

## **PROGRAM REDUCTIONS**

### **Background**

The scope of programs offered by a school is an integral part of site-based decision making which can have major implications beyond the scope of the immediate concerns of the school. On occasion it may be necessary for the Division to initiate consideration of a program discontinuance or reduction, consistent with the responsible use of resources placed in its trust.

### **Definitions**

For the purpose of this Administrative Procedure:

*Dependent program* is a program whose presence in a particular school has direct and major programming implications for another school (e.g., French Immersion, other languages, CTS modules, etc.).

*Independent program* is one that has few, if any, programming implications for another school.

Independent programs generally may be dealt with under Section 1 of the following procedures, whereas dependent programs generally will be considered under Section 2.

*Program* means either an element of curriculum (typically comprising a group of related courses or modules) or an element of a school's organization plan (typically a grade level or student cohort).

### **Procedures**

#### **1. Site Based Initiatives**

- 1.1 Proposals for significant reductions in a school's program shall be initiated through the annual school budget proposal.
- 1.2 Such proposals shall reflect adequate opportunity for consultation with the School Council and any relevant broader interests in the school's community.
- 1.3 Where possible such proposals shall be grounded in the school's Three-Year Education Plan.
- 1.4 Where such proposals impact the operation of other schools and/or other communities, appropriate consultation and any related adjustments shall be reflected in their school budget proposals.
- 1.5 The Board may endorse a program reduction proceeding by approval of the relevant budget proposal or may establish such other review and approval measures as it considers necessary to deal reasonably with the circumstances.

## 2. System Based Initiatives

- 2.1 A program at a school or schools, including the highest grade level at a school may be considered for discontinuance or reduction by the Board if:
  - 2.1.1 Total enrollment as of September 30 in the current school year does not warrant continued operation of the program or grade.
  - 2.1.2 The cost of keeping the program operable is deemed by the Board to be unreasonably high.
- 2.2 Discontinuance of all the programs at a school or of three (3) or more consecutive grade levels constitutes a school closure and is outside the scope of this Administrative Procedure.
3. When any of the criteria for reduction or discontinuance have occurred or appear as a likelihood, the Superintendent shall advise the Board at the October regular Board meeting with the intent that the Board provide direction regarding further action.
4. The Board may decide to proceed with a study and information gathering process with respect to any of the situations reported.
  - 4.1 The most recent and accurate enrollment projections and other pertinent information shall be gathered for programs under consideration and presented by the February regular Board meeting for consideration.
  - 4.2 Input from the school and School Council will be invited and considered.
  - 4.3 The Board may appoint an ad hoc committee to receive input and review information during this phase.
5. The matter will be further discussed at the February regular Board meeting, at which time all pertinent information will be considered. If the process is to continue, notice of motion for reduction or discontinuance shall be given.
6. Persons affected by the proposed reduction notice of motion shall be advised and shall be afforded an opportunity to present their comments to the Board before the motion for reduction is considered.
7. A Board decision in favour of a program reduction or discontinuance which is to take effect at the beginning of a school year or during a school year shall be made prior to May 1 of the previous school year.

Adopted/Revised/Reviewed: JUN 2016/NOV 2019/JUL 2023

Reference: Section 55, 53, 52, 197, 222 Education Act  
School Councils Regulation AR 113/2007  
School Council Resource Manual (1995)  
School Councils Handbook (1999)