



**DURHAM CATHOLIC
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD**
Learning and Living in Faith

POLICY – 415

School Attendance Area

Area: Operations
Source: Superintendent of Business, Finance and Facilities Services

Approved: April 23, 2001
Revised: November 9, 2020

1. Introduction

The Durham Catholic District School Board (the “Board”) establishes attendance areas for each Catholic elementary and secondary school within the jurisdiction of the Board, and may create new boundaries, amend existing boundaries or consolidate school boundaries in accordance with this policy.

2. Definitions

Holding School—a school at which students are attending from a designated holding area until long-term accommodation is available. The use of a holding school is not meant to be a permanent assignment for a student or group of students, but may persist for several years.

Home School—the school that is within a student’s School Attendance Area.

Optional Programs—optional programs are specialized programs of the Board that are not Ministry mandated, but offered by the Board. Optional Programs may or may not be located at the student’s community school.

Overflow—situations in which the Board directs students to attend a school other than their community school or optional program for a specific period of time. The overflow students’ attendance area does not change.

School Attendance Area—the defined boundary area of the school that is appropriately sized to accommodate sustainable student enrolment.

3. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the criteria for the development of elementary and secondary school attendance areas.

4. Application / Scope

This policy applies to all new schools and to amendments to established school boundaries.

5. Principles

5.1 The Board of Trustees believes:

5.1.1 each school has a defined attendance area, appropriately sized to accommodate sustainable student enrolment;

5.1.2 attendance areas are subject to change based on enrolment trends, construction of new schools, program changes and alignment of elementary and secondary boundaries;

5.1.3 the boundary of the school shall be of a sufficient size to sustain the long-term operation of the school at a full or near full capacity level;

5.1.4 secondary school attendance areas shall be developed based on the elementary school attendance areas and/or geographic parameters;

5.1.5 where the above are in process or cannot be established in a timely manner to accommodate the student enrolment needs, an alternative arrangement for a school facility can be found.

6. Requirements

6.1 The Director of Education, or designate, shall issue administrative procedures to support this policy and amend them thereafter as the need may arise.

6.2 School attendance areas are easily accessible to parents/guardians/caregivers through the Board website or by visiting a local school.

6.3 Students are expected to attend the school within their School Attendance Area/ Parents/guardians/caregivers must apply to their home school first if they are contemplating transferring to a school that is outside of their school attendance area.

6.4 Where possible, school attendance areas will be bounded by readily identifiable geographic features for example, major roads and highways, railroad lines, parks, major open space areas, utility corridors, rights-of-way, watercourses, municipal and regional boundaries, and rear lot lines.

- 6.5 The establishment of an attendance area will consider maximizing the safe walking route to school.
- 6.6 In certain circumstances, the Board may change or alter the existing attendance area for a school or family of schools. In such cases, the proposed revisions shall be developed by staff and brought to the Board of Trustees for approval. The changes to the attendance area(s) will be approved “In Principle” by the Board before proceeding to public consultation.
- 6.7 Where the proposed changes to an attendance area(s) impact existing student(s) at one or more schools, the affected school communities shall be consulted for input prior to finalization of the changes to the attendance area. Following consultation with the affected school(s) communities, a final boundary shall be recommended for approval by the Board of Trustees.
- 6.8 In such cases where no existing students are impacted by the proposed changes to the attendance area, or where the change in the attendance area relates to the realignment of a facet of the boundary (such as road, utility corridor or other element), the Board will post the changes on the Board website for comment and at the next meeting a final boundary shall be recommended for approval by the Board of Trustees.
- 6.9 The approved changes to school attendance areas may include one or more provisions for implementation. Upon creation of a new school attendance area, the attendance areas of any holding school(s) will be realigned accordingly.
- 6.10 Situations that may necessitate the use of a holding school/area may include, but are not limited to:
- enrolment pressure at a school;
 - construction of a new school;
 - renovation or replacement of an existing school.
- 6.11 Where a holding school/area cannot be defined/managed while a new school or addition is pending Ministry approval, then an alternative arrangement shall be found and would contemplate the following requirements:
- 6.11.1 The arrangement must be cost effective and advantageous for the Board compared to other possible arrangements including an acquisition of a school site and the construction of a free-standing building.
- 6.11.2 The arrangement shall comply with any guidelines issued by the Ministry of Education for school site acquisitions and capital priorities.
- 6.11.3 The Board may enter into lease arrangements respecting school facilities intended to be used to accommodate peak enrolment, but shall not enter into such arrangements respecting school facilities that are necessary to

accommodate long-term enrolment unless the arrangements could result in ownership at the Board's discretion.

6.11.4 The Board shall retain sufficient governance authority over the facility to ensure that it is able to deliver the appropriate educational program to its pupils, and to ensure that its identity, ambience and integrity are preserved.

6.12 Students attending optional programs will only receive transportation as approved by the Board of Trustees, and in accordance with the Board's Transportation Policy.

6.13 Overflow may occur for a specified period if:

- individual grades have exceeded acceptable enrolment levels;
- timetables cannot be created for a student at a secondary school;
- the overall enrolment exceeds the capacity of the school; or
- the school is unable to reorganize grades during the year.

7. Sources

7.1 Education Act

7.2 **Ontario Regulation 20/98 Education Development Charges**

8. Related Policies and Administrative Procedures

~~8.1 Exceptions to School Attendance Areas Policy (PO428)~~

~~8.2 Exceptions to School Attendance Areas Administrative Procedure (AP415-1)~~

8.3 Admissions to Schools Policy (PO410)

8.4 Admission of Students Administrative Procedure (AP410-1)