

	POLICY NO: 2.1
Adopted	2014
Projected Review Date	2029
Revisions	2019, 2022, 2025

POLICY: BOUNDARY REVIEW

PURPOSE:

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB) believes in optimizing and ensuring the effective and efficient use of all facilities to support student achievement. In alignment with the Long-Term Facilities Plan, guided by HWDSB's Multi-Year Strategic Plan, the Board determines school boundaries in accordance with its authority under Section 171 (1)7 of the Education Act.

The Board is committed to responding to changing demographics and program needs through boundary changes in a fair and transparent manner, prioritizing effective community engagement. New school boundaries or changes to existing school boundaries will consider the Guiding Principles of the Long-Term Facilities Plan and HWDSB's commitment to human rights and equity.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

- Boundary modifications should be considered to:
 - accommodate new school construction
 - balance student enrolment
 - address site or facility constraints; and/or
 - support evolving program needs
- Address the short and long-term accommodation requirements of the impacted communities in a timely manner.
- Be mindful of the best and most prudent use of all resources available to HWDSB.
- Adhere to the guiding principles as defined in the Long-Term Facilities Plan including optimal school capacity, grade organization, transportation, facility requirements, site size and the balance between French Immersion and English track students in dual track schools ([Long-Term Facilities Plan](#)).
- Consult with the impacted school communities to gain further insight into the boundary recommendation(s).
- Ensure Trustee(s) are engaged as a member of the Boundary Review Resource Team.

INTENDED OUTCOMES:

When a Boundary Review is conducted, HWDSB staff will:

- Ensure that community engagement for a Boundary Review process begins no later than the fall preceding the implementation year and concludes in time to support effective transition planning and the execution of the boundary change.
- Validate or amend school attendance boundaries to support and optimize the effective and

efficient use of all facilities, while also supporting student well-being and achievement.

- Consider community and school engagement strategies through the Boundary Review process.
- Ensure the input of the affected Trustee(s) is received and regarded throughout the Boundary Review process.

RESPONSIBILITY:

Chief Executive Officer

TERMINOLOGY:

Boundary Review Advisory Panel: Includes a minimum of two representatives from each affected school. Membership may consist of representatives from School Councils and/or Home & School Associations (where applicable). The school representatives (provided through the principal), along with the Boundary Review Resource Team members, analyze Boundary Review data, accommodation challenges, and boundary solutions.

Boundary Review: A formal process of public consultation undertaken to evaluate, create or modify school attendance boundaries.

Boundary Review Resource Team: This team includes the Family of Schools Superintendent, Trustee, Principal and Vice-Principal of the affected school(s), along with Planning, Accommodation and Rentals and other Board Administrative Support staff. The mandate of the Resource Team is to lead the Boundary Review process, including the establishment of boundary recommendations, the evaluation of the viability of the boundary modifications and facilitation of community consultation.

Consensus: The Boundary Review Advisory Panel reaches a decision that all panel members can support, even if some members have reservations. It emphasizes broad agreement, acceptable compromise, and collective endorsement rather than identical positive votes from everyone (i.e. a unanimous vote).

Final Staff Report: The Report to the Board of Trustees outlining the final recommendations from staff for the school Boundary Review, with feedback from the Boundary Review Advisory Panel.

Initial Staff Report: The Report to the Board of Trustees from staff outlining the rationale and scope of the proposed Boundary Review.

Long-Term Facilities Plan: A comprehensive planning document illustrating municipal demographics, condition and utilization of current facilities and accommodation analyses designed to enhance student achievement. The plan is meant to support and promote the goals of the Multi-Year Strategic Plan, Board Improvement Plan, Human Rights Policy, Multi-year Accessibility Plan, Indigenous Education Circle Strategic Action Plan and other HWDSB Policies and Plans.

ACTION REQUIRED:

A Boundary Review, outside of the accommodation review process, may commence under the following

circumstances:

- Initiated through the Long-Term Facilities Plan, upon Board approval,
- Recommendation through the Director of Education, upon Board approval, or
- Initiated through the Board of Trustees.

