



# Board Policy #108.0

## Student Accommodation - Attendance Areas and Student Transfers

Document Integration Project Format

---

The York Region District School Board believes in maintaining viable attendance areas (also known as school boundaries) for public schools in York Region. Board Policy and Procedure #680.0, Student Transportation addresses student transportation.

### **Legislative Context**

*Education Act*

### **Responsibilities**

*Board of Trustees is responsible for:*

- approving attendance areas for public schools in York Region.

*The Director of Education is responsible for:*

- implementing and operationalizing the *Student Accommodation – Attendance Areas and Student Transfers* policy.

*Coordinating Superintendent of Schools is responsible for:*

- determining circumstances as defined in this policy, where a student will be directed to attend a school other than his/her community school.

*Superintendents of Schools are responsible for:*

- reviewing attendance areas and determining program locations with Planning Services;
- holding public information sessions to explain the boundary review process, share information about boundaries and receive feedback from students and parents in school communities affected by the proposed boundary change;
- following public consultation, bringing forward the attendance areas for approval by the Board of Trustees; and
- approving all student transfers as per guidelines outlined under the definition of *Student Transfer*.

*Planning Services is responsible for:*

- identifying students to attend a school other than their community school for situations such as optional programs, overflow, primary class size compliance, administrative reasons, or holding schools; and
- providing staff support to the superintendents of schools throughout the boundary review process.

*Principals are responsible for:*

- communicating to the parent and student community, attendance areas and situations in which students have been identified to attend a school other than their community school due to optional programs, overflow, primary class size compliance, or holding school situations.

*Parents are responsible for:*

- initiating the student transfer process if they wish to have their child transferred to another school; and
- transporting their children, if approved on transfer, to another school.

## **Definitions**

*Attendance Area (also referred to as a School Boundary)*

Each school has a defined attendance area, appropriately sized to accommodate sustainable student enrolment. Attendance areas are subject to change based on enrolment trends, construction of new schools, program changes and alignment of elementary and secondary boundaries.

The following are additional considerations which can affect where students attend school; exceptional student programs, optional programs, student transfers, and students directed to attend a school other than the community school because of, overflow, enrolment pressure, primary class size, a holding school situation, and/or exceptional circumstances.

The physical school boundary is defined by geographical features including roads, railway tracks, rivers, and land parcels.

*Community School*

Community school refers to the school to which a student is assigned by the Board to attend for regular programming (English Track) based on the student's home address. Transportation zones apply.

Students may be designated to attend school(s) other than the community school in the attendance area in which their home addresses are located in the following circumstances:

- for reasons determined by the Coordinating Superintendent of Schools to be in the educational interests of the student;
- where the student has been excluded, or has been suspended or expelled and it is determined that it would either in the best interest of the student or of other students and staff that the student attend a different school than his/her community school; or
- for other circumstances where the Coordinating Superintendent of Schools determines that there is a good reason to direct the student to attend a school other than the community school.

*Exceptional Students*

Exceptional students are those students deemed exceptional by an Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC). Exceptional students may be enrolled in a program not located at their community school. Transportation zones apply unless specified by the IPRC.

*Holding Area*

Holding areas are not considered part of the permanent long-term attendance area. A holding area may be created to accommodate students for an interim period.

*Holding School*

A holding school is a school that is holding students, not considered part of the attendance area, until long-term accommodation is available. Examples of holding school situations include, but are not limited to, enrolment pressures, construction, renovation/reconstruction of a community school.

### *Optional Program*

An optional program is a program which a student may choose to attend. An optional program is not Ministry-mandated, but offered by the Board and may or may not be located at the student's community school.

Students attending optional programs do **not** receive transportation unless approved by the Board of Trustees or if the program is located at a student's community school. In all cases, transportation zones apply.

### *Overflow*

Overflow refers to situations in which students are directed by the Board to attend a school other than their community school or optional program for a specific period of time. The overflow students' attendance area does not change. Overflow may occur for a specified period if:

- individual grades have exceeded acceptable enrolment levels;
- the overall enrolment exceeds the capacity of the school; or
- the school is unable to reorganize grades during the year.

### *School Boundary*

See Attendance Area.

### *Student Transfer (as per Board Policy #680.0, Student Transportation)*

An application must be completed for a new student transfer. Approval, by the superintendent of schools, of the student transfer application is contingent upon:

- accommodation availability at the school requested;
- parents supplying transportation; and
- agreement by the principal and superintendent of education that the transfer is,
  - in the best interest of the student, and
  - will not jeopardize the program in the sending or receiving school.

Approval of a student transfer does not provide entitlement for the siblings of that student to attend that same school.

### *Transportation Zones*

*The Transportation Zones, defined below, is taken from Board Policy #680.0, Student Transportation. For more detailed information on the Board's transportation policy and procedure, please refer to Board Policy #680.0, Student Transportation.*

#### **a) Transportation Zone**

This is an area designated by Board policy as eligible for school vehicle transportation.

