

**CHIGNECTO-CENTRAL
REGIONAL SCHOOL BOARD**

POLICY # B-02

SCHOOL CONSOLIDATION AND REORGANIZATION

[BOARD MINUTE #01-96, Page 3]

Recognition: The School Board establishes this policy to govern the consolidation and/or reorganization of public schools within its jurisdiction.

This policy and the accompanying procedures are consistent with the Education Act and regulations made by the Minister. They do not apply to any school(s) where the permanent closing of a school(s) would be involved.

This policy and its procedures are applicable to the consolidation and/or reorganization of schools or grades from within schools.

The School Board may exempt any of its schools from consideration for consolidation and/or reorganization.

Definition: The "Consolidation and/or Reorganization" of a school(s) means the permanent change of students from one school building to another or the change of grades housed in a school building, for a period exceeding twelve (12) months, for purposes of providing instruction to persons who have the right to attend public school pursuant to the Education Act, unless otherwise identified as an exclusion in this policy or where the school consolidation and/or reorganization would be applicable.

Objectives: The objectives of this policy are to:

- 1) acknowledge that school consolidations and/or reorganizations are likely to occur for a variety of reasons;

- 2) recognize that schools are an integral part of every community;
- 3) ensure opportunity for good communication;
- 4) provide opportunity for community input; and,
- 5) recognize the final decision rests with the Board.

Responsibility: The School Board is responsible for the development, organization, administration, financing, and implementation of educational services within the Regional School Board area. In carrying out its responsibilities, the School Board recognizes that a variety of factors may cause it to consider consolidation and/or reorganization of schools.

The School Board also recognizes the importance of an educational institution to the life of a community, so prior to making the decision to consolidate and/or reorganize schools, the School Board will:

- a) notify the community;
- b) give consideration to all factors;
- c) encourage public participation;
- d) provide sufficient time for implementation, and,
- e) be cognizant of students' needs.

The Board makes the final decision in such matters after conclusion of all steps in this policy and the accompanying procedures.

Criteria: The factors to be considered include:

- a) inability to provide adequate program opportunities;
- b) proximity to other schools with available facilities, appropriate programs and space;
- c) enrollment trends and population patterns and projections identifying a decline;
- d) inability to provide specialist teaching services;
- e) inadequate facility;

- f) cost efficiency, program, facilities and transportation; and,
- g) social and educational opportunities for students.

Process:

A request for a study for school consolidation and/or reorganization may be initiated by the School Board and/or its Standing Committees and/or by staff and/or by parents of students in a designated school and/or by the school advisory council of a designated school.

The process may be commenced at any time and be carried out in an orderly and timely fashion per the attached guidelines.

Exclusions:

This policy shall not apply to:

- 1) a school or schools being replaced by a newly constructed school built to house the students from the school or schools which are being consolidated and/or reorganized;
- 2) the consolidation and/or reorganization of a school(s) for the purpose of effecting repairs, renovations, or additions within a school building if the Board has approved plans to continue to use the building upon approved completion of this work, and uses the building for providing instruction to those groups of persons (grades) who were housed in the building prior to the work;
- 3) a school or schools where consolidation and/or reorganization is required by acts of nature, e.g. (flood);
- 4) a school or schools where consolidation and / or reorganization is necessary as a result of an order given by another government department; and,
- 5) a school or schools where remedy to repair, or make habitable any portion of that building, is very costly and appropriate alternate housing is available.

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ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDELINES

In accordance with Policy #B-02, the School Board directs the following procedures to apply when a school(s) is being considered for consolidation or reorganization.

Identification of School(s):

The School Board will identify schools to be considered for consolidation and/or reorganization, and in reaching an appropriate decision give consideration to:

- enrollment patterns and projections;
- population patterns and projections;
- regional development forecasts;
- overall system needs;
- social and educational opportunities for students;
- reasons for consideration; and,
- alternatives.

