1. **Preamble**

1.1 The procedures that follow provide guidelines for the Waterloo Region District School Board (Board) Policy 1011 - Community Planning and Facility Partnerships.

2. **School Board Planning and Broader Community Objectives**

2.1 The Board’s long-term capital and accommodation plan will be informed by relevant information obtained from local municipal governments and other community partners, and include:

- long-term enrolment projections;
- school capacity; and
- facility renewal needs.

2.2 To assist the Board in identifying space that may be suitable for facility partnerships, and to provide an opportunity to consider potential surplus properties in which community partners may be interested, the long-term capital and accommodation plan will forecast:

- where new schools or additions may be needed;
- which schools will remain well-utilized;
- which open and operating schools may have unused space; and
- which schools may be candidates for consolidation or closure.

2.3 The long-term capital and accommodation plan will be shared with community partners to provide time to respond.

2.4 Where unused space in open and operating schools is not surplus, but is available for partnership, or where the partnership opportunity involves new construction, the information will be provided to potential partners through the notification process outlined in Section 4 below.
3. Eligible Community Partners

3.1 Organizations and agencies interested in partnering with the Board will be subject to an application process before being approved and added to the notification list. Potential community partners will submit an initial application to the Board’s Planning department containing an outline of the proposed partnership opportunity that includes:

- company/organization background;
- letter of intent, including the intended use of space; and
- financial statements.

3.2 A committee of representatives from Purchasing, Facilities, Finance, Planning, the Waterloo Region Elementary Administrators (WREA) and/or Secondary School Principals Association (SSPA), and a representative from Waterloo Region Assembly of Public School Councils (WRAPSC) and/or the school(s) involved, will receive and evaluate all applications.

3.3 At a minimum, applications will be evaluated based on the Community Partner Selection Criteria in Section 3.3.1. The committee will have full discretion when evaluating partners’ compatibility and suitability.

3.3.1 Community Partner Selection Criteria

The community partner must:

- provide financial statements showing financial viability;
- be willing to enter into a lease, license, or joint-use/partnership agreement that requires the operator to pay a pro-rated share of utility, custodial and maintenance costs;
- have independent liability insurance;
- pay for and finance costs to perform minor renovations to protect student safety, provide appropriate washrooms, and otherwise make the space suitable for use;
- pay for and finance its share of construction in a co-building partnership, including a proportional share of joint-use or shared space;
- agree to operate in accordance with Board policies; and
- agree that staff working within a school complete a criminal background check.

3.4 The notification list of approved community partners will include the following:

- Agencies listed under Ontario Regulation 444/98 – Disposition of Surplus Real Property
- Non-profit child care operators
- District Social Services Administration Boards (DSSABs)
- Consolidated Municipal Service Managers (CMSMs)
- Public health boards
- Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs)
- Children’s mental health centres

Other potential community partners may include other government agencies and non-profit organizations, as appropriate.

3.5 Ineligible organizations include:

- Entities providing competing education services including tutoring services, Junior Kindergarten to Grade 12 private schools or private colleges, and credit offering entities that are not government-funded
- Political organizations
- Others as identified by the Board
3.6 Interviews may be conducted with all qualified applicants. The committee will make their recommendations to the Superintendent of Business Services. The final decision to add a potential community partner to the notification list will be made by the Superintendent of Business Services.

4. **Notification Process**

4.1 Information regarding the Board’s intention to build new schools and to undertake significant renovations and information regarding unused space in open and operating schools and administrative buildings that is available for facility partnerships will be posed to the Board’s website. This information will be updated at least once a year for space in existing schools, and as needed for case of co-building opportunities.

4.2 The name and contact information of the staff member at the Board who will respond to questions regarding facility partnerships throughout the year will be posted on the Board’s website.

5. **Annual Capital Planning and Facility Partnerships Meeting**

5.1 Entities on the Board’s notification list will be sent invitations to the annual Capital Planning and Facility Partnerships meeting. The invitations will clearly request that each organization bring relevant planning information, including but not limited to:

- population projections;
- growth plans;
- community needs; and
- land-use and green space/park requirements.

5.2 The invitation list, the entities in attendance, and any information exchanged at the annual meeting will be formally documented by the Board.

5.3 The following information will be presented or provided during the annual Capital Planning and Facility Partnerships meeting:

- all or a portion of the Board’s long-term capital and accommodation plan (as described in Section 2);
- details of any schools deemed eligible for facility partnership;
- relevant information available on the Board’s website; and
- any supplementary capital planning and facility partnerships information.

6. **Planning Prior to a Pupil Accommodation Review**

6.1 In addition to the annual Capital Planning and Facility Partnerships meeting, the Board will hold staff-level meetings with municipalities and other community organizations on the notification list to explore options to address underutilized space issues in schools within specific areas of the Board. These meetings will inform proposals that staff may present to the Board of Trustees, including recommendations to undertake a pupil accommodation review process.

6.2 Where a pupil accommodation review may take place, the Board should obtain a clear indication of any community planning and facility partnership opportunities.

6.3 Where a planned pupil accommodation review will occur, the Board will request from the local municipality or municipalities, technical information including, but not limited to:

- population projections; and
- future development projections.
7. **Co-building with Community Partners**

7.1 As part of the planning process, when considering building a new school or undertaking a significant addition or renovation, the Board will notify the entities on the notification list one (1) to three (3) years prior to the potential construction date.

