



**DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD  
ONTARIO NORTH EAST**

## **Policy No. 2.2.2**

**Section: School Accommodation Review**

**Related References: Education Act  
Ontario Regulation 444/98**

**Appendices:**

**Approved: May 19, 2015**

**Revised:**

**Review Date:**

---

### **TITLE: Community Planning and Partnerships**

#### **1.0 Rationale:**

The purpose of the Community Planning and Partnerships Policy is to encourage school boards to reach out to the community organizations to share planning information on a regular basis. Particularly, boards are encouraged to ensure that additional efforts are made to share information with community organizations prior to commencing a pupil accommodation.

The sharing of information will allow school boards and other entities to work together to the benefit of boards, students and the community, and to optimize the use of public assets owned by school boards. This policy is intended to assist boards in establishing more facility partnerships, and to support effective planning with community partners regarding land-use and green space/ park planning.

The policy also focuses on opportunities to share facilities with community partners when building new schools and undertaking significant renovations, when considering the use of unoccupied space in schools, and when considering properties associated with schools that may close and sites that may be considered for future disposition.

School boards' primary responsibility is to support the achievement and safety of students. Within that context, the intent of this policy is to:

- Reduce facility operating costs for school boards and government;
- Improve services and supports available for students;
- Strengthen relationships between school boards and community partners and the public;
- Maximize the use of public infrastructure through increased flexibility and utilization; and
- Provide a foundation for improved service delivery for communities.

#### **2.0 Definitions:**

#### **3.0 Policy:**

District School Board Ontario North East adopts the policy on Community Planning and Partnerships, promoting cooperation and collaboration relationships between school boards and community organizations as part of the strong foundation to a sustainable publicly-funded education system.

## **PROCEDURES:**

### **Administrative Regulation**

#### **1.0. Role of School Boards**

School Boards have the authority to make decisions regarding their school facilities and the use of their properties that are consistent with the Education Act. Boards will identify which schools will or will not be suitable for facility partnerships based on board- determined criteria.

The board will follow Ontario Regulation 444/98 regarding the lease or sale of surplus assets, including schools or parts of schools. The board has the authority to co- build with other entities and to enter into a variety of facility partnerships through license or joint use agreement as defined in paragraph 44 of subsection 171 (1) , paragraph 4 of subsection 172.1. (2), and sections 183, 194 and 196 of the Education Act, with Ministry approval in some instances. Boards may choose to enter into license or joint use agreements for space that is unused but not surplus.

#### **2.0. School Board Planning and Broader Community Objectives**

The Ministry recognizes that encouraging community planning and facility partnerships will be most effective when community partners work with School boards and notify them in a timely manner when they are looking for space or considering new construction.

2.1. School boards must have a capital plan that addresses the future needs of their students. The areas of enrolment growth and decline should be presented. The plans should include enrolment projections, school capacity, renewal needs, potential consolidations and the construction of new schools or additions, including significant renovations.

2.2. In this planning process, boards 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. This information will assist boards in identifying the facilities that may be suitable for facility partnerships with respect to new construction and unused space in schools and in administrative buildings. It also provides an opportunity to consider community partners.

2.3. School board must share their planning information with the community partners so that external entities may have sufficient time to respond to the presented opportunities. The board must also include information related to the CPP policy and discussions with community organizations in school information profiles when undertaking the accommodation review process.

2.4. When unused space is declared surplus, boards will continue to follow the circulation process as defined in O. Reg. 444/98. Where the unused space in open and operating schools is not surplus, but available for partnerships, or where the partnership opportunity involves new construction, the information will be provided to potential partners through the notification process as outlined in section 4 in this policy.

#### **3.0. Community Planning and Partnerships**

3.1 The school board is responsible to determine what facilities are suitable and not suitable for facility partnerships, what entities are suitable and not suitable partners, and when to enter into a partnership. These decisions to share must be made in a way that is well- informed, well-coordinated, transparent and consistent with student achievement and safety.

3.2. Boards will develop criteria to identify Community Partners:

3.2.a Principles and criteria regarding eligibility of partner(s);

- Partnership operations, of the shared portion, must not jeopardize the health and safety of the students;
- Partner(s) must be able to fund their own upgrades to their shared portion;
- Partner(s) must have approval of the Board to any changes to their leased portion;
- Partner(s) must sign a lease that clearly defines expectations of the partnership for both parties.

3.2.b How available space will be selected;

- Surplus space to student enrolment

3.2.c What entities will be selected for the notification;

- Municipalities
- Agencies
- Co- terminus boards
- District Social Services Administration Board
- Consolidated Ministry Services Managers
- Public Health Boards & Local Health Integration networks
- Children's Mental Health Centres

3.2.d How notification to partners of space and construction;

- Formal letter
- Website

3.2.e How entities will be selected for partnerships, including prioritization, if applicable.

- Co- terminus boards
- Other Ministry divisions
- Municipalities
- Day cares
- Agencies

3.3. Criteria regarding eligibility of partners, will take into consideration the value of the partnership to students. The criteria will incorporate the following requirements:

3.3.a Health and safety of students;

3.3.b Appropriate partnership for a school setting;

3.3.c Student achievement strategy must not be compromised;

3.4. Entities that provide competing education services such as tutoring services, JK-12 private schools or private colleges, and credit offering entities that are not government-funded, are not eligible partners;

3.5 Facility sharing between publicly funded school boards through co-ownership, lease or other agreements remains a priority. Board facility partnerships should not disadvantage co-terminus boards that have priority status under O. Reg. 444/98.

