

PUBLIC CONSULTATION MEETING:

OPTIONAL ATTENDANCE POLICY AND SECONDARY PROGRAM REVIEW



Optional Attendance Policy Review

OPTIONAL ATTENDANCE POLICY

- Created in 1999 when 6 school boards amalgamated to become the Toronto District School Board
- Legacy attendance areas, boundary agreements, technical and commercial boundaries
- Policy provided mechanism to facilitate choice whereby students could choose to go to a school outside of their designated area as long as the school had space

Successes and Challenges

- Provides choice of school and/or program outside of local area, where space is available
 - Weakens concept of neighbourhood schools
 - Creates 'hierarchy' of schools
 - Difficult to predict enrolment numbers (large margin of error)
- Enables students to remain with cohorts if the family changes residence, if space is available

Optional Attendance - Current Reality

- Just over 50% of secondary students attend their home school by address (compared to 76% of elementary students).
- Some secondary schools are operating with fewer than 500 students, resulting in limited course choices and limited opportunities for students.
- Secondary schools are competing for a shrinking secondary school-aged population.
- Students are fleeing certain schools and neighbourhoods in favour of others.
- The impact of Optional Attendance is being felt overwhelmingly at schools in underserved communities (i.e. those with greater need).

Secondary Program Review

What it is and why it's necessary

What?

- A review of secondary schools, programs, policies and procedures to ensure that all students have equitable access to programs and opportunities, as close to home as possible.
- The larger vision is to create a system of strong neighbourhood schools that provide rich programming and increased access to courses that support all pathways.

Why?

- The existing structure of secondary schools across the TDSB is not in sync with the recent strategic and visionary documents approved by the Board of Trustees.
- There have been unintended negative consequences of the existing landscape, including inequity of access and an imbalance of enrolment among secondary schools across the system.
- Action is necessary to develop and implement a new vision for secondary school programming that aligns with the Multi-Year Strategic Plan, its goals and action plans; the Guiding Principles of the Long-Term Program and Accommodation Strategy, and re-enforces the Board's commitment to equity.

Current Landscape

- Secondary students in the TDSB currently have access to a wide range and variety of schools and programs.
- The system is comprised of 111 secondary schools that include:
 - Neighbourhood secondary schools
 - Technical and Commercial Schools
 - Alternative Schools
 - Specialized Schools
 - Congregated Special Education Schools
 - Adult Education Centres (EdVance programs)
- A number of specialized programs also exist, accommodated within a number of secondary schools across the system.

New Realities

Demographic Changes and the Impact on Enrolment

- The secondary panel has declined from a high of 140,433 students in 1976 to approximately 72,600 students today.

School Utilization

- As of October 31, 2019, the average utilization rate across all 111 secondary schools was 78%. Some schools are operating at over 150% capacity while others are operating at only 30-40% capacity.

Aging Buildings

- The average age of our secondary school buildings is 64.