Consultation with impacted school communities and changes to the school boundaries will adhere to the HWDSB Boundary Review Procedure.

Boundary Review Advisory Panel Mandate and Composition:

Mandate

The mandate of the Advisory Panel is to advise the Board of Trustees through the Final Staff Report.

The mandate of the Resource Team and the Advisory Panel is to analyze boundary solutions to identify accommodation challenges through discussions and inquiries about boundary options and/or information.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- Establishing and reviewing Boundary Review evaluation criteria
- Discussing the viability of other alternatives to the proposed boundary recommendations
- Identifying key considerations and applying them to recommendations or alternatives explored
- Engaging the community of identified schools
- Reviewing community feedback

Advisory Panel and Resource Team Composition:

Advisory Panel members include:

The Boundary Review Advisory Panel shall include, at a minimum, two representatives from each affected school. Membership may consist of representatives from School Councils and/or Home & School Associations (where applicable).

Resource Team members include:

- Superintendent of Equity and Student Achievement (Facilitator)
- Manager of Planning, Accommodation and Rentals
- Trustee(s) of affected schools
- Planning & Accommodation staff
- Principal and/or Vice-Principal(s) of affected schools
- Research and Analytics staff
- Communications & Community Engagement staff
- Hamilton-Wentworth Student Transportation Services staff
- Other Board staff as deemed necessary (Facility Services, Program, etc.)

The role of the Resource Team assisting the Boundary Review Advisory Panel is to support the members by sharing helpful background information, answering questions and being a liaison between staff and community throughout the process. The Resource Team does not take part in choosing or promoting specific

options, as the panel is responsible for making its own options.

Key Responsibilities and Activities of Advisory Panel and Resource Team:

Public Consultation

- The Resource Team will facilitate Advisory Panel meetings to present information in the Initial Boundary Review Report and boundary option(s) in order to facilitate discussions and solicit feedback. Decision-making at the Advisory Panel is done through consensus. When a clear consensus cannot be reached and multiple well-supported options are presented, all viable perspectives will be reflected and included in the final report.
- The Resource Team will facilitate a public information session to share information in the Initial Boundary Review Report, information gathered from Advisory Panel meeting(s), and boundary option(s). The intent of the Public Information Session is to respond to questions of clarification and receive feedback on the boundary option(s).

Board Approval

- The Superintendent of Equity and Student Achievement and Manager of Planning, Accommodation and Rentals will present the Final Report and recommended option for Board approval through the Director of Education.

Boundary Review Implementation

- Decisions regarding changes to boundaries where existing students may be impacted shall not be made after February 28th for implementation in the following school year.
- The Resource Team will begin the process of implementation, including informing other HWDSB departments of the pending boundary change. The Superintendent of Equity and Student Achievement will then form a transition committee to support students, staff, families, and community members through the changes.

Timelines

- Accommodation strategies are signaled through the Long-Term Facilities Plan (LTFP) or presentation of a Boundary Review Report to the Board from the Finance & Facilities Committee.
- The process, where possible, begins with Board Approval in May and concludes by the end of February as noted above.

PROGRESS INDICATORS:

Intended Outcome	Assessment
Ensure that community engagement for a Boundary Review process begins no later than the fall preceding the implementation year and concludes in time to support effective transition planning and the execution of the boundary change.	Measured through the commencement of the review process in the fall and completion to meet board planning timelines for the school year of implementation.
Validate or amend school attendance boundaries to support and optimize the effective and efficient use of all facilities, while also supporting student well-being and achievement.	Measured by monitoring and planning for pupil accommodation through the Long-Term Facilities Plan. This includes an annual analysis of the following: • Declining, increasing and shifting enrolments and demographics • Current funding and operational realities • Changing educational and program objectives • Physical limitations of schools and sites
Consider community and school engagement strategies through the Boundary Review process.	Measured through engagement with the Advisory Panel and public engagement with school communities.
Ensure the input of the affected Trustee(s) is received and regarded throughout the Boundary Review Process.	Measured through trustee participation in the review process and the final Boundary Report.

REFERENCES:**Government Documents**

Education Act

Revisions:

Policy Review, including template migration, October 2025