#### **4.0. Procedure for CPP Notification**

4.1. Surplus space being offered for sale or lease will continue to follow the circulation processor as outlined in O. Reg. 444/98. Non- surplus space will follow a new notification process similar to O. Reg. 444/98.

4.2. DSB Ontario North East will post information on the website regarding our 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. This information will be updated at least once a year in case space in existing schools, and as needed in the case of co- building opportunities. The information posted will contain the name of the contact person for further information.

4.3. DSB Ontario North East will inform entities from their notification list when key information regarding community planning or facility partnerships is changed. The notification list will address:

4.3.1 at a minimum the entities listed in O. Reg. 444/98 Disposition of Surplus Real Property, and will specifically include:

4.3.1a All applicable levels of municipal government ( single, upper, lower tiers);

4.3.1b Applicable District Social Services Administration Board(s) or Consolidated Municipal Service Boards;

4.3.1c Applicable Public Health Boards, Local Health Integration Networks and Children's Mental Health Centres.

4.3.2 the Board may prioritize the list as it sees fit;

4.3.3 if requested child care operators or government-funded organizations will be added to the list.

#### **5.0. Annual CPP Meeting**

**5.1. DSB Ontario North East will hold at least one meeting per year to discuss potential planning partnership opportunities with the public and community organizations.**

5.2. DSB Ontario North East will notify the entities on their notification list and general public about the annual meeting.

5.3. At the annual CPP meeting, DSB Ontario North East will clearly request that organizations prepare to bring relevant planning information, including but not limited to, population projections, growth plans, community needs, land-use and green space requirements.

5.4. The board will receive and listen to what needs or plans the community partners may have.

5.5. The board will formally document the invitation list and those in attendance at the annual meeting with the minutes posted to the website.

5.6. The CPP meeting may be a stand-alone meeting or may be held as a part of a scheduled board meeting.

## **6.0. School Board Planning Prior to a Pupil Accommodation Review**

6.1. In addition to the annual CPP, the board will continue discussions with affected municipalities and other community organizations as they explore options to address under-utilized space issues in schools within specific areas of the board. The discussions will inform proposals that Administration may present to the Board of Trustees, including recommendations to undertake a pupil accommodation review process.

6.2. At the discussions with the community organizations, DSB Ontario North East will obtain a clear indication of any community planning and partnership opportunities in areas where a pupil accommodation review may take place.

6.3. DSB Ontario North East will request technical information from local municipalities where a planned pupil accommodation review will occur. This technical information is to be specified by the school board and can include population and future development projections in the area.

## **7.0 Co- building with Community Partners**

7.1 The construction of new school, additions and renovations represents a significant public investment in a long-term asset. It is an opportunity to leverage other infrastructure investments by co-building with entities that provide services and programs for children, their families and the broader community.

7.2. As part of the planning process, when the board is considering a new school or undertaking a significant addition or renovation will notify the entities on their notification list 1 to 3 years prior to the potential construction start date. The information, on plans and site, provided will be as detailed as possible to support potential partners' consideration.

7.3. The notification will be supported by a board resolution but does not have to identify the source of funding or Ministry approval when they notify their partners.

7.4. The board will evaluate any expressions of interest and can select a partner based on criteria of this policy. The Ministry's Approval may be required depending on the Education Act.

7.5. Partnerships agreements cannot be finalized until both the board and the partners have an approved source of funding. Any request for Ministry funding and request for transfer from reserve approvals are expected to reflect that boards have solicited interests from partners.

7.6. The board and facility partners will have ownership of their respective portions of the facility, where the portions are sizeable.

7.7 DSB Ontario North East will encourage community partners to provide notification to provide to the board when community partners have proposals or plans to build their own new facilities. This information should be provided to the board when the facility partnership-related public meetings are being held.

7. 8. The Ministry has deadlines related to student accommodation needs and funding parameters therefore, the board will expect 10 working days' written notification if the community / entity is to be a potential partner.

### **8.0. Sharing Unused Space in Existing School with Community Partners**

8.1. The school board will review under-utilized open and operating schools and administrative facilities for their suitability for partnership, based on the previous criteria outlined. The starting point will be facilities that have been 60 percent utilized or less for two years, and then will extend their review to other potentially suitable facilities.

8.2. The criteria for partnerships in schools must consider issues related to safety, student achievement and pupil accommodation strategies, zoning and site use restrictions, facility conditions, the configuration of space and the ability to separate the space used by partners from the space used by students, among other factors.

8.3. When 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 O. Reg. 444/98.

8.4. When it is both suitable for facility partnerships but not surplus to the board needs, the board will follow the notification process outlined in this policy. This notification will be followed by board resolution.

8.5. DSB Ontario North East will provide information about the available space including size, location, facility amenities and any required renovations.

### **9.0. Partnership Agreements and Cost- Recovery**

9.1. The school board is responsible for providing clear instructions to potential partners regarding their rights and responsibilities as tenants, including maintenance standards and the applicability, or the lack thereof, of board user policies, including accessibility and the inclusiveness policies. The school board will be responsible to ensure that proper legal agreements respect the Education Act and the board's rights.

9.2. DSB Ontario North East will not take on additional costs to support facility partnerships, and will continue to use their discretion in supporting partnerships based in their student achievement strategy.

9.3. On a cost-recovery basis, the fees charged to partners will cover the operations and capital cost, including administrative costs and property taxes (if applicable), to the board for the space occupied by the partner. Additional costs to perform minor renovations to protect student safety, provide appropriate washrooms, and otherwise make the space for suitable use by facility partners must be borne by the partner. These financial expectations will be made clear to potential partners in the agreements.

9.4. 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. The board portion must be constructed within the Ministry space and funding benchmark.