7.2 When building or renovating schools, meeting deadlines related to student accommodation needs are paramount, therefore the Board will make its timelines clear to potential partners and may establish policies to ensure that timelines are maintained.

7.3 The notification process should be supported by a board resolution, but Ministry approval and/or an identified funding source is not required prior to notifying partners of the Board’s plan or intention to build. Similarly, plans to build may be contingent on board decisions that have not yet been made.

7.4 Once notified, entities may express their interest in co-building with the Board.

7.5 The Superintendent, Business Services & Treasurer of the Board and, if required under the Education Act, the Minister of Education will evaluate the expressions of interest to select partner(s) based on Board Policy 1011 – Community Planning and Facility Partnerships.

7.6 No partnership agreement may be finalized until both the Board and the partner(s) have an approved source of funding.

7.7 Where the portions are sizable, the Board’s preference for co-location partnerships is that each entity has ownership of their respective portions of the facility.

7.8 The Board will encourage community partners to provide notification to the Board when they have proposals or plans to build their own new facilities.

8. **Sharing Unused Space in Existing Schools with Community Partners**

8.1 Underutilized open and operating schools and administrative facilities will be reviewed on an annual basis for their suitability for partnership based on one or more of the following criteria:

- 60 percent utilized or less for two or more years;
- 200 or more unused pupil places;
- no anticipated enrolment increase within the existing boundary of the school in the mid-term that would require use of the space;
- the school is not located within an area identified for a Pupil Accommodation Review within the next 3 years;
- the space is not required for existing educational programming and initiatives;
- amenities are appropriate (e.g., parking, washrooms, separated access, etc.) or if required, can be accommodated through renovations;
- the ability to separate the space used by partners from the space used by students and other factors that make the school suitable for sharing during the school day;
- zoning and municipal bylaw restriction(s);
- other municipal planning considerations regarding appropriate site use can be satisfied;
- facility condition; and
- the ability to accommodate other Ministry of Education initiatives, as required.

8.2 If the space is both suitable for facility partnerships and is available for the long-term, the Board will consider declaring the space surplus and circulating it for lease through Ontario Regulation 444/98.
8.3 If the space is suitable for facility partnerships but is not surplus to the Board, the entities on the notification list will be notified of the potential for partnerships. The notification process should be supported by a Board resolution.

8.4 When notifying entities of facility partnership opportunities in shared unused space in existing schools, the Board will provide at minimum the following information about the available space:

- school/site name
- size (if known);
- location;
- facility amenities;
- required renovations (if needed);
- anticipated timing of when the space will become available;
- estimated duration of available space for partnerships;
- estimated cost for licensing the space (if available); and
- suitable partner uses, where applicable (some spaces may only be suited to certain types of partners).

8.5 Once notified, entities may express their interest in using the space. The expression of interest must include the following:

- space requirements (including square footage, number of rooms, washrooms, etc.);
- parking requirements;
- required renovations;
- zoning amendments (if required);
- hours of operation;
- number of users/clients/occupants;
- desired length of term/occupancy; and
- expected maintenance program or custodial services.

8.6 The Superintendent, Business Services & Treasurer of the Board will evaluate the expressions of interest to select partner(s) based on Board Policy 1011 – Community Planning and Facility Partnerships.

8.7 Pending approval of the facility requirements, the community partner will be required to:

- enter into a lease, license, or joint-use/facility partnership agreement;
- process any zoning amendments or obtain building permits through the appropriate jurisdiction;
- bear all costs associated with minor renovations to protect student safety, provide appropriate washrooms, and otherwise make the space suitable for use by the partner;
- be responsible for 100% of the costs associated with any zoning amendments, property taxes or renovations to the building and/or property;
- bear the cost for all land, legal and administrative costs incurred by the Board related to the partnership;
- pay for and finance any additional costs to support the facility partnership.

8.8 The Board may then choose to enter into a license or joint use agreement with the partner(s). The length of the term will be negotiated on a case-by-case basis. Under the Education Act, Minister of Education approval may be required.

9. Partnership Agreements and Cost-Recovery

9.1 The Board will provide clear instructions to potential partners regarding their rights and responsibilities as tenants and/or partners, including maintenance standards and the applicability, or lack thereof, of Board user policies, including accessibility and
inclusiveness policies. Unless otherwise negotiated, operational costs will include maintenance and custodial services provided by Board staff.

9.2 Legal agreements will respect the *Education Act* and protect the rights of the Board. The community partner is responsible for its legal counsel’s review of the agreements.

9.3 The Board will take on no additional costs to support facility partnerships; however, the Board will continue to use its discretion in supporting partnerships based on its student achievement strategy.

9.4 Fees charged to partners will be on a cost-recovery basis and should cover the operational and capital costs, including administrative costs and property taxes (if applicable), to the Board of the space occupied by the partner.

9.5 In co-building, partners will be required to pay for and finance their share of construction, including a proportional share of joint-use or shared space and elements required to partition or provide special service to that space (i.e., to ensure safety, non-mixing of populations, if needed, etc.). The Board will continue to build within Ministry space and funding benchmarks for the Board’s portion of the facility.