

<b>Procedure Title</b>	<b>Holding Zones and Holding Schools</b>		
<b>Date of Issue</b>	November 27, 2024	<b>Related Policy</b>	BP 3101-D
<b>Revision Dates</b>	December 12, 2024 (housekeeping)	<b>Related Forms</b>	
<b>Review Date</b>		<b>Originator</b>	Administrative Council
<b>References</b>			
BP 3101-D “Accommodation Review – School Program and Facility Efficiency”			

## **1.0 RATIONALE**

- 1.1** Student enrolment numbers and school utilization can be significantly impacted from new residential development within a school attendance area, and schools may exceed their total available capacity, including the site’s ability to accommodate temporary capacity (i.e., portables).
- 1.2** Bluewater District School Board (BWDSB) may temporarily reassign a designated geographic area or particular development to a school with space to accommodate students.
- 1.3** This procedure will provide the necessary guidelines for the establishment, assignment, and dissolution of holding zones, as well as for the designation of holding schools, in order to provide overflow accommodation and temporarily mitigate enrolment pressures. The protocol for communicating such changes is also outlined.

## **2.0 DEFINITIONS**

- 2.1** For the purpose of this procedure, the following definitions will apply:
- 2.1.1 Attendance Area:** an area defined by a geographic boundary which determines, in part, students’ designation to a particular school or program (e.g., French Immersion), based on primary residence within that area.
- 2.1.2 Holding School:** a school designated by the trustees to accommodate students from one (1) or more holding zones and is not part of the student’s attendance area. Examples of a holding school situation include, but are not limited to, enrolment pressure, construction of a new school, or renovation of an existing designated home school.

- 2.1.3 **Holding Zone:** an area defined by a geographic boundary, within an attendance area (usually with high concentrations of new or imminent development), for which the trustees have approved that students residing in it are to attend a specified school based on available capacity, until such time as long-term accommodation and related revised attendance areas can be established.
- 2.1.4 **School:** a body of elementary school pupils and/or secondary school pupils, organized by BWDSB as a unit for educational purposes.

### 3.0 PROCEDURE

#### 3.1 Designation of Holding Zones and Holding Schools

- 3.1.1 Business Services will be responsible to ensure that all municipal development plans are reviewed for student accommodation and transportation needs, and that appropriate comments are provided to the municipal approval authority to ensure that current and future student requirements are being met.
- 3.1.2 Business Services will be responsible for preparing and presenting to the Board of Trustees a report containing recommendations for the establishment of holding zone(s) and holding school(s). The report shall include, but not limited to, pending residential developments, the anticipated influx of students from that area and the enrolment potential, operational capacity of the schools within the attendance area and proposed Holding School, and considerations for temporary accommodation measures.
- 3.1.3 Business Services, in consultation with senior administration, may designate holding zones when the projected student yield from proposed residential developments is expected to generate enrolment pressure that will exceed the sustainable capacity of the designated home school, necessitating the use of holding zones and/or other temporary accommodation measures.
- 3.1.4 The area superintendent would be notified of the designated holding zone and holding school.
- 3.1.5 Where the designation of a holding zone may result in existing students being redirected to a different school, notification will be given to the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the affected students.
- 3.1.6 Business Services, in consultation with senior administration, may designate a holding school based on the following criteria:
- i. available capacity considerations including classroom and portable
  - ii. adequately size ancillary spaces (i.e. library, gymnasium)
  - iii. site servicing and capacity considerations (i.e. electrical, sanitary servicing, situational placement of the school site and number of access points for students and families)

- iv. appropriately sized school bus loading zones
- v. capital expenditure required to accommodate increased enrolment at the holding school

3.1.7 Business Services will provide an annual report to the Business Committee of the Whole, indicating the status and location of holding zones and holding schools.

### **3.2 Notification of Holding Zones/ Holding Schools**

3.2.1 In the event that the Board of Trustees approve the designation of an area as a holding zone and make determination in respect of related holding school(s), or approve amendments in respect of same, BWDSB will provide notice to all of the following:

- i. the administrator of any schools affected by such decisions of the trustees;
- ii. the chairs of the school councils and the presidents of the home and school associations for any schools affected by such decision of the trustees;
- iii. The parent(s)/guardian(s) of any student whose primary residence is in the holding zone(s) in question at the time of the trustee's decisions;
- iv. the owner of any as yet to be developed property within the holding zone in question, who has submitted a plan of subdivision for residential development within that holding zone, as long as BWDSB has knowledge of the same;
- v. The respective municipality in which such holding zone is located.

### **3.3 Amendment of Holding Zones**

3.3.1 Prior to the determination of the long-term accommodation of students in a holding zone, it may be advisable for BWDSB to consider amendments with respect to the interim accommodation of students whose primary residence is in a holding zone and/or in respect of the related holding school(s). In such circumstances, and so long as the proposed amendment(s) do not affect any BWDSB enrolled student whose primary residence is that in holding zone, Business Services will prepare and present to the Board of Trustees a report containing recommendations for amendment(s) to the determination previously made in respect of such holding(s) and holding school(s).

3.3.2. The holding zone amendment recommendation will analyze and consider matters listed in 3.1.6.

### **3.4 Removal of Holding Zone Designation**

- 3.4.1. A holding zone designation will remain in place until such time as:
- i. a new school or school addition is built in the community; or
  - ii. all or a portion of a holding zone can be incorporated into the existing home school; or

- iii. a review or realignment of boundaries altering student's attendance area.

#### **4.0 GENERAL**

- 4.1 In the event that BWDSB is requested by a municipality to comment on a plan of subdivision or subdivision agreement, BWDSB will recommend to such municipality that it consider requiring a clause similar to the following to be included in the respective final plan of subdivision or subdivision agreement (with such amendments as may be appropriate given the context and wording of such plan of subdivision or subdivision agreement):

*The developer agrees to include in all of its agreements of purchase and sale with purchasers of residential lots and blocks, a provision advising such purchasers that the construction of additional public school accommodation is dependent upon funding approval from the Ontario Ministry of Education and, as a result, the property may be designated as part of a "Holding Zone" by Bluewater District School Board and that any students residing in such Holding Zone may be designated to attend a "Holding School" until a long-term accommodation solution is in place. There can be no assurance that a new elementary or secondary school may be built to accommodate students residing within the Holding Zone.*

- 4.2 Despite the establishment of, or any amendments made to, any holding zones pursuant to this procedure, BWDSB will have the authority to allow any student residing in a holding zone and enrolled in a school at the time the establishment of that holding zone comes into effect (or at the time an amendment to such holding zone is approved), to continue to attend such school, for so long as that student continues to reside at the address they did at the time of the establishment of that holding zone (or at the time an amendment to such holding zone is approved), and until such student graduates from that school or otherwise ceases attending that school for their own reasons.
- 4.3 This procedure does not apply to the use of facilities for alternate education, adult education, and/or continuing education.