



TEMPORARY STUDENT ACCOMMODATION FOR DEVELOPMENT AREAS

Responsibility: *Coordinating Superintendent, Business Services & Treasurer of the Board*

Legal References: *Education Act, R.S.O, 1990, c.E.2 (S. 171(1) paragraph 7)*

Related References: [*Board Policy 4000 - Pupil Accommodation Review \(Consolidation or Closure\)*](#)
[*Board Policy 4012 - School Attendance Areas*](#)
[*Board Policy 4022 - School Size and Configuration*](#)
[*Administrative Procedure 1030 - Student Out of Boundary Transfer Requests - Secondary Schools \(Grade 9-12\)*](#)
[*Administrative Procedure 1040 - Out of Boundary Requests - Elementary Schools*](#)
[*Administrative Procedure 4991 - Boundary Studies*](#)

Revisions: December 2021

Reviewed: October 2016, May 2017, November 2017

1. Preamble

- 1.1. School attendance areas significantly influence school enrolment numbers and utilization. Enrolment yielded from new residential development can result in schools exceeding their total available capacity, including a site's ability to accommodate temporary capacity. The Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB) may temporarily reassign a designated geographic area or particular development to a school with space to accommodate students. This procedure outlines establishing, assigning, reassigning and dissolving development areas and the protocols for communicating changes.

2. Definitions

- 2.1. **Development Area:** A Development Area (DA) is a geographically defined area that does not belong to any school attendance area. DAs are usually created when new residential units are projected to generate a student yield that the local neighbourhood school(s) cannot accommodate. Board of Trustee (Board) motion is required to establish a DA and remove it from all existing school attendance areas. By definition, DAs are temporarily assigned to Holding Schools with available facility and site capacity.
- 2.2. **Holding School:** A Holding School is a facility that DAs are assigned to attend temporarily. A Holding School is not intended to be a long-term accommodation solution. Some Holding Schools may serve multiple different DAs over time based on their ability to meet the Holding School criteria. Some DAs may be refined geographically and assigned to more than one Holding School.

3. General

- 3.1. The WRDSB's Long-Term Accommodation Plan projects school utilization over ten years. It also identifies where new schools or additions may be needed and which facilities may have available space to accommodate students in DAs temporarily.
- 3.2. The capital planning process will consider enrolment projections, school capacity, renewal needs and the construction of new schools or additions, including significant renovations, which shall assist in identifying facilities that may be suitable for temporary student accommodation.
- 3.3. DAs are established when growth is expected to be maintained for extended periods, and schools in the development's immediate areas are overutilized. Availability of capital funding and the resulting timing of construction for the new school(s) or additions is always uncertain.
- 3.4. As plans for new development are reviewed by Planning staff, available accommodation is examined, and DAs may be identified.
- 3.5. A Boundary Study conducted under *Administrative Procedure 4991 - Boundary Studies*, or a *Pupil Accommodation Review* conducted under *Board Policy 4000 - Pupil Accommodation Review (Consolidation or Closure)* may consider the establishment or dissolution of DAs in accommodation solutions.

4. Development Areas Annual Report and Notification Protocols

- 4.1. An annual report is presented to the Board indicating the status of DAs. Any proposed changes are identified for Board approval.
- 4.2. The annual report is presented in advance of the staffing process with recommended changes (if applicable) to be implemented at the commencement of the school year (September) where an existing community is affected. Where no existing community is affected, the changes may be applicable upon approval.
- 4.3. To ensure notice is provided to new home buyers, WRDSB staff will undertake the following DA notification measures:
 - 4.3.1. In response to development circulations, staff will ask that conditions be included to notify prospective buyers that the area may be designated as a DA, and students may be directed to schools outside of the area. These conditions are generally requested to be added as clauses in the Purchase and Sale Agreement (Schedule C) and the provision of a sign at the development site (see Schedule D).
 - 4.3.2. Post an annual report (and any other DA report) on the Planning section of the WRDSB's website.
 - 4.3.3. DA mapping will be shared online on the WRDSB website. Municipal addresses, once assigned, will be searchable through the WRDSB or STSWR website.
 - 4.3.4. Distribute the annual report (and any other DA report), if applicable, to:
 - 4.3.4.1. The local realty associations (e.g., Kitchener-Waterloo Association of Realtors, Cambridge Association of Realtors, etc.) and new development sales offices.
 - 4.3.4.2. The affected property owner(s) or developer(s).

