chaired by the director of education or designate.

4.3.2 The director of education or designate will provide the ARC with information regarding the board's long-term enrolment and capital planning. This information shall include partnership opportunities (e.g. with other school boards, municipalities, community groups, etc.) or lack thereof, as identified as part of the board's long term planning process.

4.3.3 The director of education or designate shall provide the ARC with at least one alternative accommodation option that addresses the objectives and Reference Criteria outlined in the Terms of Reference (APPENDIX A). The option(s) will address where students would be accommodated; what changes to existing facilities may be required; what programs would be available to students; and transportation. If the option(s) require new capital investment, the director of education will advise on the availability of funding and, where no funding exists, will propose how students would be accommodated if funding does not become available.

4.3.4 The director of education or designate shall provide the ARC with a School Information Profile for each school in an accommodation review. The profile will provide information about each school that addresses the:

- Value to the student,
- Value to the school board,
- Value to the community, and
- Value to the local economy.



The school's value to the student takes priority over other considerations about the school. The ARC will consult with the community at the first public meeting regarding the content of the School Information Profile and edit the profile where new objective information is available or corrections to information is required. Board staff will assist the ARC in reviewing and editing the School Information Profile(s). A final version of the School Information Profile for each school under review will be presented to the public and the board of trustees as part of the ARC's Accommodation Review Report.

- 4.3.5 All information the ARC receives from board staff that is deemed relevant shall be posted on the board's website, and made available in print on request. Where relevant information is technical in nature, it is to be explained in plain language.

4.4 Public Consultation Process

- 4.4.1 The public consultation process is to be based on the School Information Profile(s), and the Terms of Reference, and include input from the public meetings.
- 4.4.2 A minimum of thirty (30) calendar days notice of the first public meeting shall be provided. The date of this meeting shall be established by the director of education.
- 4.4.3 A minimum of four public meetings are to be held as part of the public consultation process.
- 4.4.4 At the discretion of the ARC additional public meetings may be held where deemed by the ARC to be necessary.
- 4.4.5 Public meetings will be publicized in advance, and held in the school(s) under review, or in a nearby facility if physical accessibility cannot be provided at the school(s).
- 4.4.6 Attendance at public meetings will be recorded in order to track who has include the printed name, full address, home phone number, and signature of attendees. For the board to be able to verify that a non-parent/guardian of a pupil in one or more of the school(s) under review has participated in the review process, the nonparent/guardian must have more of the public meetings held by the ARC, and their attendance must have been recorded.



- 4.4.7 A minimum of ninety (90) calendar days shall elapse between the first and last public meeting of the ARC. The date of the last public meeting shall be established by the director of education, in consultation with the ARC.
- 4.4.8 The final public meeting held by the ARC will be for the purpose of presenting the draft Accommodation Review Report to the community. Following this meeting, the ARC may further revise the report based on input received at this meeting prior to delivering the final written document to the director of education.
- 4.4.9 Minutes reflecting the full range of opinions expressed and submissions presented at the meetings are to be kept and made publicly available once approved by the ARC. ARCs and board administration are to questions relevant to the ARC and its analysis, at the meetings, or in writing appended to the minutes of the meeting, and made available on the board's website.

4.5 Accommodation Review Report and Board Decision(s)

- 4.5.1 The ARC will produce an Accommodation Review Report that will make accommodation recommendations consistent with the objectives and Reference Criteria outlined in the Terms of Reference. The report will include:
- a final version of the School Information Profile for each school in the group of schools under review,
 - an accommodation proposal or proposals,
 - community input regarding the proposal, and
 - other possible options identified by the ARC as solutions to the accommodation issues under consideration.

The ARC's accommodation recommendation may include new capital investment. The director of education will advise the ARC on the availability of funding and, where no funding exists, the ARC, with the support of the board administration, will propose how students would be accommodated if funding does not become available.

- 4.5.2 In the interests of achieving a timely conclusion for the community involved, a maximum of fourteen (14) calendar days shall elapse between the last of the ARC's public meetings and the delivery of the Accommodation Review Report to the director of education.
- 4.5.3 Should an ARC fail to deliver its final Accommodation Review Report to the director of education within the 14 calendar day period, it must request an extension of this timeline. The request for the extension must be addressed to the chair of the board and the director of education.



It must include detailed reasons why the ARC requires an extension to the timeline.