- Measurement methods to establish transportation zones are completed along pedestrian routes within a municipality and recognize roadways, municipal walkways and parks. Measurements shall be made from the edge of a student's driveway to the closest access to the school property.

**b) Non Transportation Zone**

This is an area designated by Board policy as ineligible for school vehicle transportation.

- Junior Kindergarten to Grade 3 – a child who lives within 1.2 kilometres of the school is not eligible for Board-provided transportation.
- Grade 4 to Grade 8 – a child who lives within 1.6 kilometres of the school is not eligible for Board-provided transportation.
- Grades 9 to 12 – a secondary school student living in an area served by public transit is not eligible for Board-provided transportation.
- A secondary student living more than 3.2 kilometres from the nearest secondary school in an area not served by public transit is eligible for Board-provided transportation.

**Policy History**

Approved 1997

Revised 2004

Revised 2011

*It is the expectation of the York Region District School Board that all employees, students and persons invited to or visiting Board property; or partaking/volunteering in Board or school-sponsored events and activities will respect the policies and procedures of the Board. The term "parents" refers to both parents and guardians in all Board policies and procedures.*



# Board Procedure #108.0 Student Accommodation - Attendance Areas and Student Transfers

Document Integration Project Format

---

This procedure outlines the steps followed when an attendance area is determined or under review and the process for student transfers.

## **Responsibilities**

*The Board of Trustees shall:*

- approve attendance area changes prior to any boundary changes becoming permanent.

*The Director of Education shall:*

- allocate staff and resources to support the *Student Accommodation – Attendance Areas and Student Transfers* procedure.

*Coordinating Superintendent of Education may:*

- direct a student to attend a school other than the student's community school in the following circumstances:
  - where there are reasons in the educational interest of the student to attend a school other than the student's community school; and
  - where the Coordinating Superintendent of Education determines that there is good reason to direct a student to attend a school other than the community school.

*Superintendents of Schools shall:*

- review and approve new student transfers;
- review and approve student transfer lists annually submitted by principals;
- where a student has been directed to attend a school other than their community school, and where accommodation is available, give consideration through the student transfer process for the student's sibling(s);
- when a new elementary school opens, only when accommodation in the holding school is available, decide whether to give consideration for students entering Grade 8 to continue at their holding school until graduation; and
- for the boundary review process,
  - by March 31 each year, present proposed boundary changes (including transportation impact) to the Board of Trustees that may be required for implementation in six to 18 months,
  - by April 30 each year, create a list of schools considered for boundary changes that may be required for implementation in 18 months,
  - following their presentation to trustees, inform at least two weeks prior to the meeting date, all affected students, their parents and school councils of the date, location and time of the public information session, and
  - hold a public information session, in consultation with the local trustee(s) when a proposed boundary change will affect 25 or more students.

*Superintendents of Schools may:*

- identify students as overflow;
- direct students to attend a school other than one's community school for special kindergarten situations in order to keep kindergarten classes at the established primary class size or in situations where space is unavailable or unsuitable to accommodate all of the children registered for kindergarten;
- direct students to a holding school; and
- direct students to attend a school other than their community school or optional program for exceptional circumstances as they arise.

*Planning Services shall:*

- in consultation with superintendents of schools;
  - review school attendance areas annually, and
  - for the schools identified for a boundary review process,
    - share with trustees in April of each year schools identified for a potential boundary change that may be required for implementation in 18 months,
    - following information being given to the trustees, ensure that the affected school principals receive notification to share with parents that Planning Services will attend a school council meeting outlining the proposed boundary change,
    - circulate a notice of a public information session to each affected school and in local newspapers, indicating the date, location and time of the public information session, at least two weeks prior to the meeting date,
    - ensure that feedback forms are available during the public information session and after the public information session in the office of schools affected by the proposed boundary change,
    - ensure that the presentation from the public information session is available on the Board's website 24 hours after the meeting,
    - ensure that at the public information session, information is made available on how public delegations may be made to the Board Standing Committee,
    - present to Program Planning Committee the recommended attendance area(s), a review of the process followed, and the public input received by each February 28,
    - distribute a notice to each impacted school indicating the recommended attendance boundary that will be presented to the Board Standing Committee, and
    - formally present to the Board of Trustees by each March 31, the recommended attendance area(s), a review of the process followed, and the public input received.

*Planning Services may:*

- recommend to the superintendent of schools that students attend a school other than their community school or optional program; and
- when exceptional circumstances exist, present to Program Planning Committee for approval an alternate timeline for the boundary review process and the communication plan to the affected area.

*Secondary Principals shall:*

- review new student transfers and forward them to the superintendent of schools for approval for the entire duration of secondary school;
- notify parents only if a student's transfer can no longer continue; and
- share with parents notifications provided by Planning Services that they will attend a school council meeting outlining proposed boundary changes.

