



## **Long-Term Program and Accommodation Strategy 2020-2029**

**To:** Committee of the Whole

**Date:** 4 November, 2020

**Report No.:** 11-20-3971

### **Strategic Directions**

- Transform Student Learning
- Provide Equity of Access to Learning Opportunities for All Students

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Long-Term Program and Accommodation Strategy 2020-2029 and Annual Planning Document 2020-2021, as presented in Appendix A of the report, be approved.

### **Context**

The Long-Term Program and Accommodation Strategy is part of the Multi-Year Strategic Plan approved by the Board of Trustees in May 2018.

First approved in May 2014, the Long-Term Program and Accommodation Strategy provides an approach to program and accommodation planning with a ten-year timeframe that allows for responsiveness and flexibility in a changing environment by including an annual cycle of review.

The Annual Planning Document that accompanies the strategy document provides details about the specific studies that are planned for the next school year. It reflects the short-term work that will be done to execute the long-term strategy.

TDSB has benefitted from the development and approval of the Long-Term Program and Accommodation Strategy with a ten-year timeframe as it has helped focus valuable resources and assist in the development of an Annual Planning Document and Capital Budget. It has also ensured all decisions include a system perspective and has enabled proactive rather than reactive responses to program and accommodation issues.

## **Annual Cycle of Review**

Each year, the Long-Term Program and Accommodation Strategy is reviewed and updated and then presented to the Board of Trustees for approval.

The first step in the annual review process involves the refreshing of school data (detailed information such as operational, planning and program data for every school). The program and accommodation drivers are also reviewed to ensure they are still relevant.

Staff then develops initial concepts for the entire system. Input from meetings with Trustees and Superintendents of Education and from discussions with the City of Toronto and co-terminus schools boards is considered. The list of all planned program and accommodation studies is reviewed and updated as needed. The changes are then reflected in the next version of the Long-Term Program and Accommodation Strategy which is a ten-year rolling plan.

## **Guiding Principles for Long-Term Program and Accommodation Strategy**

In the fall of 2018, a more detailed review of the drivers was identified in the action plans related to the implementation of the TDSB's Multi-Year Strategic Plan (MYSP) to ensure alignment with the goals of the MYSP and consideration of the TDSB's commitment to human rights, equity, accessibility and inclusion.

As part of the review, staff decided to replace the term "drivers" with "guiding principles" because the latter term is more commonly used in education and easily understood.

The following guiding principles were approved by the Board of Trustees in April 2019:

### **Equity of Access**

1. Neighbourhood schools that meet the needs of all students – Focus on building strong neighbourhood schools that offer a wide range of programs including specialty programs that meet the needs and interests of all students and support all post-secondary destinations.
2. Optimal elementary school size of at least two classes per grade – Aim for enrolments of no less than two classes per grade in elementary schools where possible to ensure that schools have a sufficient number of teaching staff to offer a range of educational opportunities.
3. Optimal secondary school size of at least 1,000 students – Aim for enrolments of no less than 1,000 students in secondary schools where possible to ensure that a variety of pathways, opportunities and programs can be offered to all students – review secondary schools with enrolments of less than 700 students to address

diminishing opportunities to offer viable programs that meet the needs of all students.

4. Consistent attendance boundaries – Establish consistent attendance boundaries across the TDSB – review instances of shared attendance boundaries where multiple schools are offered based on home address and split attendance boundaries where graduating cohorts are divided among two or more schools.
5. School locations that support active transportation – Locate schools and plan attendance boundaries to support active, safe and sustainable transportation to and from school with consideration to the distances specified in the Transportation of Students Policy P020 – locate elementary schools within walking distance and secondary schools in close proximity to public transit.
6. Minimal transitions – Minimize school transitions for students as they move through their elementary and secondary school pathways.
7. Balanced enrolment across tracks – Aim for a balanced representation of students across programs in schools where French programs are offered.

### **Efficient and Flexible Learning Space**

8. Optimal utilization rate of 90% – Ensure that school buildings are used efficiently by targeting utilization rates of 90% while recognizing the importance of child care – address issues of underutilization (schools operating at 65% utilization or less) and overutilization (schools operating at 110% utilization or greater) – use existing space in schools efficiently to balance enrolments.
9. Minimal use of portables – Use portables when the enrolment of a school exceeds the capacity of the building – review the use of portables on a site when the number of portables approaches the maximum number that can be accommodated on the site.
10. Flexible buildings and sites – Plan school sites, school buildings, and additions to be flexible and adaptive to a dynamic and changing city – design sites that can accommodate portables and future expansion as well as school spaces that are multi-functional.
11. Different models of school organization – Explore different models of school organization such as JK to Grade 12, Grade 7 to 12, specialty programs, campus models, multiple schools co-existing within the same building, full-year schools, and schools in mixed-use developments.

