

Title: **School Boundaries**

Adopted: May 19, 1998

Effective: May 19, 1998

Amended/Reviewed: June 15, 2026

1.0 RATIONALE

The Durham District School Board recognizes that school attendance boundaries support effective long-term accommodation planning, equitable access to programs and services, sustainable school communities, and the responsible use of board facilities. Boundary decisions may significantly affect students, families, schools, and communities and therefore require a consistent and transparent governance framework.

2.0 OBJECTIVE

The Durham District School Board (DDSB) is committed to establishing and maintaining school attendance boundaries through transparent, equitable, and consistent processes that support student needs, sustainable school communities, long-term effective accommodation planning, accessibility, and compliance with Indigenous rights, human rights and responsibilities.

3.0 DEFINITIONS

- a. **Attendance Boundary:** The geographic area from which a school draws its students. Attendance boundaries may vary by school program (i.e., English language, French Immersion). Where multiple programs are offered at a school, there will be an attendance boundary associated with each individual program.
- b. **Boundary Review:** A formal, time-bound process to establish or adjust attendance boundaries through public consultation resulting in a final recommendation for the Board of Trustees to consider.
- c. **Permanent Boundary Adjustment:** A long-term change to a school attendance boundary intended to support sustainable enrolment, program delivery, accommodation planning, or effective use of board facilities.
- d. **Pupil Accommodation Plan:** Document guiding capital and accommodation planning. The document is updated annually.
- e. **Growth Boundary:** A geographic area of new residential development temporarily assigned to an existing school until a new school within the community is funded, constructed, and opened.
- f. **Partner School:** An existing school identified by DDSB to temporarily

accommodate students residing within a growth boundary area until a new community school becomes operational.

4.0 RESPONSIBILITY

4.1 Accountability

The **Chief Executive Officer** is responsible for the overall implementation and administration of this policy and may delegate operational responsibilities to appropriate departments and staff.

The Property and Planning area is responsible for coordinating boundary review processes and related consultation activities.

4.2 Final Authority

Final approval of school attendance boundaries rests with the **Board of Trustees**.

5.0 APPLICATION AND SCOPE

5.1 Policy Scope

This policy applies to all DDSB-operated elementary and secondary schools and programs (including English and French Immersion).

Public consultation shall be undertaken as part of formal boundary reviews related to:

- Boundary reviews due to enrolment growth or decline.
- New school openings.
- Program relocations or expansions; and
- Other significant accommodation or boundary-related changes identified by the DDSB.

This policy does **not** apply to the following operational functions:

- Temporary redirection of students required due to capacity pressures within a school year. These students return to their home school in the following school year.
- Growth boundary redesignations that temporarily assign students to a partner school pending the opening of a new school; or
- School closures governed through the Pupil Accommodation Review Process.
- Special education class types falling within the Inclusive Student Services area of DDSB.

Final decisions regarding all permanent school attendance boundaries rest with the **Board of Trustees**.

6.0 POLICY STATEMENT

This policy provides a governance framework for the establishment, modification, and review of school attendance boundaries. The framework ensures public consultation while prioritizing:

- Program Viability: Maintaining robust and sustainable educational programs.
- Facility Optimization: Ensuring the effective and efficient use of board facilities.
- Community Stability: Supporting balanced and stable school communities.
- Equity of Access: Supporting equitable student access to all DDSB programs and services.
- Boundary decisions require consideration of student well-being, enrolment pressures, program sustainability, transportation impacts including walkability, community considerations, and effective use of board resources.

7.0 POLICY DIRECTIVES

- a. Boundary reviews shall include public consultation.
- b. Boundary decisions shall consider enrolment projections, facility capacity, transportation impacts, program viability, and student well-being.
- c. Boundary reviews shall be informed by Indigenous and human rights, and accessibility considerations.
- d. Recommendations shall be supported by relevant planning and accommodation data.
- e. Final approval authority rests with the Board.

8.0 EVALUATION

This policy shall be evaluated every five years or earlier to ensure relevance, effectiveness, and alignment with DDSB's strategic priorities and legislative requirements.

9.0 COMMUNICATION

Information related to boundary reviews and public consultation processes shall be communicated in an accessible and timely manner.

10. REFERENCES

- DDSB annual Pupil Accommodation Plan – Trends, Issues and Future Opportunities
- DDSB PR FAC 01-01 School Boundary Procedure
- Human Rights Code
- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act
- Education Act
- DDSB P COM 01 Communications Policy

- DDSB P COM 07 Community Engagement Policy
- DDSB PR COM 07-01 Community Engagement Procedure