

Questions and Answers

- Q. What is the utilization rate that would be considered on a low end, one that would put a school in consideration for closure?**
- A. When closing schools there are a number of factors to consider such as; the ability of the facility to host the needed programs, the size of the school, costs and the impact on students. Some boards have used 50% as a benchmark, but again it has to do with program delivery. Additionally, consideration is given to whether a school is the only school in a given community. A lot will depend on the new (pending) PARC policy. Declining enrolment does not automatically mean closing schools. The Board's Program and Accommodation Review (PARC) policy has not been finalized at this time.
- Q. At what point will we know which elementary schools and secondary schools may need to close?**
- A. To initiate a PARC process the Director would need to bring a report to the board of trustees identifying review areas of concern and the reason for initiating a PARC. As part of that highly consultative and community oriented process, options are reviewed and recommendations are made to the board as to what school(s) may be consolidated or closed.
- Q. How would a parent know if a PARC is being initiated somewhere in Halton?**
- A. The specific details of this process will be outlined in the pending PARC policy, but there is no doubt there will be a piece that looks at notifying the community. The committee is compelled to meet with the community 4 times to discuss options so there is no shortage of public consultation. Notices typically appear in the newspaper, website and through your child's school. Details of any PARC would be accessible from the board's main webpage, www.hdbs.ca.
- Q. What is the timeline for developing the PARC Policy?**
- A. The Policy went before trustees last spring but was delayed due to the election and change over of trustees. A subcommittee is reviewing a draft of this policy. At this time we cannot speak to a specific timeline on this.
- Q. With regards to on the ground capacity (OTG), what is included in that count? Do specialized rooms like French and music rooms contribute to a school's rated capacity?**
- A. The OTG is the Ministry rated capacity. Most rooms are counted at 23 (regardless of the room's present use) while other rooms may be counted at only 9 (for example special education rooms).
- Q. When does Full day JK/SK have to be fully implemented?**
- A. The Ministry of Education's current 5 year roll out plan indicates that boards should have fully implemented full day every day kindergarten by 2014/2015. For more information, [click here](#).

- Q. When placing portables on school sites is any consideration given to the size of the actual school facility?**
- A. Portable placement is a function of several variables including site/zoning requirements, as well as facility factors such as number of washrooms. School capacities have declined as a result of changes to class capacities (Ministry initiatives). Most new schools are planned to accommodate 12 portables on site. In some cases additional portables can be placed on site, subject to meeting building code requirements.
- Q. Why are portable classrooms used rather than permanent additions?**
- A. Portable classrooms are utilized to provide interim pupil accommodation at schools experiencing enrolment growth due new residential development (i.e. new subdivisions) or as a result of policy/program initiatives. The trend for schools located within new residential communities is to have significant enrolment growth in the short to medium term, with enrolment peaking in year 10. As the community matures, enrolment declines and the portable classrooms are removed to the point that all students are able to be accommodated within the building itself. Constructing permanent additions to facilities to accommodate the peak enrolments, typically results in the school(s) being under capacity with vacant pupil places once the community matures. This could possibly result in the Board having a number of schools with vacant pupil places, which could result in the need to undertake a Program and Accommodation Review (i.e. school closures or consolidations) for these underutilized schools. Historically, schools were built to meet these peak enrolments. However, due to declining enrolment in these schools as a result of the communities maturing, the Board has undertaken a number of PARC's, which has resulted in school closures in many of these neighbourhoods. In the event that there are new policy/program initiatives (i.e. implementation of Full-Day JK/SK), with funding from the Ministry of Education, permanent additions are constructed.
- Q. Are portables safe? How do we know they aren't all mould filled??**
- A. A schedule was developed to inspect all portable classrooms owned and operated by the Halton District School Board.
- While most moulds can be cleaned up with a solution of water and bleach, it is important to note that any area of mould found in a portable classroom to be larger than two square feet (60 cm²), must be removed by an environmental consultant (in accordance with the protocol developed by the Halton District School Board and the Halton Regional Health Department, for inspection/remediation). **At present, all portables are inspected every two (2) months, and any remediation required is carried out.**
- Q. Why aren't schools better situated on their sites to handle parking and traffic?**
- A. Prior to building permit approval, site plans are submitted to the local municipalities for approval. These plans include building location, set backs and parking requirements as required by the local municipality. As part of site plan approval is the submission of appropriate traffic studies by the school board. These are reviewed by the local municipality traffic engineering department. Once these have been approved, the board can proceed to get a building permit.

Q. How do I learn about school renewal projects?

A. The 2011/2012 Renewal Projects and Funding report to board is available [here](#) (page 35). Questions pertaining to a specific school should be directed to facilityservices@hdsb.ca

Q. Can you provide some background as to why the Halton District School Board relinquished the Georgetown South High School site?

A. The Board approved a plan to renovate GDHS in 2008 as projection data did not support the construction of a second high school located in Georgetown South. Generally speaking, a critical mass of about 1000-1200 students would be required to support a high school. GDHS is projected to be under capacity by 2021. Therefore, a construction of new secondary school in Georgetown South would result in a significant number of empty secondary school pupil places. The need for another high school will be assessed as part of the review of the Town's new urban expansion area (west of 8th Line and north of Main Street) and the associated development of the secondary plan for that new community.

Q. What is the Status of the Lakeshore Woods Site (ERA 111)?

A. Halton District School Board is still pursuing the purchase of the site from the developer. The development of the school would be subject to the outcome of a PARC and funding approvals from the Ministry of Education.

Q. It appears that there are significant enrolment pressures in new communities, such as Milton. Why is the Board not building the schools and additions fast enough?

A. Funding for the construction of new schools and additions are provided by the Ministry of Education. The Board provided a list of capital projects for new schools and additions to the Ministry in January 2011. A similar list was submitted by all school boards in Ontario and the Ministry of Education assessed them accordingly. The HDSB received approval for funding in the amount of \$22,412,956 for the Burlington NE #4 (Alton) Elementary and Milton SE #7 ps. The Ministry has indicated that any further funding capital approvals would be determined in the spring of 2012 as part of the Province of Ontario's budget process.

Q. Milton #9 and Milton #10 elementary schools are planned to be built in Boyne. The LTAP does not include Boyne numbers and the Elementary Review Areas (ERAs) are still projected to be over capacity. Will they service just Boyne families or other areas to the north of Louis St. Laurent, alleviating pressures at existing schools?

A. The expectation is that these new schools will provide accommodation for the new students generated from the Boyne Secondary Plan area. As well, these schools will likely provide accommodation relief to existing schools in ERA 120 and ERA 121. However, the final outcome will be determined through the school boundary review process.