Change to Secondary Average Class Size

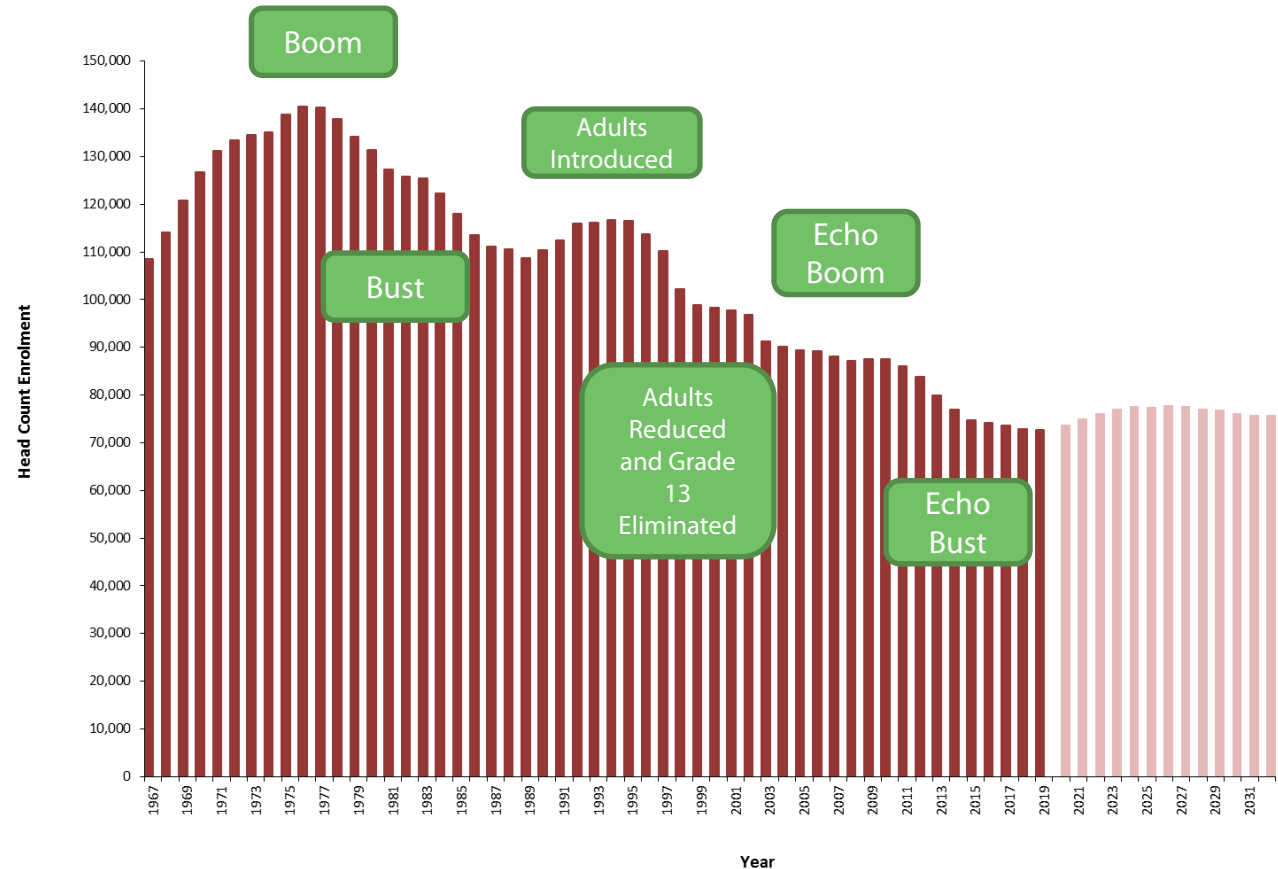
- The recent changes to secondary school class size significantly impact staffing and program offerings

Polarization of City of Toronto

- Secondary students are choosing programs and schools in higher income areas and fleeing from those in lower income areas.

What's Happening with Secondary Enrolment?

- First peak in 1976.
- First low in 1989 – decline of 32,000 (-23%) over 13 years.
- Second peak in 1994 – growth of 8,000 (+6%) over 5 years.
- Second low in 2008 – decline of 29,000 (-25%) over 14 years.
- Third peak in 2010 – growth of 370 (+0.3%) over 2 years.
- Decline of 14,925 (-17%) from 2010 to now.
- Reached a period of decline and enrolment is projected to marginally increase, then stabilize



Source: TDSB Strategy and Planning

Working Draft Policy Facilitated Discussion

Optional Attendance – At a Glance

Preparation for Optional Attendance

- Mid November: Planning determines school status (Limited or Closed) based on building capacity and projected enrolment.
- End of January: Enrolment projections sent to schools
Schools determine available spaces

Optional Attendance – Secondary Schools

- Early February: Optional Attendance applications due
If demand exceeds available space, lottery conducted to determine offers
- Mid-February: Parents/students notified about status of application
- End of February: Parents/students must confirm acceptance

After the first Monday in March, no Optional Attendance offers can be made, including from a waiting list. The Optional Attendance process is over.

