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# SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 36 (SURREY)

No. 6801.1

## REGULATION: CLOSING SCHOOLS

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### 1. PROCEDURES

#### 1.1 Public Board Meeting

Any proposed closure of a school should first be raised at a Regular Board meeting.

#### 1.2 Public Consultation

1.2.1 The process of consultation for school closure shall require at least 60 days commencing from the time when the Board provides public notice as to which specific school(s) are being considered for closure or “alternative community use” of part or all of the affected school(s), as that term is defined in Ministerial Order 193/2008.

1.2.2 The process of consultation should provide an opportunity for those who will be affected by a proposed closure or alternative community use(s) of part or all of a school(s) to participate in the process. Such participation should include trustees, parents, community members, district staff, school staff and any community agencies or organizations known to the district to be interested in participating in alternative community use(s) of part or all of a school(s).

1.2.3 Public consultation should be undertaken by the Board prior to making a final decision on any proposed closure of a school or alternative community use(s) of part or all of the school(s).

1.2.4 The Board should take the following steps to ensure that an open and meaningful public consultation has taken place:

- Make available, in writing, a full disclosure of all facts and information considered by the Board with respect to any proposed school closure or alternative community use(s) of part or all of a school(s), including:
  - (a) detailed reasons for the proposed school closure;
  - (b) which specific school(s) are being considered for closure;
  - (c) how the proposed closure would affect the current catchment area for each school;
  - (d) the general effect on surrounding schools;

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**REGULATION: CLOSING SCHOOLS**

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- (e) the number of students who would be affected at both the closed school(s) and surrounding schools;
  - (f) the effect of proposed closures on Board-provided student transportation;
  - (g) educational program/course implications for the affected students;
  - (h) the proposed effective date of the closure(s);
  - (i) financial considerations;
  - (j) impact on the Board's five year capital plan;
  - (k) proposed use of the closed school(s) including potential lease or sale; and
  - (l) future enrolment growth of persons less than school age as well as adults in the community.
- Provide an adequate opportunity for affected persons, community agencies and organizations to submit a written response to any proposed school closure or possible alternative community use(s) of part or all of the school(s) and information and directions on how to submit a written response to the Board. The information and directions should advise potential correspondents that their written response may be referred to at subsequent public forums respecting the closure; unless the correspondent specifically states in their written response that the correspondent wishes his or her name and address to remain confidential.
  - Hold at least one public meeting to discuss the proposed closure, summarize written submissions, and listen to community concerns and proposed options.
  - Maintain records of all consultation, including agenda, minutes, dates of consultation working group and public community consultation meetings, copies of information provided at these meetings; names of Trustees/district staff who attended these meetings, a record of individuals, community agencies and organizations attending public community consultation meetings, record of questions asked, and a record of transition plans/activities identified for parent/staff/students at both the school considered for closure or alternative community use(s) of part or all of the school and the school to which the students would be moved.

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**REGULATION: CLOSING SCHOOLS**

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1.3 Public Meeting

The time and place of the public meeting should be appropriately advertised to ensure adequate advance notification to affected persons, community agencies and organizations in the community. Generally, this will mean a letter to students and parents of students currently attending the school, and a clearly visible notice in a local newspaper.

The Board should also specifically notify, in writing, any potentially affected local governments, First Nations, business associations, or community associations and community agencies or organizations interested in alternative community use(s) of part or all of a school(s) of the time and place of the public meeting.

Discussions should include the following:

- implications of the closure;
- implementation plans, including timing of the closure;
- options that the Board considered as alternatives to closure including alternative community use(s) of part or all of the school(s);
- possible future community growth in the area of the school including future enrolment growth of persons less than school age and adults;
- contents of written submissions presented to the Board by members of the community.

The Board should keep minutes of the public meeting which include a record of concerns or options raised to the proposal.

Following the public meeting, the Board should give fair consideration to all public input prior to making its final decision with respect to any proposed school closures or alternative community use(s) of part or all of a school(s).

A decision by the Board to permanently close a school will be made by bylaw.

**REGULATION: CLOSING SCHOOLS**

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1.4 Notification to the Minister

If the Board decides to permanently close a school under Section 73 of the *School Act*, the Board must, without delay, provide the Minister with written notification of the decision containing the following information:

- the school's name;
- the school's facility number;
- the school's address; and
- the date on which the school will close.

1.5 Criteria for Considering School Closure

A school may be considered for closure when there is sufficient space to accommodate the students in neighbouring schools. In addition the following factors need to be considered:

- the present and three to five year enrolment projection;
- future enrolment growth of persons less than school age and adults;
- the number of children in the catchment area who do not attend the school;
- the number of children attending the school from outside the catchment area;
- the operating cost per student;
- the condition of the facility and the need for capital expenditures to keep the building operational;
- the limitations of the facility that restrict appropriate education programming;
- the total enrolment of a school being less than 200 FTE;
- the overall excess capacity of a geographically defined district sub-region.

**REGULATION: CLOSING SCHOOLS**

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**2. OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS DISPLACED BY SCHOOL CLOSURE**

The district will ensure that all district students displaced by a school closure will have opportunities to receive an appropriate educational experience in another school in the district. The registration of displaced students will be subject to the guidelines contained in Policy 9320 and Regulation 9320.1 – *Registration and Placement of Students* and the *School Act*.

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Revised: 2004-01-20  
1983/07

XRef: Policy No. 9320  
Reg. No. 9320.1

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