
BACKGROUND

The Board believes that a key foundation of good governance and accountability is electoral representation. Each trustee is elected within a ward or area but represents all public school constituents of the Division and represents this electorate through the democratic process. Section 76(4) of the *Education Act* requires Boards to make publicly available a policy respecting the considerations and processes used to determine ward structures.

GUIDELINES

1. The Board may by bylaw
 - 1.1 provide for the nomination and election of trustees by wards and determine the boundaries of the wards, or
 - 1.2 provide for the election of trustees by the general vote of the electors.
2. In addressing the statutory requirements of the *Education Act*, the Board may from time to time undertake a review of electoral wards to ensure that effective and equitable representation is maintained. At least one time per electoral cycle and prior to the mid-point of the third year, the Board will discuss the potential need to perform a ward boundary review. Such a review shall consider both the number of trustees and the ward boundaries.
3. A review of ward boundaries shall include consultation with all communities within the RVS boundaries and appropriate stakeholders.
4. When reviewing ward boundaries, the Board may take into consideration any factors it considers appropriate, but must take into consideration the following criteria:
 - 4.1 Population/Number of Electors: The primary factor in designing ward boundaries will be population within each ward; attempting to ensure that population is relatively equal (typically +/- 25%) between wards.
 - 4.2 Number of Trustees: Consideration shall be given as to the number of trustees required for effective governance keeping in mind the prudent use of resources, workload, and accessibility.
 - 4.3 Easily Identifiable Borders: Ward boundaries should be clear and easily identifiable so as to avoid voter confusion. Roads, existing municipal boundaries, or geographical features should be used for boundaries. In so far as it is possible, they should avoid having a voter required to vote at two different polling stations for municipal and school board elections.
 - 4.4 Consider the rural/urban nature of the division and its associated communities.



POLICY 29 WARD STRUCTURE

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5. When changes to ward structures are determined by the Board, the Board shall pass a bylaw before December 31 in the year prior to that general election being held and inform the Minister.
6. Should the Board request a change in the number of trustees, a request must be made well in advance of December 31 in the year prior to that general election to the Minister of Education who can vary the number of trustees to be elected for the school division.

Legal Reference:

- Section 76, 78 Education Act