Working Draft Policy

Current:

Applies to:

- a) Regular schools
- b) Schools with French programs
- c) Alternative schools
- d) Specialized schools/programs

Proposed:

Would apply to:

- a) Regular schools
- b) Schools with French programs

Current Policy/Procedure on Alternative Schools to include Admissions Procedures

New Policy/Procedure will be created for Specialized Programs

Working Draft Policy

Current:

Applications can be submitted to:

- 2 Regular schools
- 2 Specialized Schools/Programs

Proposed:

One application for a Regular school only.

New Policy/Procedure to specify application process to Specialized Programs

Working Draft Policy

Current:

7 Priority Groups

Distinction between students who attend the feeder school as in-district students vs. those who attend as Optional Attendance students

Proposed:

9 Priority Groups

No distinction for feeder school students

Additional priority for current TDSB students vs. non-TDSB students

Comparison of Current and Proposed Priority Groups

Current Optional Attendance Policy

- **Priority 1:** Students who have siblings already in the requested school and expected to be in the school for the next school year.
- **Priority 2:** Secondary students whose child(ren) is/are enrolled in the child care centre in the catchment areas of the Secondary school.
- **Priority 3:** Students attending licensed child care, including licensed home childcare, in the catchment area of the requested school.
- **Priority 4:** Students receiving child care in the catchment area of the requested school.
- **Priority 5:** Feeder school students who are currently under optional attendance.
- **Priority 6:** Students who are in district to the feeder school, but not in district to the next panel school.
- **Priority 7:** Other students resident in the City of Toronto.

Proposed Attendance at Schools Outside of Designated Attendance Area Policy

- **Priority 1:** Students who are attending another school as an Out-of-Area student at and who wish to return to their designated school by address. **Proposed NEW**
- **Priority 2:** Secondary students whose child/children is/are enrolled in a child care centre in the designated attendance area of the secondary school.
- **Priority 3:** Students who have siblings currently attending the requested school and the siblings are expected to be at the requested school for the next school year.
- **Priority 4:** Students currently attending a feeder school of the requested school. **Proposed NEW**
- **Priority 5:** Children enrolled after January 1 in the school-based child care pre-school program of the requested school (see 6.1.6). **Proposed NEW**
- **Priority 6:** Children attending child care programs in the designated attendance area of the requested school.
- **Priority 7:** Current TDSB students **Proposed NEW**
- **Priority 8:** Other students residing in the City of Toronto.
- **Priority 9:** Students residing outside the City of Toronto. **Proposed NEW**

Working Draft Policy

Current:

Students in school-based child care are automatically admitted into the school, without an Optional Attendance application

Proposed:

Students in school-based child care who register after January 1 must apply as out-of-area students

Working Draft Policy

Current:

Students who change residence or who withdraw from child care must change schools.

Proposed:

Students who change residence or who withdraw from child care must change schools, unless the following year is a graduating year

Working Draft Policy

Current Policy Name:

Optional Attendance

Proposed Policy Name:

Attendance at Schools
Outside of Designated
Attendance Area

Other recommendations?

- Current paper process vs. centralized process (web-based application)
- Please share your recommendations and feedback
- Online survey – Optional Attendance

About Us
▶ Director of Education
▶ Equity
▶ Policies, Procedures & Forms
Policies
Procedures
Forms
New and Revised
Policy Development
Policy Review
Policy Consultations
Policy Review Schedule
▶ Business Services
▶ Employment
▶ School Cash Online
▶ Facility Services
▶ Strategy & Planning
Toronto Lands Corporation
▶ International Programs
▶ Professional Support Services
Research
▶ Innovation
▶ Partnership Opportunities
Brand Hub
▶ Accountability
EducationWeek
▶ Legal Services
▶ Student Discipline Committee
▶ Severe Weather
▶ Labour Negotiations
▶ Accessibility
▶ Excellence
TDSB Charity Page

Policy Consultations

We Want to Hear From You

The Toronto District School Board (TDSB) is committed to open and inclusive policy decision-making and values community input and participation through consultation. Consultation is a two-way communication process between the Board and external participants, including students and their parents/guardians, school councils, advisory committees, community members, different levels of government, service agencies, professional organizations and union partners. The objective of consultation is to gather public input regarding options, alternative courses of action, as well as to identify unintended effects for various participants and to find solutions.

