

**School District #62 (Sooke)**

<b>SCHOOL CLOSURES/ CONSOLIDATIONS</b>	No.: F-205
	Effective: Apr. 22/03 Revised: Nov. 27/07

**ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS**

Guidelines

1. The most important consideration in any decision will be the educational well-being of the students concerned.
2. An elementary school of 250 – 350 students is educationally and economically desirable.
3. New schools or additions should only be built when overall enrollment warrants new facilities.
4. Portables should only be utilized if suitable classroom space is not available.
5. The age, condition and physical characteristics of schools (eg. gym, library, hallways, multi-purpose room, etc.) should be considered.
6. Transportation issues such as distance, routes, walkways, timing of pick-ups and drop-offs should be considered.
7. Areas of projected growth (new housing) should be considered.
8. The timing and phasing-in of any changes must be carefully planned.
9. The value of schools to their neighbourhoods should be considered.
10. A rationale for any proposed change must be clearly stated.
11. If any net savings are realized, the Board should consider means by which those funds can be used to support affected students and schools.
12. It's important to demonstrate advantages, as well as recognize difficulties, in making any change.

To ensure that effective consultation occurs before closing or consolidating schools, the Board will establish an ad hoc committee that will:

1. Gather information regarding:
  - a) Enrolment trends in the schools and the district. Such trends will include future projections.
  - b) The condition and life expectancy of the school.
  - c) The distance to neighbouring schools.
  - d) Any transportation issues.

- e) Ages of students attending the school.
- f) The value of the school to the community.
- g) Monetary savings in closing the school.
- h) Options other than closing the school.

Membership on the Ad Hoc Committee shall normally include:

- ◆ District staff
- ◆ Trustee(s)
- ◆ Parent(s) – from the school PAC – nominated by the PAC Executive
- ◆ Student(s) – if age appropriate – from the affected school(s)
- ◆ Teacher(s) – from the affected school(s)
- ◆ CUPE support staff – from the affected school(s)
- ◆ Principal/Vice-Principal – from the affected school(s)
- ◆ Community member(s) nominated by the community governing group
- ◆ A member of the local municipal council or staff delegate where applicable.

These selections shall be governed by the normal processes in place for each representative organization or union.

The Ad Hoc Committee shall convene a meeting or meetings in the community to provide opportunity for public input once the basic data has been collected. The Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee shall chair the public meeting(s). A quorum of Board members shall be in attendance at the public meetings. The format of the meeting or meetings shall be:

1. The Ad Hoc Committee shall present the information gathered (as per a – h above).
2. The people in attendance shall have an opportunity to ask questions of the committee regarding the information.
3. Concerned parties shall be provided with an opportunity to provide additional input to the committee both at the meeting and within one week of the meeting (in writing).
4. Subsequent to the public meeting(s), the Ad Hoc Committee shall present a written report to the School Board at a public meeting of the Board. Copies of the report will be available to the public. The Board will make its decision once it has received the written report.

#### Time Frame

- a. Once the Board has decided to consider closing a school, notice will be given to all affected by the school closure:
  - School Planning Council
  - Parent Advisory Council
  - Parents
  - Staff members of affected school(s)
  - Communities affected by the closure and consequential changes to other schools.
- b. The consultation process will be preceded by evaluation of the physical condition of the school, available alternative accommodation, educational program/course implications for affected students, safety impact, alternate potential uses of the facility, parental

and community support, enrolment projections, the effect of a closure on other schools, impact on students and number of students affected, effect on catchment areas, effect on transportation services, financial impact of the closure, and other factors relevant to whether a particular school should be one considered for closure.

- c. Generally, the Board will take at least sixty days from the time the Board decides to consider closing a school (through formal motion at a public Board meeting) until it makes a final decision. The Board may shorten the consultation process if it is satisfied that:
    - There is a pressing need for a shorter time frame, and
    - Prior consultation has given the community adequate notice and an opportunity for input such that the Board has full understanding of the impacts of closure.
  - d. Following the Board's decision to permanently close a school, the Secretary-Treasurer will promptly notify the Minister of Education, including the school name, facility number, address and date of closure.
5. The Board will make its final decision on the proposed school closure after taking into fair consideration the input received through the consultation process. This includes the possibility that the proposal could be changed or reversed. If the changed proposal means a different part of the community, parents or staff is affected, additional consultation shall be provided.
  6. The Board decision shall be made by By-law at an open meeting of the Board.