## **Program Priorities**

Five program areas have been identified as priorities for study to address a range of issues such as increasing access, implementing new initiatives, and promoting equity. The five program areas are:

- Secondary Program
- Building the Workforce of Tomorrow
- French Immersion and Extended French
- Indigenous Education
- Special Education and Inclusion

## **Studies to Address Accommodation Issues**

The Long-Term Program and Accommodation Strategy identifies studies to address the key accommodation issues of underutilization and redundant facilities (Pupil Accommodation Reviews), areas of sustained overcrowding where additional pupil places are required (Emerging Capital Priorities to Submit for Funding), and opportunities to reduce costs and generate revenue (Reviews of Non-operating School Sites for Potential Sale).

In addition, the Long-Term Program and Accommodation Strategy identifies other studies to balance enrolments across schools and make use of existing school space to solve problems (Boundary Changes, Grade Changes, Program Relocations, New Programs, Rooms Available for Partnership, Development Redirections, and Child Care Occupancy Reviews).

## **Summary of Studies Completed in 2019-2020**

Due to the scope and magnitude of changes that the COVID-19 pandemic has caused for the system, staff was not able to proceed with or complete the majority of studies that had been identified in the 2019-2020 Annual Planning Document. Due to the shutdown of schools in March 2020, staff was not able to proceed with arranging the necessary public consultation meetings required to complete these studies.

Furthermore, staff has devoted time to large system-wide initiatives including the Secondary Program Review and French-as-a-Second Language Review. These priorities precluded staff's ability to initiate other program and accommodation studies.

## **Summary of Studies Planned for 2020-2021**

Subject to changing conditions due to COVID-19, studies identified in the Annual Planning Document 2020-2021 will begin, or continue, this school year. The following provides a high level summary of the studies that have been identified.

- Emerging Capital Priorities: 10
- Pupil Accommodation Reviews: 1
- Boundary Change Studies: 4
- Grade Change Studies: 1
- New Program Studies: 3
- Program Relocation Studies: 2
- Development Redirection Studies: 5
- Non-Operating School Site Studies: 2
- Child Care Occupancy Reviews: 0
- Program Priorities: 2
- Other: 1

Future Pupil Accommodation Reviews at the elementary panel have been identified as 'TBD' in the document. This is due to the moratorium on Pupil Accommodation Reviews imposed by the Ministry of Education in fall 2017. Future Pupil Accommodation Reviews at the secondary panel will be determined after the final report of the Secondary Program Review is approved by Trustees.

TDSB staff has received Ministry approval to commence a Pupil Accommodation Review of York Memorial CI and George Harvey CI based on the urgent situation resulting from the fire at York Memorial CI. This process began during the 2019-2020 school year. Public meetings were put on hold due to the pandemic. The process will resume at an appropriate time.

## **Action Plan and Associated Timeline**

As in past years, following Board approval of the updated strategy, staff will move forward with the implementation of the reviews identified in the Annual Planning Document. As a first step, staff will conduct Local Feasibility Studies to examine the feasibility of preliminary accommodation and program concepts. These Local Feasibility Studies could lead to other processes such as Program Area Reviews or Boundary Reviews.

There will be opportunities for community engagement as per our policies and procedures for each process. Staff will explore virtual platforms for engaging those impacted including students, parents, school staff and the public when required. Final decisions including Board approval, if required, will be made only after completion of the processes.

## **Resource Implications**

The resources needed to implement the strategy will be determined in the future as reviews are completed and costs are determined. Details about costs such as staffing, resources, and capital will be provided to the Board for approval.

## **Communications Considerations**

The Long-Term Program and Accommodation Strategy 2020-2029 document will be posted on the TDSB's website. The public will be engaged during the review processes included in the strategy.

## **Board Policy and Procedure Reference(s)**

Policy P068, Program and Accommodation Review

Policy P076, Community Planning and Partnerships

Procedure PR598, Pupil Accommodation Review

Procedure PR713, Community Planning and Partnerships

Procedure PR715, Program Area Review

## **Appendices**

- Appendix A: Long-Term Program and Accommodation Strategy 2020-2029

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