- 4.3.4.3. The local municipal planning departments.
- 4.3.4.4. The affected schools.
- 4.3.4.5. Student Transportation Services of Waterloo Region (STSWR).

5. Public Consultation

5.1. Board meetings are public, and community members may register to become a delegation at the meeting (following WRDSB Bylaws). No additional consultation is held for the annual report.

5.2. Where a change to a DA assignment may result in existing students changing schools, a public information session will be held, with notification to the parents/caregivers of the affected students (see Schedule A).

5.2.1. In some cases it may be necessary to phase-in implementation of changes. The following conditions will be applied when grandparenting of existing students at a Holding School (the former Holding School) within a DA is considered:

5.2.1.1. A definitive end date must be declared as the implementation of the change;

5.2.1.2. The option to remain at the current Holding School may only be extended to students enrolled and attending the affected school(s) and living within the DA on the date the reassignment is made;

5.2.1.3. Transportation service will not be provided to the former Holding School; and

5.2.1.4. Should a student move addresses after the reassignment date, the grandparenting provision to the former Holding School will no longer apply.

Schedule A - Development Area (DA) Life Cycle

1. Before Establishing a Development Area

Development activity is monitored and reviewed by Planning staff. Where existing schools have insufficient capacity to accommodate growth, DAs may be established. Planning Staff will request, as part of the municipal development approval process, that developers/property owners will:

- Include an advisory clause in all Agreements of Purchase and Sale informing buyers of the potential to be directed to a school outside of the area (refer to Schedule C).
- Provide signage at new developments advising of the potential for students to be accommodated in temporary facilities and/or bused to a school outside the area and may in future have to be transferred to another school (refer to Schedule D).

Developers/home builders and Realtors will be notified of the status of DA. They will be invited to direct prospective buyers to contact the Planning Department to clarify the school assignments and status of new schools.

2. Establishing a Development Area

When a DA is established, a Holding School may also be identified, or the DA may have a status 'To-Be-Determined' (TBD) pending further information about the development (timing, housing type, phasing, etc.).

New DAs can be either a greenfield subdivision development with a range of unit types or a block of high density condominium/apartment units.

3. Assigning a Development Area

DAs can be assigned to a Holding School when they are created or when development is considered imminent, depending on the availability of space at the Holding School(s).

4. Reassigning a Development Area

If a Holding School becomes overcrowded or can no longer accommodate growth, existing DAs (entire areas or portions thereof) may be reassigned temporarily to alternative Holding School(s).

Existing approved DAs can be split into smaller geographic parcels to facilitate the distribution of enrolment to multiple Holding Schools with capacity available if needed.

Grandparenting of existing students may be considered.

5. Dissolving Development Areas

DAs may continue to be assigned temporary accommodation until:

- A new school or school addition is built in the community; or
- All or a portion of a Development Area can be incorporated into a new or existing school's attendance area.

6. Board Approval

Any changes to a Development Area as outlined in steps 2 to 5 above are subject to approval by the Board of Trustees.

Schedule B - Criteria for Identifying a Holding School

Holding School recommendations are identified by staff, in consultation with school administrators, facilities services and STSWR using criteria such as (but not limited to) the following;

- Available capacity considerations; classroom and portable classroom capacity (current and projected);
- Adequately sized ancillary spaces (library, gymnasium, etc.);
- Site servicing and capacity considerations like electrical, sanitary services, the situational placement of the school site and number of access points for students and families;
- Appropriately sized school bus loading zone if applicable;
- Compliance with time-on-the-bus criteria; and
- The capital expenditure required to accommodate increased enrolment at the facility temporarily is minimal.