*Elementary Principals shall:*

- review new student transfers and forward them to the superintendent of schools for approval, and
- by February of each year,
  - review the list of students currently on transfer,
  - send a letter to the parents of students on transfer to notify them that their child is still considered a transfer student and to seek confirmation that they still prefer their child continue at the school, in order to notify and seek approval of the superintendent of schools,
  - compile a final list of students currently on transfer and forward them to the superintendent of schools for approval, and
  - once approval has been received by the superintendent of schools, communicate with parents of students on transfer that their child may/may not continue to attend the school; and
- share with parents notifications provided by Planning Services inviting them to attend a school council meeting outlining proposed boundary changes.

*School Councils shall:*

- if their school's boundary is under review and would like to provide input, submit their input regarding the proposed boundary changes to the offices of any of the schools affected by the boundary change, or e-mail/fax their input to the superintendent of schools no later than two weeks after the public meeting.

*Parents shall:*

- if their school's boundary is under review and would like to provide input, submit their input regarding the proposed boundary changes to the offices of any of the schools affected by the boundary change, or e-mail/fax their input to the superintendent of schools no later than two weeks after the public meeting;
- understand that if Policy or Procedure #680.0, Student Transportation is amended that impacted students identified to remain, must comply with the most current policy;
- if they wish to have their **child transferred to a school outside of their child's community school**,
  - complete the application form and submit it to their child's community school,
  - understand that approval of the transfer is contingent upon the transfer criteria and students are not entitled to transportation,
  - understand that approval of a student transfer does not provide an entitlement for the siblings of that student to attend a school and that siblings are not entitled to transportation, and
  - understand that if they wish to have siblings of a child accepted on transfer attend the same school, they must complete the application form for each sibling and that the same criteria for admission would apply and siblings are not entitled to transportation;
- if they wish to have their **child attend an optional program that is offered in a school other than their community school**, understand that,
  - once admitted, their child will have the right to continue that program until completion, or until a more suitable program is recommended for the student, or until the program is moved from that location,
  - if they withdraw their child from the optional program, they must apply for a student transfer to have their child continue that school's regular program and are not entitled to transportation, and
  - if they wish to have siblings of a child enrolled in an optional program attend the same school, they must complete the transfer application form for each sibling. The same criteria for admission would apply and siblings are not entitled to transportation;

- understand that their child may be **directed by the Board to temporarily attend a school other than their community school or optional program and in these situations,**
  - the attendance area for their community school or optional program does not change,
  - students may be redirected by the Board back to their community school or optional program as space becomes available,
  - if they wish to have their child remain at a school other than their community school or optional program, they may apply for a student transfer and are not entitled to transportation, and
  - sibling(s) are not entitled to attend a school other than their community school and if they wish to have siblings attend the same school, they must complete the transfer application form for each sibling and supply transportation;
- understand that **when a school boundary has been changed,**
  - all students are to attend the school serving the newly defined attendance area (their new community school or optional program) unless directed otherwise by the Board,
  - existing students who do not wish to attend their new community school may apply for a transfer to the current school location, if space is available, and will not be entitled to transportation as per Board Policy #680.0, Student Transportation,
  - implementation of the new boundary may be phased in over a multi-year period, and
  - sibling(s) are not entitled to attend a school other than their community school or optional program and if they wish to have siblings attend a school other than their community school or optional program, they must complete the transfer application form for each sibling and siblings are not entitled to transportation;
- understand that when a **new elementary school** opens,
  - all students must move from their holding school to their new community school or optional program,
  - only when accommodation in the holding school is available, special consideration may be given by the superintendent of schools for students entering Grade 8 to continue at their holding school until graduation and will be entitled to transportation if they qualify as per Board Policy #680.0, Student Transportation, and
  - sibling(s) are not entitled to attend a school other than their community school or optional program and if they wish to have siblings attend a school other than their community school or optional program, they must complete the transfer application form for each sibling and siblings are not entitled to transportation; and
- understand that when a **new secondary school** opens,
  - it generally opens with Grades 9 and 10 with an additional grade added each subsequent year for the next two years,
  - all students entering Grades 9 and 10 must move from their holding school to their new community school or optional program, and
  - all students entering Grade 11 and 12 remain at the holding school until graduation and will be entitled to transportation if they qualify as per Board Policy #680.0, Student Transportation.

*Parents may:*

- apply for a student transfer if they wish for their child to attend a school other than their community school or optional program and students are not entitled to transportation.

*The Public shall:*

- if a school boundary is under review or being newly created and would like to provide input, submit their input regarding the proposed boundary changes to the offices of any of the schools affected by the boundary change, or e-mail/fax their input to the superintendent of schools no later than two weeks after the public meeting.

**Procedure History**

Approved 2011

*It is the expectation of the York Region District School Board that all employees, students and persons invited to or visiting Board property; or partaking/volunteering in Board or school-sponsored events and activities will respect the policies and procedures of the Board. The term "parents" refers to both parents and guardians in all Board policies and procedures.*