

SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 48 (SEA TO SKY)

REGULATION SERIES 900 BUILDINGS & SITES

R905. DISPOSITION OF SITES AND CLOSURES OF FACILITIES R905.1 Permanent School Closure

This Regulation provides more specific direction to be followed if the Board is considering the permanent closure of a school.

A “permanent” school closure means the closing, for a period exceeding 12 months, of a school building used for the purposes of providing an educational program to students.

This regulation does not apply to the closing of a school for the purposes of effecting repairs, renovations or additions to a school building if the Board intends to reopen the building upon completion of the repairs, renovations or additions.

This Regulation does not apply to temporary school closures pursuant to s. 73(1)(b) of the School Act.

1. Criteria for Considering School Closure

1.01 If a school meets any of the following criteria, the school may be considered for permanent closure.

- a) there is sufficient space to accommodate the students in neighbouring schools;
- b) the operating cost per student is significantly greater than the average cost per student in the District;
- c) the condition of the facility and the need for capital expenditures to keep the building operational is significant;
- d) the limitations of the facility-restrict appropriate education programming; or
- e) other criteria that in the view of the Board, should be considered.

2. Public Board Meeting

2.01 Any proposed permanent closure of a school should first be raised at a regular open meeting of the Board.

3. Public Consultation

- 3.01 Public consultation shall be undertaken by the Board prior to making a final decision on the proposed permanent closure of a school.
- 3.02 The process of consultation should provide an opportunity for those who will be affected by a proposed closure to participate in the process. Such participation should include trustees, parents, community members, local governments, First Nations, district staff, school staff and employee bargaining agents.
- 3.03 The Board shall take the following steps to ensure that an open and meaningful public consultation takes place.
- a) Make available relevant facts and information considered by the Board with respect to any proposed permanent school closure, which may include:
 - i) reasons for the proposed school closure;
 - ii) which specific schools(s) are being considered for closure;
 - iii) educational program/course implications for the affected students;
 - iv) how the proposed closure would affect the current catchment area for each school;
 - v) the anticipated effect on surrounding schools;
 - vi) the number of students who would be affected at both the closed school(s) and the surrounding schools;
 - vii) the effect of proposed closures on Board-provided student transportation including the amount of time that students spend travelling to and from school;
 - viii) the proposed effective date of the closure(s);
 - ix) financial considerations;
 - x) impact of the proposed school closure(s) on the Board's five-year capital plan;
 - xi) the proposed use of the closed school (s) including potential lease or sale;
 - b) Provide an adequate opportunity for affected persons to submit written response to any proposed permanent school closure and provide 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 proposed closure.

c) Hold at least one public meeting to discuss the proposed permanent closure, summarize written submissions, and listen to community concerns and proposed alternative solutions.

d) Maintain records consultation.

4. Public Meeting

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

4.02 The Board should also specifically notify, in writing, any potentially interested local governments, First Nations, business associations, community associations and any other parties known by the Board to be interested in the use of the school space of the time and place of the public meeting.

4.03 The public consultation process will include the following:

a) discussion of potential implications of the closure;

b) discussion of the implementation plans, including timing of the closure;

c) discussion of the options that the Board considers as alternatives to closure;

d) consideration of future enrolment growth in the District of persons of school age, persons of less than school age and adults and

e) consideration by the Board of the contents of written submissions presented to the Board.

f) a fair consideration of the community's input and adequate opportunity for the community to respond to the Board's proposal to close the school permanently and

g) consideration of possible alternative community use for all or part of the school.

4.04. The Board shall keep minutes of the public meeting which include a record of concerns or options raised in response to the proposal.

- 4.05 Following the public meeting, the Board will give consideration to public input prior to making its final decision with respect to any proposed permanent school closure.
- 4.06 The final decision of the Board on a permanent school closure shall be made by Board bylaw.

5. Opportunities for Students Displaced by School Closure

- 5.01 The District will ensure that all District students displaced by a permanent school closure will have opportunities to receive an appropriate educational experience in another school in the district.

6. Notification to the Minister

- 6.01 If the Board decides to permanently close a school the Board must, without delay, provide the Minister with written notification of the decision containing the following information:
- a) the school's name
 - b) the school's facility number
 - c) the school's address, and
 - d) the date on which the school will close.

7. Disposition of Equipment & Materials

- 7.01 The Secretary-Treasurer will prepare tentative plans for the disposition of equipment and materials located in school(s) cited for closure.
- 7.02 The Secretary-Treasurer will identify options, in accordance with Ministerial Order M193/08 and related Board policy for Board consideration with respect to the future use of buildings and grounds cited for closure.