- 4.5.4 The chair of the board will place the request on the next board agenda, if required, or call a special meeting of the board to consider a request for an extension.
- 4.5.5 The board may require the ARC appear before it to explain the reasons for the delay, to discuss the progress of the ARC, and to consider up to a maximum of 14 days extension for the ARC.
- 4.5.6 Once the Accommodation Review Report has been delivered by the ARC to the director of education, it will be made accessible to trustees and the public via posting on the board website, within five school days. The director will have the Accommodation Review Report reviewed and analyzed by board staff, and a staff report will be prepared.
- 4.5.7 Within five school days from the date the director of education received the Accommodation Review Report from the ARC, the board chairperson shall call the following ARC Special Board Meetings:
 - (a) The first ARC Special Board Meeting will receive the final Accommodation Review Report and the staff report. The agenda will include the Accommodation Review Report and staff report. There will be no decisions or delegations. This meeting shall be held within 21 days from when the director receives the Accommodation Review Report.
 - (b) The next ARC Special Board Meeting(s) will receive delegations from community members to make their views known to the board before any decision(s) are made by the board. This meeting shall be held within 30 days from the ARC Special Board Meeting referenced in 4.5.3(a). No decisions will be made. There will be no less than 21 days notice to the public of the ARC Special Board Meeting held to receive delegations.
 - (c) The final ARC Special Board Meeting will be the meeting at which trustees will make a decision(s) and vote. The meeting date shall be held within 90 days from the ARC Special Board Meeting referenced in 4.5.3(a). No delegations will be heard. There will be no less than 60 days notice to the public of the final ARC Special Board Meeting.
- 4.5.8 In order to delegate at the ARC Special Board Meeting(s), individuals must forward their written outline to the director's office at least 7 days prior to the meeting date.



Delegations will be heard as per the Board's bylaws. No delegations regarding an ARC will be heard at a Special or ARC Regular Board or Committee Meeting.

- 4.5.9 Should the Board pass a resolution to close a school or schools, the board shall outline clear timelines around when the school(s) will close.
- 4.5.10 When the board decides to close a school, the director of education or designate shall meet with the parents of the students in the school to be closed and shall inform the parents of the arrangements for the accommodation of the students.
- 4.5.11 Following a decision administration will establish a Transition Team(s) to facilitate the reorganization of the students.

5. Special Circumstances

- 5.1 In the following circumstances the Board will not undertake a pupil accommodation review. Instead, the Board will provide appropriate advance notice of proposals that would affect the accommodation of students, and an opportunity for public input before a final decision is made by the trustees:
 - 5.1.1 When a replacement school is to be rebuilt on the existing site or within the existing attendance boundary.
 - 5.1.2 When a lease is terminated.
 - 5.1.3 When the Board is considering the relocation of a program, where the enrolment in the program constitutes less than 50% of the enrolment of the school.
 - 5.1.4 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.
 - 5.1.5 When a facility has been serving as a holding school for a school community whose permanent school is under construction or repair.
- 5.2 Despite any other provision in this policy or any policy of the Board, in unusual and extreme circumstances such as problems with safe use of a facility, the director of education may temporarily close a school and forthwith commence planning for the permanent accommodation of displaced students.



6. Administrative Review of Accommodation Review Process

- 6.1 An individual or individuals may seek a review of the school board's accommodation process from the Ministry of Education. In order to seek a review the individual or individual(s) must:
 - 6.1.1 Submit a copy of the board's accommodation review policy highlighting how the accommodation review process was not compliant with the school board's accommodation review policy.
 - 6.1.2 Demonstrate the support of a portion of the school community through the completion of a petition signed by a number of supporters equal to at least 30% of the affected school's student headcount (e.g., if the headcount is 150, then 45 signatures would be required). Parents/guardians of students and/or other individuals that participated in the accommodation review process are eligible to sign the petition.
- 6.2 The petition must provide a space for individuals to print and sign their name; address (street name and postal code); and to indicate whether they are a parent/guardian of a student attending the school subject to the accommodation review, or an individual who has participated in the review process.
- 6.3 The petition and the justification must be submitted to the school board and the Minister of Education within thirty (30) calendar days of the board's closure resolution.
- 6.4 When the board receives a petition, the board must:
 - 6.4.1 Confirm to the Minister of Education that the names on the petition are parents/guardians of students enrolled at the affected school(s) and/or individuals who participated in the review process.
 - 6.4.2 Prepare a response to the individual's or individuals' submission regarding the process and forward the board's response to the Minister of Education within thirty (30) calendar days of receiving the petition.
 - 6.4.3 Post the petition for a review by the Minister of Education on the board's website.



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7. Administrative Procedures

The director of education is authorized to provide the administrative procedures necessary to implement this policy.

**ADOPTED AND APPROVED June20, 2007
REVISED March 24, 2010**

APM No. A5500

TERMS OF REFERENCE APPENDIX A

Terms of Reference

1.0 Preamble

1.1 Prior to establishment of the ARC:

- Each year the director of education shall conduct a preliminary accommodation analysis of all schools under the board's jurisdiction and present the findings to the board of trustees in the Capital Plan;
- Based on the Capital Plan, the board of trustees may identify a school or school(s) for further review;
- The director of education shall inform parents, staff, the school council(s) and the community of the schools' identified of possible changes in accommodation status.

