

Toronto District School Board

Procedure PR715

Title: **PROGRAM AREA REVIEW**

Adopted: October 11, 2016

Effected: October 11, 2016

Revised: Not Applicable

Reviewed: Not Applicable

Authorization: Executive Council

1.0 RATIONALE

This procedure supports the implementation of Policy P068, Accommodation and Program Review.

2.0 OBJECTIVE

To provide guidance when undertaking a Program Area Review

3.0 DEFINITIONS

Board is the Toronto District School Board, which is also referred to as “TDSB”.

Central Accommodation Team (CAT) is a cross-functional team of senior staff that makes decisions and/or recommendations to effectively and efficiently manage the exclusive use of space in TDSB facilities in order to create/maintain the strategic placement of academic programming and services to support students and system-wide accommodation needs.

Local Feasibility Study is a preliminary analysis of an accommodation or program concept to determine its viability that is conducted by a staff team and the affected Trustee(s). The team, called the Local Feasibility Team, is led by the local Superintendent(s) of Education. The study could lead to other formal public review processes such as Boundary Reviews, Program Area Reviews and Pupil Accommodation Reviews that include community engagement.

Long-Term Program and Accommodation Strategy is a roadmap for the future that provides a systematic 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.

Program Area Review is a process undertaken for consideration of changes to the grade configuration of a school (excluding changes to grade configurations of French Immersion or Extended French programs and programs for students with exceptionalities); the establishment of new schools or new specialized programs.

Program Area Review Team (PART) is a group that is formed to complete a Program Area Review. Membership includes Planning and Teaching and Learning staff (as required), affected Trustee(s), affected Superintendent(s) and Principal(s), and School Council Chair or designate from each school. A PART uses the information gathered during the Local Feasibility process, communicates with the larger community and staff, and considers options and implications of these options. Recommendations from the PART are based on consensus of the PART.

Superintendent's Local Review is an initial analysis of a program issue at a particular school or group of schools by a Superintendent of Education.

TDSB is the Toronto District School Board, which is also referred as the "Board".

4.0 RESPONSIBILITY

Associate Director, Finance and Operations

5.0 APPLICATION AND SCOPE

This procedure applies to staff engaged in a Program Area Review.

6.0 PROCEDURES

6.1 Scope

Program Area Reviews concern the establishment of new schools or programs as well as grade reconfigurations.

6.2 Process to Establish a Program Area Review Team

a) *Initiation*

During the annual process to refresh the Long-Term Program and Accommodation Strategy, staff meets with Superintendents of Education and Trustees to determine if new issues have arisen that could lead to formal processes such as Program Area Reviews, Boundary Reviews, Pupil Accommodation Reviews, and Re-directions of Residential Development. Potential Program Area Reviews are included in the strategy.

All of the reviews included in the Long-Term Program and Accommodation Strategy are presented to the Central Accommodation Team (CAT) for initiation.

Throughout the year, unforeseen accommodation issues identified by a Superintendent of Education, Principal, Trustee or school community could lead to a review. The Superintendent of Education brings these new issues forward to the CAT for consideration.

- b) *Superintendent's Local Review*
For a new accommodation issue, the Superintendent of Education completes the Superintendent's Local Review form and submits it to the CAT.
- c) *Local Feasibility Team*
Once the CAT gives permission to proceed with a Local Feasibility Study that was identified in the Long-Term Program and Accommodation Strategy or identified during the year, the Superintendent of Education forms a Local Feasibility Team (LFT) composed of the directly-affected Superintendent(s), Principal(s), Trustee(s) and other central staff as required. The LFT meets to review and discuss the proposed change. The LFT reviews the data and discusses the impacts of any change. The Superintendent of Education then completes the Local Feasibility Team Report form and reports back to the CAT.
- d) *Approval to Begin a Program Area Review Team*
The CAT recommends the formation of a Program Area Review Team (PART). Staff resources are assigned to support the work of the team.
- e) *Work of the PART*
Once approval has been granted, the Superintendent of Education forms a PART consisting of the same staff who participated in the LFT but also including other members. The PART holds working meetings to review the data, discuss the impacts, and make a recommendation to proceed or not to proceed with any change. The PART holds at least one public meeting to inform a broader audience and get feedback. Once the PART has developed its recommendation(s), the Superintendent of Education prepares a report with the recommendation(s) and brings it to the CAT for review. The financial impact of all recommendations and a funding source must be included.