Policy development and reviews are carried out in accordance with the policy review schedule that is approved by the Board of Trustees and is revised on a regular basis. [To view the latest policy review schedule, please click here.](#)

We would like to know your thoughts about our policy decision-making. We are inviting you to our policy consultations. Please click on the policy of your interest to see the current draft. You are welcome to provide your comments, including suggestions on the wording and provisions of the draft policies, questions or recommendations using the contact information below.

Consultations

Policy	Status	Closing Date	Draft Policy	Survey	Contact Information
	Open	February 03, 2020	Draft Policy	Survey	Email: secondaryreview@tdsb.on.ca
Attendance at Schools Outside of Designated Attendance Area (formerly Optional Attendance) (P013)	Objective: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ To provide policy direction about access to schools outside a student's designated attendance area. Note: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Please note that in the Review Work Plan that was approved in June 2019, it was recommended to separate and clarify provisions related to requests for Regular Schools vs. Specialized Schools/Programs. This working draft Policy would only apply to Regular Schools and schools with French programs. A separate draft Policy on Specialized Programs will be developed and posted in the coming months for feedback and comment.				



Secondary Program Review

Facilitated Discussion

Secondary Program Review


What would the ideal secondary school experience look like?

- *Ice breaker:* In your opinion, what is the goal of secondary schooling?
- What is the most important part of your child's (or your, or your students') secondary school experience?
- What are the positive aspects of the secondary school your child (or you) currently attends (staff - or work at)?
- What are the challenges your child (or you) have experienced at your current secondary school?
- If applicable, why did your family (or you) choose to attend a school outside of your neighbourhood secondary school? How did your family (or you) choose this secondary school?
- If not attending your neighbourhood secondary school, what would be the furthest distance your family (or you) are willing to travel to attend another regular school or specialized/alternative program/school? (in time)
- Any additional comments?

Online Survey – Secondary Program Review

lary-Program-Review

Search...



Toronto District School Board

[Find Your School](#) | [New to Canada](#) | [Policies](#) | [Media](#)
[About Us](#) | [Staff](#) | [Employment](#) | [Leadership](#) | [Contact Us](#)

Google Custom Search

Translate

[Home](#) | [Early Years](#) | [Elementary School](#) | [High School](#) | [Adult Learners](#) | [Parents](#) | [Community](#)

High School

Secondary Program Review

[Going to High School](#)

[GradesExamsDiplomas](#)

[Your School Day](#)

[Sports](#)

[Aboriginal Education](#)

[Caring & Safe Schools](#)

[Get Involved](#)

[Equity & Inclusion](#)

[Guidance](#)

[After High School](#)

[TDSB Student Senate](#)

[Supporting You](#)

[Student Discipline Committee](#)

[International Students](#)

[Graduation Rate](#)

Secondary Program Review

The Toronto District School Board (TDSB) is undertaking a review of secondary schools to ensure all students have equitable access to programs and opportunities, as close to home as possible.

The vision of the Secondary Program Review, which will address both under and over-utilized schools, includes fewer schools with strong programming and increased access to courses that support all pathways. In order to achieve that, the Board will consider potential consolidation and/or relocation of schools, repurposing secondary school buildings to address other system needs, and different models of school organization (e.g. full-year programming).

Background

The Board of Trustees approved an action plan for the [Secondary Program Review](#) in June 2019. This plan includes looking at all the programs and courses offered at each site, related policies and procedures and enrolment.

The current and projected enrolment at the secondary panel does not support the number of facilities in operation. As of October 2019, the average utilization rate at the 112 secondary schools in the system was 78%; 25 of them were operating below 50% of their capacity. That means that the Board has almost 20,000 surplus pupil spaces across the system.

Reports

- [October 2019](#)
- [June 2019](#)

Resources

- [TDSB's Mission and Values](#)
- [Equity & Inclusion](#)
- [Multi-Year Strategic Plan](#)

Surveys

- [Secondary Program Review](#)

