



REPORT TO

REGULAR BOARD

PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE DRAFT ADMISSIONS & PLACEMENT OF SECONDARY PUPILS POLICY AND FIXED ATTENDANCE BOUNDARIES FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS

*Let the morning bring me word of your unfailing love, for I have put my trust
in you. Show me the way I should go, for to you I entrust my life.*

Psalm 143:8 | NIV

Created, Draft	First Tabling	Review
January 18, 2017	March 30, 2017	Click here to enter a date.
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RECOMMENDATION REPORT

Vision:

*At Toronto Catholic we transform the world
through witness, faith, innovation and action.*

Mission:

*The Toronto Catholic District School Board is an
inclusive learning community uniting home, parish
and school and rooted in the love of Christ.*

*We educate students to grow in grace and
knowledge to lead lives of faith, hope and charity.*



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A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report recommends the adoption of fixed attendance boundaries for all secondary schools in response to a November 21, 2016 recommendation from the Ministry of Education, and to be consistent with most Ontario school Boards.

Adoption of fixed attendance boundaries for all TCDSB secondary schools requires one substantive amendment to the current **draft** Admissions & Placement of Secondary Pupils (APSP) policy, namely to direct grade 8 students to one (1) co-educational secondary school based on proximity of the elementary school to the secondary school. The draft APSP policy, in its current form, articulates that each grade 8 student will be given a choice of the two (2) closest co-educational secondary schools.

This report recommends that the Board of Trustees approve the current draft APSP policy (*Appendix 'A'*) for consultation at the level of consult, **with the following amendments:**

1. That each grade 8 student be directed to one (1) co-educational secondary school based on the proximity of the elementary school to the secondary school.
2. That grade 8 students have the option of selecting one (1) other co-educational secondary school. Admission may be granted pending space availability, program availability, and proximity of the secondary school of choice to the home address of the student.

The cumulative staff time dedicated to developing this report was 123 hours.

B. PURPOSE

1. To update the current draft APSP policy, as attached in *Appendix 'A'*, in response to a Trustee motion at the Regular Board meeting of October 23, 2014:

“That the draft Admission and Placement of Secondary Pupils Policy, incorporating the changes approved at Regular Board meeting held on February 27th, 2014, as contained in Appendix B of this report, and to be considered for adoption at the Committee of the Whole Board in January 2015.”

2. To establish secondary fixed attendance boundaries in response to a November 21, 2016 letter from the Ministry of Education:

“Your board is strongly encouraged to implement specific catchment areas for each secondary school to better redistribute enrolment across all secondary schools.”

C. BACKGROUND

1. Senior academic and Planning staff have met to discuss and review the current draft APSP policy last tabled at the Regular Board meeting of October 23, 2014, where it was deferred for consideration at a future Board meeting.
2. Staff were directed to assess the current draft APSP policy to determine if its potential implementation will have a positive impact on enrolments and utilization rates at our secondary schools over time. Currently, there are several secondary schools that are oversubscribed, some significantly, and conversely, there are several secondary schools that are undersubscribed. Staff are seeking solutions to help create a better balance of enrolment and a more optimal use of available classroom space.
3. **February 27th, 2014** – At the Regular meeting of the Board, Trustees considered the report: *Review of Admissions Policy (S.A.01) and Placement Policy (S.A.02)*, and approved a number of revisions to the proposed policy. Staff were directed to consult with the broader stakeholder community.
4. **March 27th, 2014** – At the Regular meeting of the Board, Trustees considered the report: *Communications and Community Engagement Plan for Admissions Policy (S.A.01) and Placement Policy (S.A.02)*, and approved a comprehensive community consultation strategy as proposed by staff.
5. **May 2014** – A number of consultations with key stakeholders took place over the course of the month of May, including a successful and well attended “Consultation in the Round” event at the CEC. At “Consultation in the Round”, parents, students, administrators, student leaders, TSU, community leaders and members, parishioners, and various Board staff had an opportunity to provide comment and feedback directly to senior staff on the draft Elementary (S.A.01) and draft Secondary (S.A.02) Admissions policies being proposed.