The preliminary investigation shall be carried out by the appropriate School Board Committee or designated staff. The information gathered will be presented to the Committee(s) and the School Board along with a recommendation. Upon approval by the School board to proceed with further consideration for consolidation and/or reorganization, the following steps will be initiated and in the order that follows.

Formation of Study Action Committee:

- (a) Initially there will be established a Study Action Committee for each school or group of schools who, in addition to reviewing all information previously considered by the School Board, will examine and report on all aspects of the consolidation and/or reorganization including:
 - input from the public (includes all individuals and groups who wish to provide input);
 - educational and program implications and their effects on the progress of students;

- financial implications;
- transportation implications;
- maintenance implications;
- facilities implications;
- effect on the social environment of the community;
- lunchroom facilities;
- socialization implications for students of the school(s) which may be consolidated and/or reorganized;
- relocation of students;
- student co-curricular activities;
- student government finances (secondary school);
- traffic at schools to which students may be transferred; and,
- other matters the Study Action Committee considers relevant along with source and identification of all statistics.

- (b) The membership of the Study Action Committee for each school or group of schools will include representation from:
- the parent-teacher organization of the school(s) considered for consolidation and/or reorganization and the school advisory council (2 members per school);
 - School Board (1 member);
 - School Board's senior staff (2 members);
 - student council representative, in the case of secondary schools (1 member per school); and,
 - principal(s) of the school(s) considered for consolidation and/or reorganization.
- (c) The Study Action Committee will be chaired by the senior member of the School Board's senior staff (on this committee). All members will be entitled to vote.
- (d) The initial work of the Study Action Committee will be completed within one month of the establishment of this Committee.

Public

Notification:

When it has been determined that one or more schools should be considered for consolidation and/or reorganization, public notification (by the Board secretary) of intention to consider consolidation and/or reorganization of a school(s) shall be published in a newspaper having general circulation in the area(s) served by the school(s) no later than one week of the initiation of the study. An invitation inviting input to the Study Action Committee, the procedure to provide this input and the date of the public session to hear the preliminary report shall be included.

Public Information Session:

Within six weeks of the initiation of the Study Action Committee, this Committee will hold an information session to inform the public of the contents of its preliminary report and to allow for community response to the preliminary report. This is to be achieved by:

- filing a copy of the preliminary report with the School Board at its first meeting (in camera) following the completion of the preliminary report;
- holding a public meeting following appropriate advance notice (2nd public notification) on the date established by the School Board as above;
- presenting a preliminary report for community response (distributed in draft or point form); and,
- making available, upon request, to the public all information used to produce the report.

The Study Action Committee will then finalize its report for presentation to the School Board. This report may be changed following community input. The final report will be presented to the School Board in advance of the second public meeting and at the first meeting of the School Board following completion of the final report. The Study Action Committee will hold a second public meeting (3rd public notification) to inform the public of the contents of the final report. Copies will be distributed at this meeting.

Board Action: The debate and vote by the School Board on consolidation and/or reorganization of schools will take place at the next meeting of the School Board to be effective no later than July 31 following. The public may submit written comments or request to be on the School Board agenda (Item f) at this meeting and before this committee report is acted upon by the School Board. Copies of the report and all information that the Committee has used to produce the report may be obtained from the School Board office by the public after the report is tabled.

**Post Consolidation/
Reorganization Report:**

The principal(s) of the school(s) involved will be required by November 30 following the consolidation and/or reorganization, to present a report to the Superintendent of Schools on the educational and social progress of affected students and their adjustments to the new environment. The Superintendent of Schools will deliver this report to the School Board at the next December meeting of the School Board. The public, on request, may have access to the principal(s) report.

Limitations: This procedure is not intended for a boundary change, for possible consolidation and/or reorganization not initiated by the board, temporary arrangements necessitated by renovations and/or construction and for those exclusions as identified in Policy B-02.

Distribution: All Policy and Procedure Manual holders