Schedule C - Sample Conditions of Draft Approval

The WRDSB requests the following inclusions in the conditions of Draft Approval:

1. That the Owner/Developer must agree in the Subdivision Agreement and/or Site Plan Agreement to notify all purchasers of residential units and/or renters of same, by inserting the following clauses in all offers of Purchase and Sale/Lease:
 - a. *“Despite the best efforts of the Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB), accommodation in nearby facilities may not be available for all anticipated students. You are hereby notified that students may be accommodated in temporary facilities and/or bussed to a school outside the area, and further, that students may, in future, be transferred to another school.”*
 - b. *“For information on which schools are currently serving this area, contact the WRDSB Planning Department at 519-570-0003 ext. 4419, or email planning@wrdsb.ca. Information provided by any other source cannot be guaranteed to reflect current school assignment information.”*
 - c. *“To limit liability, public school buses operated by the Student Transportation Services of Waterloo Region (STSWR), or its assigns or successors, will not travel on privately owned or maintained right-of-ways to pick up students, and potential busing students will be required to meet the bus at a congregated bus pick-up point.”*
2. That the Owner/Developer supply, erect and maintain a sign (at the Owner/Developer's expense and according to the WRDSB's specifications), near or affixed to the development sign, advising prospective residents about schools in the area and that prior to final approval, the Owner/Developer shall submit a photo of the sign for review and approval of the WRDSB.
3. Prior to final approval, the WRDSB advises in writing to the Approval Authority how the above condition(s) has/have been satisfied.

Schedule D - New Development Sign Language

Sign Type 1 - Development where a school block has been identified

NOTICE

Be advised that students from this development may attend schools outside the neighbourhood, including on a permanent basis. If required, students may be accommodated at a Holding School(s) and/or in portable classrooms. The identification of a school site in a plan of subdivision does not necessarily mean that a school will be built within the plan of subdivision. Any identified school site may ultimately be developed for other land uses.

The Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB) has the right to redirect students based on the capacity of schools. Also note that if necessary, the WRDSB has the right to undertake boundary studies and change school boundaries.

For information on which schools are currently serving this area, contact the WRDSB Planning Department at 519-570-0003 ext. 4419, or email planning@wrdsb.ca. Information provided by any other source cannot be guaranteed to reflect current school assignment information.

Sign Type 2 - Development where no school block has been identified

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Specifications for Subdivision Advisory Signs

1. Number of Signs Required

- a. One Advisory Sign is required for each entrance of the subdivision, or site.

2. Sign Area/Format

- a. Advisory Signs may be freestanding or incorporated with development signage required by area municipalities.
- b. Minimum: 0.91m x 0.91m (3' x 3')
- c. Maximum: 1.22m x 1.22m (4' x 4')

3. Sign Face

- a. Colour: Advisory Sign shall have black lettering on white background.
- b. Format:
 - i. **Heading**: The Advisory Sign shall include the Waterloo Region District School Board "Logo" (see attached) and "NOTICE", as a heading.
 - ii. **Body**: The following wording shall be prominently placed on each sign:

"Be advised that students from this development may attend schools outside the neighbourhood, including permanently. If required, students may be accommodated at a Holding School(s) and/or in portable classrooms. Identifying a school site in a plan of subdivision does not guarantee school construction within the Plan of Subdivision. Any identified school site may ultimately be developed for other land uses.

The Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB) has the right to redirect students based on the capacity of schools. If necessary, the WRDSB also has the right to undertake boundary studies and change school boundaries."

The bottom of the Advisory Sign shall include the wording:

"For information on which schools are currently serving this area, contact the Planning Department at 519-570-0003 ext. 4419, or email planning@wrdsb.ca. Information provided by any other source cannot be guaranteed to reflect current school assignment information."

4. Height

The Advisory Sign shall conform to local municipal requirements regarding height above grade and setback from property lines and intersections.

5. Financial Responsibility

The Advisory Sign shall be provided at the expense of the owner/developer.

6. Sign Maintenance

The owner/developer is responsible for maintaining the Advisory Sign in a satisfactory condition and ensuring that it remains visible to prospective residents of the subdivision until alternate arrangements are made with the WRDSB Planning Department.

7. Clearance of Conditions of Draft Plan Approval

The owner/developer shall provide a photograph of the sign on site to fulfill the WRDSB's sign condition.

8. Advisory Sign Example



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The Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB) has the right to redirect students based on the capacity of schools. If necessary, the WRDSB also has the right to undertake boundary studies and change school boundaries.

For information on which schools are currently serving this area, contact the WRDSB Planning Department at 519-570-0003 ext. 4419, or email planning@wrdsb.ca. Information provided by any other source cannot be guaranteed to reflect current school assignment information.