6. **May 22nd, 2014** – At the Regular meeting of the Board, Trustees deferred the report: *Review of Admissions Policy (S.A.01) and Placement Policy (S.A.02)*, and made requests for some additional information, which was provided by June 2014.
7. **September 25th, 2014** – At the Regular meeting of the Board and **October 16th, 2014** – Corporate Affairs, Strategic Planning and Property Committee meeting, Trustees considered the report: *Review of Admissions Policy (S.A.01) and Placement Policy (S.A.02)*, where further key amendments to the staff recommendations were made. Staff were directed to provide comment and feedback to the motions and amendments at a subsequent meeting of the Board.
8. **October 23rd, 2014** – At the Regular meeting of the Board, Trustees considered the report: *Elementary Admission Policy (S.A.01) Update*, and approved the following recommendations.

[...] That the draft Admission and Placement of Secondary Pupils Policy, incorporating the changes approved at Regular Board meeting held on February 27th, 2014, as contained in Appendix B of this report, and to be considered for adoption at the Committee of the Whole Board in January 2015. [...]

9. **November 21st, 2016** – In a letter from the Ministry of Education, which did not approve the Board's highest Capital priority, the Ministry strongly encourages our Board to approve fixed boundaries for all secondary schools in an effort to create a better balance of enrolment across the system:

“Your board is strongly encouraged to implement specific catchment areas for each secondary school to better redistribute enrolment across all secondary schools.”

D. EVIDENCE/RESEARCH/ANALYSIS

1. Closer examination of secondary enrolment across the system has revealed continued oversubscription in several secondary schools and continued undersubscription in several secondary schools.

2. The Board approved elementary fixed attendance boundaries between 2010 and 2014 to accommodate the phased implementation of Full Day Kindergarten (FDK). At the Regular meeting of the Board on October 23, 2014, Trustees approved fixed attendance boundaries for all grades (FDK-8).

Current Admissions Policies (in Use)

3. The current Secondary Admissions and Placement policies indicate that grade 8 eligibility for admission to a secondary school is governed by the extent of a concentric circle around the secondary school, whereby each year the secondary Principals, in consultation with Planning and other Board staff, determine the extent (or radius) of the circle to include the closest elementary schools as per grade 9 enrolment caps set by the Director of Education.
4. Students who are unsuccessful in gaining admission to their designated home school, or first school of choice, are given the option of redirection to a nearby school or placed on a waitlist in order of priority and by time and date of applications. Students are offered three (3) choices:
 1. Accept the new placement.
 2. Reject the new placement and be placed on a Priority 1 waitlist of their first school of choice.
 3. Accept redirection and also be placed on a Priority 2 waitlist for their first school of choice until the end of May.
5. The Planning and Facilities department in partnership with the school principal will make every effort to ensure that space at any school is fully utilized. Furthermore, any school where there is potential for the placement of portables will be assessed in an effort to accommodate as many students as possible. Facilities staff will also assess schools with pupil accommodation challenges and make any suggestions for internal modifications in an effort to increase overall capacity. The overriding objective is to accommodate all students wherever possible.

Current Draft APSP Policy

6. The current **draft** APSP policy (*Appendix 'A', column 1*), as shared with stakeholders during the May 2014 consultation period, articulates that each grade 8 student will be given a choice of the **two (2) closest** co-educational secondary schools relative to the elementary feeder school in question, and **one (1) choice of the closest** single gender schools and the following specialty programs:

- French Immersion
 - Extended French
 - Congregated Advanced Placement
 - Regional Arts Program
 - STEAM, STEM, MST, MSE
 - International Baccalaureate Program (IB)
7. Staff measured the walk (street-line) distance of each elementary school to the closest co-educational secondary school, single-gender secondary schools, and various secondary specialty programs in an effort to model the draft APSP policy. This analysis has revealed that some of the elementary to secondary school matches are not consistent with established feeder school patterns—reasons for this may be varied, but the role history plays in elementary-secondary school associations is likely the greatest contributing factor. This detailed information will be provided to the Board of Trustees as a separate hand-out item, printed on larger-sized paper, and electronically via e-mail.

