



Legal References:

Related References: *Board Policy 4009- Student Transportation*  
*Administrative Procedure 4260- Student Transportation*  
*Board Policy 4012- School Attendance Areas*  
*Administrative Procedure 1030- Boundary Requests- Secondary Schools*

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## 1. Preamble

- 1.1 The Waterloo Region District School Board (Board) believes that secondary schools should be welcoming and secure places, supporting all learners, and helping students succeed within an operational framework that is efficient, within the natural boundary wherever possible.

## 2. Secondary Schools

- 2.1 Therefore, it is the policy of the Board to use as a guideline the following principles to support its vision of secondary schools:
- 2.1.1 Secondary school boundaries should reflect a natural area around the facility that optimizes the number of students that can walk to school;
- The natural area around a school is understood to encompass those areas that are within walking distance; where this does not apply, the natural boundary will be understood to reflect a balance between Board needs and the local neighbourhoods that identify with that school
- 2.1.2 The linkages between senior elementary programs and secondary schools should be clear, and the transition to secondary school should as much as possible avoid splitting students between schools;
- 2.1.3 Every student should have the opportunity to attain an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) through a variety of core program pathways at their home secondary school;
- Every school should offer a mandatory course list and perform a periodic review of this list;
  - There should be the provision of funding and resources required to deliver, at a minimum, the list of mandatory courses.
- 2.1.4 The placement of System Designated Specialized Programs will be considered in lieu of physical boundary changes to support a balanced demographic within the school;
- A System Designated Specialized Program is commonly referred to as a "magnet" and is intended to meet the needs of a unique group of students. Each System Designated Specialized (Magnet) Program consists of a series of interconnected courses that provide students with a particular focus based on their interests and diverse abilities.

- A System Designated Specialized (Magnet) Program is established following a system identification and designation process. This process considers many factors including a focus on long term sustainability and appropriate allocation, and effective utilization of resources, expertise and facilities.
  - A System Designated Specialized (Magnet) Program optimize learning and achievement for all students at specific school sites without detracting from the viability of programming at other sites or the educational experiences of students enrolled elsewhere throughout the system
  - Students are permitted to attend a school outside their designated home school boundary to participate in a System Designated Specialized (Magnet) Program provided they meet appropriate criteria for participation in the program.
  - The movement of a System Designated Specialized (Magnet) Programs will be considered to achieve balanced enrolment in areas that are under growth pressures from within the natural area around the school
- 2.1.5 The size of secondary schools needs to support the delivery of a core program, including a variety of pathways for students. This is typically achieved within a range of 800 to 1400 pupil places, with a target size of 1,100 students per school, but successful secondary schools can exist outside of these limits by utilizing alternative delivery methods (e.g., e-learning, Independent Learning Centre (ILC) materials);
- 2.1.6 Decisions regarding new school construction, additions, portables, upgrades and/or boundary changes should support the efficient utilization of overall accommodation capacity within the board;
- 2.1.7 When considering any of the above noted actions, public consultation should be undertaken in accordance with Board policy.