

Accommodation Review Q&A

Q: Where do I find the policy which explains the new process and guidelines for accommodation reviews?

A: The link to board policy *BP 3101-D Accommodation Review – School Program and Facility Efficiency* is as follows: http://www.bwdsb.on.ca/director/policies/BP_3101-D.pdf

The policy is permanently housed in the [Policies & Procedures](#) section of our board website.

Q: When does the accommodation review begin?

A: The Board of Trustees approved the two recommendations to commence accommodation reviews for both the Meaford area and Owen Sound area on October 20, 2015. This means that the accommodation review process has begun. It is important to note that approval to commence a review does not mean initial approval of the options relating to specific schools provided in the Initial Staff Report. The final decisions are made by the Board of Trustees at the end of the process.

Q: When and where will information on accommodation reviews be posted?

A: An *Accommodation Review* link, which includes individual web pages for each review, is now posted on the board website home page: <http://www.bwdsb.on.ca>

Each web page will include all relevant reports and information specific to the area group of schools under review.

Q: Where do I learn more about the Ministry of Education's Community Planning and Partnerships Guideline?

A: A *Community Planning and Partnerships* (CPP) page was launched on the board website in the spring of 2015. The page includes a link to the Ministry document, a section for notifications regarding new school builds or significant renovations, an application form for expressions of interest from community partners, details on the board's annual CPP meeting and links to our CCP policy and procedure.

Here is the CPP page link: <http://www.bwdsb.on.ca/business/CPP>

Q: The new Ministry requirements speak to consultation with municipalities before beginning any accommodation reviews. How has this been done to date?

A: As required by the new CPP guideline, our board began the process of reaching out to local upper and lower tier municipalities with our first annual CPP public meeting on June 15, 2015. Invitation letters were sent to senior staff at each municipality within our jurisdiction. The following media release was also issued on May 1, 2015 in an effort to invite expressions of interest from potential partners as well as to announce the public meeting:

http://www.bwdsb.on.ca/BWDSB_Newsroom/Media_Releases/May_1_2015.pdf

The intent of the CPP public meeting was to share planning information, discuss potential partnerships and outline the Ministry's new CPP guideline. Representation at the meeting included a broad cross section of senior staff and councillors from several local municipalities and both counties, a contingent of community organizations, members of the general public and local media. Several communities and organizations have since followed up with Bluewater District School Board to engage in productive consultation.

Q: When will public consultation take place?

A: Public consultation takes place during the accommodation review process in a variety of ways:

Municipal/community partners

Invitations to meet and discuss the recommended options in the Initial Staff Report are to be sent within five days of the Board of Trustees' approval to undertake an accommodation review to affected upper and lower tier municipalities, as well as other community partners that previously expressed interest.

Accommodation Review Committee (ARC)

Upon approval of the recommendation to initiate an accommodation review, the board is responsible for establishing an ARC to act as a conduit for information shared between the board and school communities. The mandate and composition of the committee are outlined in the board policy referenced at the beginning of this document, *BP 3101-D Accommodation Review – School Program and Facility Efficiency*.

Please note that an ARC is not required during a modified accommodation review, which may be initiated in certain situations. Details regarding a modified accommodation review process are outlined in sections 4.12 and 9.0 of our board policy, *BP 3101-D Accommodation Review – School Program and Facility Efficiency*.

Public meetings/delegations

A minimum of two public meetings will take place as part of the Public Consultation Period in order to share information and provide a forum for community feedback on the recommended options in the Initial Staff Report.

Please note that a modified accommodation review process requires only one public meeting.

The board will utilize local media, its website and social media to announce upcoming public meetings.

Written submissions and presentations by members of the public are welcome at public meetings providing that notification is given no later than one week prior to the next scheduled meeting. Public submission guidelines are outlined in Appendix C of our board policy, *BP 3101-D Accommodation Review – School Program and Facility Efficiency*.

Q: Where do I find the ‘Watson Report’ which recommends a number of school closures in our area over the next several years?

A: Both the *Long Term Accommodation Strategy* and an executive summary of the May 2014 report from the consulting firm Watson & Associates can be found in the *Capital Plan* section of the board website at the following link: http://www.bwdsb.on.ca/Business/Capital_Plan

The intent of the report was not to be a ‘be all and end all’ plan, but rather to offer some recommendations that the board might consider as part of its long term planning in addressing excess school space.

In addition to a significant amount of media coverage that was generated upon release of this report, letters to share the information were sent to mayors/wardens of all local municipal and county councils in October 2014, and then again in December 2014 to those councils where the mayorship changed following the municipal election.