New Draft APSP Policy

8. In order for the Board to consider formalized fixed attendance boundaries for all secondary schools in response the Ministry’s recommendation to consider secondary boundaries, and to be consistent with most Ontario school boards, the current draft APSP policy requires **one key amendment**—namely, to direct grade 8 students to **one** (1) co-educational secondary school option. This would allow for the logical aggregation of individual elementary fixed attendance boundaries into secondary boundaries. The result of such aggregation would be to create an elementary “family of schools” for every secondary school in the system.
9. Students will still have the ability to further select from a list of designated single gender schools and various speciality programs as noted above.

Furthermore, students will have the option of selecting another co-educational school of choice, pending space, program availability, and proximity of the secondary school of choice to the home address of the student.

E. ACTION PLAN

1. Regulation 2(a) of the current draft APSP policy (*Appendix 'A'*) states:

“Students in each elementary school shall have identified access to two co-educational secondary school options based on proximity of the elementary school to the secondary school. If the number of applicants to one of the two secondary school options exceeds the capacity of the identified school, students shall be redirected to the second identified option. Capacity will be determined based on numbers approved by the Director of Education, in consultation with school and planning staff. This shall be based on the existing elementary feeder school approach whereby the Secondary School would draw from identified feeder schools based on proximity and a concentric circle model.”

Staff propose to amend Regulation 2(a) to read (changes bolded):

*“Students in each elementary school shall have identified access to **one (1) co-educational secondary school option** based on proximity of the elementary school to the secondary school. **Students shall also have the option of selecting one (1) other co-educational secondary school, pending space and program availability—priority will be given to students whose primary home address is in closer geographic proximity to the secondary school.** Capacity will be determined based on numbers approved by the Director of Education, in consultation with school and planning staff. ~~This shall be based on the existing elementary feeder school approach whereby the Secondary School would draw from identified feeder schools based on proximity and a concentric circle model.~~”*

2. **February 23th, 2017** – At the Regular Board meeting, the Board approved the Long-Term Accommodation Plan (LTAP). The LTAP calls for significant Capital investments over 15 years (subject to Ministry funding) to increase secondary OTG capacity in areas where there is oversubscription—this includes “right-sized” replacement schools, additions, and retrofits.

3. A Waitlist survey and Entry and Exit surveys have also been implemented as of January 2017. Staff will report on the results of the surveys in the spring of 2017.
4. In response to the Ministry of Education’s recommendation for the Board to strongly consider secondary boundaries, and pending the outcome of consultation, **staff recommend the establishment of fixed attendance boundaries for all secondary schools**—taking into consideration the geographic proximity of the elementary feeder school. Further to this point, staff also recommend the establishment of fixed attendance boundaries for all single gender schools and the following specialty programs:
 1. French Immersion
 2. Extended French
 3. Congregated Advanced Placement
 4. Regional Arts Program
 5. STEAM, STEM, MST, MSE
 6. International Baccalaureate Program (IB)

Note: Other Regional programs may be developed as consistent with the Long-Term Program Plan (LTPP).
5. Staff will develop a consultation plan and bring a final recommendation report to Board by June 30, 2017, reflecting stakeholder input.

F. RECOMMENDATION

That the Board of Trustees approve the following for consultation at the level of consult:

1. The current draft Admissions and Placement of Secondary Pupils (APSP) policy as found in Appendix ‘A’, with the following amendments:
 - a. That each grade 8 student be directed to one (1) co-educational secondary school based on the proximity of the elementary school to the secondary school.
 - b. That grade 8 students have the option of selecting one (1) other co-educational secondary school. Admission may be granted pending space availability, program availability, and proximity of the secondary school of choice to the home address of the student.

2. That fixed attendance boundaries for each secondary school be approved.
3. That fixed program boundaries for secondary schools offering Regional programs be approved, including, but not limited to:
 - a. French Immersion
 - b. Extended French
 - c. Congregated Advanced Placement
 - d. Regional Arts Program
 - e. Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM), Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), Mathematics, Science and Technology (MST), and Mathematics, Science and Engineering (MSE)
 - f. International Baccalaureate Program (IB).