1.2 The review of a particular school or schools is to be led by an Accommodation Review Committee (ARC) appointed by the board of trustees.

1.3 The ARC assumes an advisory role and will provide recommendations to the board of trustees.

1.4 The final decision regarding the accommodation of pupils will be made by the board of trustees.

2.0 Membership of the ARC

2.1 The ARC will be comprised of the following members:

2.1.1 Voting members of the ARC will include the following representatives from each school:

- Two (2) parents/guardians, of the attendance area of each school, appointed by the school council
- One (1) student appointed by student council (where a secondary school is under review)
- One (1) community representative who is a public school supporter from each municipality within the accommodation review area appointed by the municipal council

2.1.2 Non-voting Members of the ARC will include the following representatives from each school:

- Local trustee(s)
- The principal
- The superintendent(s) of education K-12
- The director of education or designate

2.1.3 The ARC will be chaired by the director of education or designate.

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3.0 Responsibilities of the ARC

3.1 Voting members of the ARC are charged with:

- Reviewing and amending where new objective information is available or correction to information is required the School Information Profile for each of school(s) under review;
- Applying the Terms of Reference and the Reference Criteria to the proposed accommodation option(s) provided by the director of education and any proposed accommodation option(s) generated by the ARC;
- Seeking public input on accommodation options for the schools under review;
- Creating an Accommodation Review Report that includes;
 - The final version of the School Information Profile for each of the school(s) under review;
 - An accommodation proposal or proposals;
 - Community input regarding the proposal(s), and
 - Other possible options identified by the local ARC as solutions to the accommodation issues under consideration.
- Presenting the Accommodation Review Report to the community at the final public meeting;
- Delivering the Accommodation Review Report to the director of education;
- Presenting the Accommodation Review Report to the Board of trustees.

3.2 Non-voting member duties include:

- The director of education or designate shall provide the ARC with information regarding the board's long term planning and capital planning, including partnership opportunities or lack thereof;
- The director of education or designate shall provide the ARC with at least one alternative accommodation option that addresses the objectives and Reference Criteria outlined in the Terms of Reference;
- The option(s) will address where students would be accommodated;
 - what changes to existing facilities may be required;
 - what programs would be available to students;
 - and transportation plans.
- If the option(s) require new capital investment, the director of education will advise on the availability of funding, and where no funding exists, board administration will propose how students would be accommodated if the funding does not become available;

- The director of education or designate shall provide the ARC with a School Information Profile for each school listed in an Accommodation Review;
- Board administration shall assist the ARC in advertise the public meetings and make arrangements for the logistics of such meetings;
- Board administration shall post to the board's web site all relevant information related to the ARC process;
- Board administration shall assist the ARC through the provision of data to analyze accommodation options;
- Trustees shall act in an advisory capacity to facilitate discussion around accommodation options;
- The director of education or designate shall present the Accommodation Review Report, along with an analysis of the report, and recommendations from staff, to the Board of trustees.

4.0 ARC Operational Rules

- 4.1 The director of education or designate shall chair the ARC.
- 4.2 A minimum of thirty (30) calendar days notice of the first public meeting will be provided. The date of this meeting shall be established by the director of education.
- 4.3 All meetings of an ARC shall be open to the public, and the dates of such meetings shall be published.
- 4.4 The School Information Profile(s) and the Terms of Reference shall be presented at the first public meeting. Input from the community will be received at this time.
- 4.5 As the ARC considers the accommodation options, the needs of all students in schools of the ARC are to be considered objectively and fairly, based on the School Information Profile(s) and the objectives and the Reference Criteria outlined in the Terms of Reference.
- 4.6 A minimum of four public meetings are to be held as part of the consultation.
- 4.7 At the discretion of the ARC additional public meetings may be held where deemed by the ARC to be necessary.
- 4.8 Public meetings will be publicized in advance, and held in the school(s) under review, or in a nearby facility if physical accessibility cannot be provided at the school(s).
- 4.9 Attendance at public meetings will be recorded in order to track who has taken part in the accommodation review process. Attendance must include the printed name, full address, home phone number, and signature of attendees.

