

SCHOOL CLOSURE

The Board may from time to time be required to close existing schools and to realign attendance areas to ensure the efficient and effective operation of the division. The process for the closure of schools is outlined in Section 62 of the *Education Act*. Prior to any decision on a school closure or a realignment of attendance areas, the Superintendent shall review the *Education Act* to ensure that the process to be followed is in compliance with provincial requirements.

Specifically

1. The Board, upon receiving a referral from the Superintendent of Schools regarding the possible closure of a school, shall determine whether or not to proceed with further study.
2. Should the Board wish to proceed with a consideration of closure, the Board will have the matter raised as a notice of motion at a regular meeting of the Board, and details will be provided which will identify the specific school or portion of the school affected.

The Board shall communicate the fact and implications of the possible school closure, and the date and place of the public meeting to discuss the closure in writing to the parents of every child and student enrolled in the school affected by the closure and any other person, municipality or community organization who, in the opinion of the Board, may be significantly affected.

3. The communication shall address how the closing would affect the following:
 - 3.1 the attendance area for that school;
 - 3.2 relevant information as outlined within the Board's long-range capital plan;
 - 3.3 the attendance at other schools, including the number of students who would be relocated if the school were to close;
 - 3.4 the need for, and the extent of, bussing;
 - 3.5 program implications for other schools;
 - 3.6 the educational and financial impact of closing the school, including the effect on operational costs and capital implications;
 - 3.7 the financial and educational impact of not closing the school;
 - 3.8 the capital needs of other schools that may have increased enrollments as a result of the closure; and
 - 3.9 the proposed disposal of the school if the entire school is to be closed.

4. The date and place of the public meeting shall be:
 - 4.1 posted in five or more conspicuous places in the area of the school, or schools, affected by the closure, for at least two weeks prior to the date of the public meeting; and
 - 4.2 published online on both the school and division websites, in the local parish bulletin and in a newspaper circulating within the area or areas of the school or schools affected by the proposed closure, once a week for at least two weeks prior to the date of the public meeting.
5. On the date set for the public meeting, the Board will convene at the time and place specified to discuss:
 - 5.1 the possible closure;
 - 5.2 the implications for the students, the community, and for the school system;
 - 5.3 possible implementation plans; and
 - 5.4 possible alternatives.
6. At the public meeting, the Board shall provide an opportunity for the council(s) of the municipality in which the school is located to provide a statement to the Board of the impact the closure may have on the community.
7. A minimum of three trustees shall attend the public meeting.
8. Following the public meeting, there shall be a minimum period of three weeks for electors to make written representation to the Board regarding the possible closure.
9. The Board may determine times and places for further meetings.
10. The final debate by the Board and the vote upon the resolution shall occur only after all the Board procedures have been completed.
11. Subsequent to the final debate, and if the vote is in favour of school closure, the Board shall request approval from the Minister forthwith in order to proceed with the closure.

Reference **Section 62, *Education Act***