



ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SIZE AND CONFIGURATION

Legal References:

Related References: *Good Schools Standing Committee Report, May 17, 2007*
Board Policy 1011 – Facility Partnerships
Board Policy 4000 – Pupil Accommodation Review
Administrative Procedure 4991 – Boundary Studies

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1. Preamble

- 1.1 The Waterloo Region District School Board (the “Board”) believes that elementary schools should be welcoming and secure places, supporting all learners, and helping students to achieve success within an operation and organizational framework that is efficient and effective.
- 1.1.1 The Board believes that school size (enrolment) and elementary program configuration contribute to achieving these outcomes.
- 1.2 The Board supports all elementary school configurations (e.g., JK-5, JK-6, JK-8, 6-8, and 7-8) and this will continue where necessary.
- 1.3 The Waterloo Region District School Board prefers a JK-8 elementary school configuration to meet curriculum and development needs, but acknowledges possible alternatives necessary to address:
- geographical community connections and access;
 - existing facilities;
 - student learning opportunities;
 - community growth patterns;
 - funding, including partnership opportunities.

2. Policy

- 2.1 It is the policy of the Board to use the following guiding principles when building new elementary facilities or additions, and as considerations in Pupil Accommodation Reviews and Boundary Studies:
- 2.1.1 Planning for elementary school configurations will consider the following:
- A minimum of two (2) classes per grade in Junior Kindergarten to Grade 6 to support professional learning communities;
 - More than two (2) classes per grade in Grades 7 and 8 to support program;

- Minimize the number of schools with Full-Time Equivalent enrolments greater than 700 students wherever possible;
 - Minimize the transition of elementary students between schools where practical.
- 2.1.2 JK-8 facilities will preferably have a built capacity of between 500 and 700 students;
- 2.1.3 JK-6 facilities will preferably have a built capacity of between 350 and 525 students;
- 2.1.4 JK-6 facilities will be designed to accommodate future expansion to accommodate a JK-8 configuration where practical;
- 2.1.5 Recognition that existing senior elementary school (e.g., Grade 7 and 8) configurations are providing excellent learning opportunities and some may continue to operate for the foreseeable future.
- 2.1.6 That the needs of the early adolescent learners are met through the design and operation of new JK-8 facilities and by operating existing Grade 7 and 8 facilities through lessening the number of daily student/teacher contacts.
- 2.1.7 That each elementary school configuration has high academic and behavioural expectations.
- 2.1.8 The boundaries of higher grade schools should encompass the complete boundaries of their respective feeder schools.