6.3 Membership

The PART membership includes:

- Superintendent(s) of Education
- Trustee(s)
- Principal(s) of directly-affected school(s)
- School council chair(s) or designate
- Secondary student (when a secondary school is part of the review)

Members are expected to attend all meetings. Substitutes cannot be sent to the working meetings or the public meetings to represent absent members.

Others who participate as part of a support pool to the team but are not members are central staff including but not limited to Planning, Teaching and Learning, Special Education, Caring and Safe Schools, and Facility Services to provide information, analysis, and resource support in their area of expertise.

6.4 Mandate of the Program Area Review Team

The role of the PART is an advisory one. It considers a full range of options within the framework provided and makes recommendations. The Board may support the PART's recommendations or staff's recommendations or it may make a different decision.

The purpose of the first working meeting is to:

- Explain the reason for the Program Area Review
- Clarify the role of the team;
- Determine consensus and the voting procedure; and
- Set dates of all meetings (including a minimum of one public meeting).

Functioning of the Program Area Review Team

The PART may conduct as many working meetings as required but must have at least one meeting with only team members before the public meeting occurs.

The PART functions by reaching consensus among members. If consensus cannot be reached, a vote occurs. The definition of consensus, the determination of voting procedure (e.g. by ballot or show of hands), and the process to be followed in the event of a tie vote is established by the team at its first meeting. The PART decides who will participate if a vote is necessary. For example, it could decide that each school participating in the review has one vote or it could decide that each school has two votes – one for the Principal and one for the parents,

6.5 Chair of Program Area Review Team

The Superintendent of Education chairs the team. If two or more Superintendents of Education are involved in a review, one of them serves as chair.

The chair, in addition to other duties:

- a) Organizes the working and public meetings;
- b) Facilitates and chairs PART working meetings and the public meeting;
- c) Reviews the mandate and task of the PART and the responsibilities of the members;

- d) Establishes, in conjunction with PART members, meeting norms;
- e) Ensures meeting notes are taken;
- f) Works with the Educational Planning Officer to prepare the final report based on team consensus; however, if consensus cannot be reached, includes dissenting opinions in the PART's report; and
- g) Establishes, in consultation with the directly-affected Principals, a process for implementing the recommendations. This process includes details about pupil accommodation, facilities, staffing, student transportation and others as appropriate.

6.6 Public Meeting

At least one public meeting will be held.

A meeting notice will be sent to parents and the school community (residents living within a 500-metre radius of each school in the review) in advance of the public meeting.

Supports such as interpreters and child care will be available to allow participants to fully participate at the meeting.

The meeting may be held using different formats such as town hall, town hall with small group discussion, or open house. The format will be determined by the Superintendent of Education leading the review.

There will be opportunities for attendees to ask questions and provide feedback.

The meeting notice, agenda, presentation, meeting notes, and any other related documents will be posted on the TDSB's website.

6.7 Program Area Review Team's Report

The Superintendent of Education and the Educational Planning Officer prepare the Program Area Review Team's report. A member of the team may submit a dissenting report to the Superintendent of Education leading the review if he or she disagrees with the PART's recommendations. The report is presented to the CAT.

Central staff prepares a report with its recommendations to Executive Council and then to the Board of Trustees. The PART's report is appended to the staff report.

6.8 Communication

Information about the Program Area Review is posted on the TDSB's external website and updated regularly during the review process. Information includes the name(s) of the school(s) involved in the review, the names of Program Area Review Team members, date and time of the public meeting, meeting agenda, meeting notes, and other relevant material where practical.

Other communication methods that may be used include written notices sent to parents of the school(s) named in the review and to members of the school community.

Following the Board's approval of recommended changes, a letter is sent to parents informing them of the decision.

7.0 EVALUATION

This procedure will be reviewed every four (4) years after the effective date or sooner if required.

8.0 APPENDICES

N/A

9.0 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Policy P068, Accommodation and Program Review