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- 4.10 For the board to be able to verify that a non-parent/guardian of a pupil in one or more of the school(s) under review has participated in the review process, the non-parent/guardian must have attended one or more of the public meetings held by the ARC, and their attendance must have been recorded as in 4.9.
- 4.11 The final public meeting held by the ARC will be for the purpose of presenting the Accommodation Review Report to the community. Following this meeting the ARC may further revise the report based on input received at this meeting prior to delivering the final written document to the director of education.
- 4.12 The ARC's report shall include the final School Information Profiles(s) and any proposed alternative accommodation recommendations developed by the ARC. The ARC may recommend accommodation options that include new capital investment. In such cases, board administration will advise on the availability of funding. Where no funding exists, the ARC with the support of board administration will propose how students would be accommodated if funding does not become available.
- 4.13 A minimum of ninety (90) calendar days shall elapse between the first and last public meeting of the ARC. The date of the last public meeting shall be established by the director of education, in consultation with the ARC.
- 4.14 In the interests of achieving a timely conclusion for the community involved, a maximum of fourteen (14) calendar days shall elapse between the last of the ARC's public meetings and the delivery of the ARC's final Accommodation Review Report to the director of education.
- 4.15 Should an ARC fail to deliver Accommodation Review Report to the director of education within the fourteen (14) calendar day period, it must request an extension of this timeline. The request for the extension must be addressed to the chair and director of education of the board, and include detailed reasons why the ARC requires an extension to the timeline.
- 4.16 The board may require the ARC to appear before it to explain the reasons for the delay, to discuss the progress of the ARC, and to establish timelines for the ARC's work.
- 4.17 Minutes reflecting the full range of opinions expressed and materials submitted at meetings are to be kept, and made publicly available. ARCs and board administration are to respond to questions relevant to the ARC and its analysis, at the meetings or in writing appended to the minutes of the meeting, and made available on the board's website.
- 4.18 After the ARC has presented the Accommodation Review Report to the Board of trustees, the ARC will be disbanded.

5.0 Reference Criteria

- 5.1 To consolidate students in sites to achieve sufficient sized student populations thereby reducing the likelihood of triple grade classes in elementary schools.
- 5.2 To consolidate students in sites in sufficient numbers to:
 - Allow for the provision of specialized programs;
 - Afford opportunities for teachers to improve teaching practices through in-school professional learning communities;
 - Enhance opportunities for students to participate in a range of extra-curricular activities.
- 5.3 To, wherever possible, keep the time any student rides on a bus in accordance with Board Policy 2410, Transportation of Students.
- 5.4 To reduce, or eliminate, the surplus pupil places that exist in the board and thus ensure better use of limited resources.
- 5.5 To, where it meets the needs of the students and the educational objectives of the board, work in partnership with the local community to make the best use of the school building (e.g. co-location of community agencies within school buildings).
- 5.6 To, where it meets the needs of the students and the educational objectives of the board, work in partnership with community agencies to augment the educational experience provided to our students (e.g. reciprocal agreements with recreation facilities).
- 5.7 The value of the school to the student is reflected in the following reference criteria to be used when considering accommodation options.

Factor	Comparison Criteria		Considerations
Schools Size and Grade Configuration	Elementary	JK-8 preferred 400-550 students	Existing available surplus spaces in schools. Consolidation of sufficient number of students at one site to minimize triple grades.
	Secondary	9-12 preferred 1200-1400 students	Existing available surplus spaces in schools.
School Utilization	Enrolment vs capacity	Less than 85% OTG Insufficient student population for programming	Low student populations impact on the delivery of program and the ability of teachers to work in professional learning teams. Lower student enrolment results in fewer staff being allocated to a school which has resulted in triple grade

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Appendix A-6			classes and a reduction in the number of extra-curricular opportunities, reduces flexibility in student interactions.
	Community use of school	The school site is used by the community	Community use of schools is an important consideration when examining the role of the school in the community.
	Potential alternative uses of the building	Partnerships, leasing, disposition	Alternative uses of the school building and site enhance the community in other ways
Financial Consideration	Projected capital costs	5 years 10 years	Renovations are costly and can take resources from other board programs.
	Annual operational costs	Efficiency	Duplication of services in multiple sites that are not fully utilized is not an efficient use of resources
	Capital funding	Competing priorities	Alternative accommodation must be made if capital funds are not available.
Transportation	Costs	Efficiency	Transportation is an ongoing expense. Routing, walkzones, and belltimes must be examined to understand costs.
	Policy 2400	Adherence	
Program Offering	Multi-age groupings	Incidence of triple grades. Incidence of combined secondary courses that allow for range of course offerings	Student enrolment determines class and grade organization. Lower enrolment results in less than optimal combinations.
	Courses required for graduation	Available to students at all levels and can be timetabled.	Lower enrolment challenges a school's ability to offer compulsory courses and address all graduation pathways.
	Specialized courses (secondary)	Art, music (instrumental, vocal), dance, visual arts, drama, business, communications, technology, computer	The Appendix A-7 is required to identify population base and special instructional staff.

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	Specialist high skills major	Availability	Appendix A-7 The ability to run and sustain these programs require a minimum student population base and special instructional staff.
	Extra-curricular activities	Range and availability	Lower student population results in fewer teaching staff. This has the potential to limit the number and type of extra-curricular programs available to students. Lower student populations limit the ability to provide complete team membership

TERMS OF REFERENCE APPENDIX B

Appendix B

Timelines for Accommodation Review Process

