

Province of Manitoba Policy Statement Regarding Guidelines for School Closure

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide a framework for open discussion and consideration of the issue of school closure. These guidelines are intended as a minimum requirement. They provide for the sharing of information and for input of affected parents and residents into the decision-making process.

The locally elected school board will make the final decision with respect to closure of a school in its jurisdiction. School divisions will make their decisions in accordance with the following process for community consultation.

- 1) A school may be closed only if it is identified as a candidate for review by the school division at least 20 months prior to the proposed date for closure.
- 2) Once a school has been identified for review the school division shall notify parents and residents served by the school in question.
- 3) Once a school has been designated for review, the school division administration should prepare an informational report so that community members will be aware of educational implications, community implications and financial implications with respect to the continued operation or possible closure of the school under review. That report should be made available to parents and community residents within two months of designation of a school for review.

The informational report should make specific reference to the attendance area defined for the school, attendance at other schools, the need, extent and cost of bussing, the effect on community activities which take place on the school premises and should indicate the possible alternative use or disposition of the school if it is to be closed. The City of Winnipeg Planning Department or the provincial government Municipal Affairs Planning Department may be consulted for necessary background information with respect to community implications.

- 4) The school division shall convene a meeting of all interested parents and residents of the affected school within two months of designation of the school for review. The meeting is to be for the purpose of allowing affected parents and residents to receive the information paper and establish a procedure for reviewing it and formulating a response.
- 5) The school division administration should serve as a resource to parents and residents by providing necessary information and nominal office services such as duplication of minutes and sending notices of meetings as requested.

- 6) Parents and residents of the affected school shall have reasonable opportunity to present recommendations with respect to the affected school and comment on the impact on the neighbourhood or community of any possible school closure to the school board prior to the final decision being taken by the school board.
- 7) The school division shall make a final decision with respect to school closure no later than June 30th of the year preceding the proposed date for closure.
- 8) If parents and residents of the affected school are concerned that this policy guideline has not been followed they may obtain a review of the process of community consultation by a committee appointed by the Minister of Education. The Minister will refer any petition of 25 or more affected parents or residents to the School Closure Guideline Review Committee. The committee will not deal with the merits of any school division decision but where it finds that there has not been a process of community consultation as set out in these guidelines it will refer the matter back to the local school board for further consultation and consideration.
- 9) These guidelines are effective October 1, 1982. Any school division that can demonstrate that the procedures outlined in these guidelines are currently in effect may continue with any review process that is presently underway.