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## COMMUNITY PLANNING AND PARTNERSHIPS

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### OBJECTIVE

The Limestone District School Board (LDSB) supports and encourages cooperative and collaborative partnerships for Facility Sharing as part of the foundation of a strong, vibrant and sustainable publicly funded education system.

LDSB is committed to focusing on opportunities to share facilities with community partners when building new schools or undertaking significant additions and/or renovations, when considering the use of underutilized space in schools, and when considering properties associated with schools that may close and sites that may be considered for future disposition.

### POLICY

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

- Improve services and supports available to students;
- Reduce facility operating costs for the Board;
- Strengthen relationships between the Board 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.

This policy implements the *Community Planning and Partnerships Guideline* released by the Ontario Ministry of Education in March 2015. A copy of the *Community Planning and Partnerships Guideline* along with this policy will be posted on the Limestone District School Board website and will be made available at the head office of the Board upon request.

### CONTEXT

Decisions considered under this policy and its supporting Administrative Procedures will take into account the Board's *Long Term Accommodation Plan*.

Where available space has been identified for partnership opportunities or co-build partnerships, the following principles will be the primary consideration when identifying suitable partnerships:

- 1) Partnerships will not compromise the health and safety of Limestone DSB students and staff;
- 2) Partnerships will not compromise the student achievement strategy of the Board;

- 3) Partnerships will respect the values of the Board;
- 4) Partnerships will improve services and supports available to the students and community in which the school is located;
- 5) Partnerships will reduce facility operating costs for school boards and government;
- 6) Partnerships will maximize the use of public infrastructure through increased flexibility and utilization;
- 7) Partnerships will strengthen relationships between the Board and community partners and the public;

Operation and maintenance of the space will be carried out by the Board on a cost recovery basis to the partner. Any renovations required by the partner to effectively use the space must be approved by the Board and paid for by the partner.

## **DEFINITIONS**

*Facility Partnership Agreement:* A legal document that outlines the terms and conditions of the facilities partnership, and complies with all existing Limestone District School Board policies and procedures. The agreement is signed by both/all parties prior to implementation.

*Facilities:* Buildings and properties owned by Limestone District School Board.

*Long-Term Accommodation Plan:* A comprehensive planning document illustrating the condition and utilization of current facilities, and possible accommodation solutions designed to enhance student achievement.

*Notification List:* A list of eligible potential and existing partners, established according to Ontario Regulation 444/98, but not limited to those identified by the regulation.

*Partnerships:* Mutually beneficial and supportive arrangements between the Board and business, labour, community and government agencies.

*Community Partners:* community non-profit or profit entities expressing interest in participating in facility use partnership agreements that are deemed eligible by the Board.

*Surplus Space:* space that has been declared as surplus to the needs of the Board by the Board of Trustees. This space may be leased, sold or otherwise disposed of, subject to Ontario Regulation 444/98 of the Education Act.

*Underutilized Space:* space in existing facilities that is not declared surplus can be analyzed to determine if it is suitable for partnership opportunities. This space is identified on an annual basis.

## **PROCEDURES**

The key procedures in establishing facility partnerships and supporting effective planning with community partners are identified below. Specific details related to the implementation of these procedures are outlined in administrative procedure *AP- 551 Community Planning and Partnerships* and in administrative procedure *AP-550 Community Use of School Facilities*.

## 1. Identification of Community Planning and Partnership (CPP) Opportunities

The Limestone District School Board will update annually, usually in April/May, the *Long Term Accommodation Plan*. The plan will include enrolment projections, school capacity, renewal needs, potential consolidations and the construction of new schools or additions, including significant renovations. Through this planning process the Board will identify facilities that may be suitable for facility partnerships and those that may be considered for potential surplus space.

In annually identifying underutilized space the Board will consider include facilities that meet the following criteria:

- The facility has been 60 percent utilized or less for two years and/or has 200 or more unused pupil places;
- Staff are able to identify and create distinct and contiguous space within a facility, separate from the students, as appropriate;
- The space is not required for Board programming or other uses and is projected to be available for the long-term;
- There is appropriate access to the space;
- Parking availability;
- Zoning and site use restrictions;
- Facility conditions;
- Other criteria as recommended by the Director of Education.

For surplus space being offered for sale or lease, boards will continue to follow the circulation process outlined in *Ontario Regulation 444/98 – Disposition of Surplus Real Property*.

## 2. Community Planning and Partnership Notification

The Long Term Accommodation Plan and information about the Board identified space suitable for facility partnerships and those declared as surplus space will be posted on the Board website and updated annually and as needed to maintain accurate information for the public and potential partners. The website posting will also include contact information for personnel who will respond to questions regarding facility partnerships.

The Board will maintain a list of community partners who will be notified when key information regarding community planning or facility partnerships is changed or updated. The list will include as a minimum the entities listed in *Ontario Regulation 444/98 – Disposition of Surplus Real Property* and specifically include:

- All applicable levels of municipal government (single, upper, lower tiers)
- Applicable District Social Services Administration Board(s) or Consolidated Municipal Service Manager(s)
- Applicable Public Health Boards, Local Health Integration Networks and Children’s Mental Health Centres.

Child care operators or government-funded organizations will be added to the notification list upon request, in writing, to the Director of Education. Other appropriate entities to the notification list may be added at the discretion of the Director of Education.

As per the *Community Planning and Partnerships Guideline* 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.

The Community Partnership List will be maintained in Administrative Procedure 551 and posted on the Board's website. When a partner is added to the list a notification letter outlining the expectations of the partnership will be forwarded to the organization.

### 3. Annual Community Planning and Partnership (CPP) Meeting

Board Staff, on behalf of the Board, will hold at least one meeting per year, usually in April/May, to discuss potential planning and partnership opportunities with the public and community organizations. The Board of Trustees will be represented at each meeting by one or more Trustees.

The Board Staff will notify the entities on the Board's *Community Partnership List* and the general public about the annual meeting. Notification of the CPP Meeting will be posted on the LSDB website and in key local newspapers. Organization contacts on the List of Community Partners will receive written notification at least two weeks in advance of the meeting.

Invited entities will be requested to bring relevant planning information concerning their organizations to the meeting.

At the CPP meeting all or appropriate portions of the *LDSB Long Range Accommodation Plan* will be presented and the invitee organizations will share planning information and community needs related to their respective organizations. Information shared will be formally documented in the summary notes of the meeting which will be posted on the LSDB website.

Additional staff-level meetings may be held to discuss additional information with relevant entities.

### 4. School Board Planning Prior to a Pupil Accommodation Review

As the Board explores options to address underutilized space in schools the Board will continue discussions with affected municipalities and other community organizations. These discussions will include information about any community planning and partnership opportunities and proposals that Board staff may present to the Board of Trustees.

### 5. Co-building and Facility Partnership Agreements

The Superintendent of Business will present, to the appropriate committee of the Board, a detailed report outlining the terms of any proposed Co-building or Facility Partnership Agreement. Following discussion and receipt of additional information, as needed, the Board Committee will make a recommendation to the whole Board.

Partnership agreements cannot be finalized until both the Board and the partner/s have an approved source of funding. Requests for Ministry of Education funding and requests for transfer from reserve approvals are expected to reflect that the Board has already solicited interest from partners. The Ministry prefers that the Board and facility partners have ownership of their respective portions of the facility, where the portions are sizeable.

The Committee and the Board will consider all agreements within the context of this policy and the *Community Planning and Partnerships Guideline*.

#### **Legal References:**

*Ontario Community Planning and Partnerships Guideline (March 2015)*

*Ontario Regulation 444/98*

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