
HORIZON SCHOOL DIVISION**POLICY HANDBOOK**

Policy Code:	FL
Policy Title:	School Closure
Cross Reference:	
Legal Reference:	<i>Education Act ,62,</i> Disposition of Property Regulation
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POLICY

THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF HORIZON SCHOOL DIVISION RECOGNIZES THAT UNDER SPECIFIC CONDITIONS IT MAY BE NECESSARY TO CLOSE SCHOOL, OR A PORTION OF A SCHOOL. WHEN SUCH CONDITIONS OCCUR, THE BOARD SHALL FOLLOW CAREFULLY THE GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES OUTLINED BELOW.

DEFINITIONS

School closure is defined as:

- (a) Closing an entire school, permanently or for a specified period of time,
- (b) Closing entirely 3 consecutive grades in an elementary school,
- (c) Closing the entire junior high school program or the entire senior high program in any school,
- (d) Transfer all students from one school to another or more other schools.

GUIDELINES

1. The Board will make every effort to keep all schools open in the jurisdiction. However, the Board may consider closure of a school or a division within a school (i.e., primary, upper elementary, junior high, senior high) when any one or more of the following conditions exist.
 - 1.1. Student enrolments as of September 30 in the current school year or projected school enrolments for the forthcoming school year cause school budget allocations to be insufficient to maintain a quality educational environment for students;
 - 1.2. The cost of keeping the school in operable condition or restoring it to operable condition is unreasonably high; or
 - 1.3. Keeping the school open poses a threat to the health or welfare of students, staff or the public.
2. A review of the possible closure of a school or division within a school may be initiated by either one of the following groups:
 - 2.1. The Board of Trustees, after recommendation by the Superintendent of Schools; or
 - 2.2. The School Council, in consultation with the School Principal.

Policy FL - School Closure, Cont'd.

3. Where deemed necessary, a public meeting may be called to discuss the implications with all the residents of the community.
 - 3.1. After careful discussion of alternative programs, possibility of local supplementary funding, and any other important consideration, the School Council shall recommend to the Board the action they feel should be taken for the coming year.
 - 3.2. If it appears the majority of the group attending the meeting favor school closure, the Board shall proceed to survey all residents living in the attendance area of the school, and if the majority are in favor, the Board shall proceed with school closure initiation.
4. The Board may at any time determine not to proceed with school closure. However, following the review of the above information, if the decision of the Board is to proceed with closure, the following procedures shall be followed.

REGULATIONS

1. A notice of motion shall be made at a regular meeting of the Board indicating the school or school program which is being considered for closure.
 - 4.1. The notice of motion shall set out the following:
 - 4.1.1. The effect on the attendance area for that school and other schools is;
 - 4.1.2. The number of students who would need to be relocated;
 - 4.1.3. Transportation needs and implications;
 - 4.1.4. The location and suitability of alternate school accommodations for the student involved;
 - 4.1.5. Future enrolment projections for the school;
 - 4.1.6. The impact on the community;
 - 4.1.7. The educational and financial impact of the closing of school, including the effect on operational costs, outstanding debentures and the capital implications;
 - 4.1.8. The financial and educational impact of not closing the school;
 - 4.1.9. The implications for the students and staff, both those in the receiving school as well as those who will be transferred;
 - 4.1.10. Program implications for other schools and for the students when they are attending other schools and financial implications for the receiving school;
 - 4.1.11. Capital needs at schools that may have increased enrollment as a result of the closure.
 - 4.1.12. The proposed disposal of the school, if entire school is closed.
2. Within seven days of the notice of motion, the Board shall notify the parents or guardians of each child affected by the closure, as well as all staff members that the Board is considering the closure of the school or school program and outline all the considerations set out in the notice of motion.
3. The Board shall organize and convene a public meeting for the purpose of discussing the possible closure, its implications for the students and for the school division, possible implementation plans and possible alternatives. If required, further meetings may be held.
4. The date and place of the meeting shall be:
 - 4.1. Posted in five or more conspicuous places in the area or areas of the school or schools affected by the closure for a period of at least two weeks prior to the date of the public meeting, and
 - 4.2. Published in a newspaper circulating within the area or areas of the school or schools affected by

Policy FL - School Closure, Cont'd.

the closure once a week for at least two weeks prior to the date of the public meeting.

5. A quorum of the Board shall be in attendance at this meeting.
6. The Board shall ensure that minutes of this meeting and all other public meetings held relating to school closure are prepared.
7. After the public meeting, concerned electors shall be allowed 21 days to present responses in writing to the Notice of Motion, indicating preferred alternatives. Such responses shall be presented to the Superintendent and the party or parties may elect to present their own responses verbally at the next Board meeting or to have the Superintendent present the written response.
8. The Board shall give the Council of the Municipality in which the school is located an opportunity to provide a statement on the effect the closure may have on the community.
9. After accepting all responses and having carefully followed the procedures outlined above, the Board may then debate and vote on the motion.
10. If the vote is in the affirmative, the Board shall proceed immediately to notify the Minister of Learning in writing of the decision and proceed with closure as outlined in the motions.
11. 1A decision of the Board to close a school may be appealed to the Minister.
12. All school closures shall be initiated and completed within the school year in which the decision to close the school is made.