

## **HALIFAX REGIONAL SCHOOL BOARD**

### **Long-Range Outlook Action Plan Update**

**PURPOSE:** To provide information to the Governing Board regarding the Long-Range Outlook Action Plan.

**BACKGROUND:** In October 2014 the province approved the provincial School Review Policy for use by all school boards. The policy contains sixteen directives (A to P) boards must follow during a school review process.

Directive A states: “A school review may be considered when a Long-Range Outlook has been completed by a school board, as required by the Education Act and outlined in Appendix A: Preparing a Long-Range Outlook.”

The policy further states that “A school board’s decision to review a group of schools is informed by, and a school review is conducted in the context of, the information contained in the Long-Range Outlook.”

The Halifax Regional School Board (HRSB) staff presented its initial Long-Range Outlook to the Governing Board on April 22, 2015 (report # 2015-04-13).

On October 28, 2015 staff presented the Long-Range Outlook Action Plan (report # 2015-09-35) at the regular board meeting. The report identified priorities for recommendations of School Reviews.

The Governing Board approved initiation of two School Review processes at its regular board meeting on December 16, 2015:

- Eastern Passage Schools (report # 2015-10-42)
- Citadel High Family of Schools (report # 2015-10-43)

The Cole Harbour District High Family of Schools Recommendation to Review (report # 2015-10-41) was subsequently deferred until September 2016.

An updated Long-Range Outlook 2016 was approved by the Governing Board at its regular board meeting on June 22, 2016 (report # 2016-04-17).

**CONTENT:** HRSB staff has reviewed and revised the Long-Range Outlook Action Plan (see table below).

The experience and understanding gained from the School Reviews completed in 2015-16 including feedback from School Options Committee members and community, and consultation with other Boards regarding their School Review processes have helped to inform a revised approach to future facility planning processes.

There are six circumstances described in the School Review Policy Directive A that may lead to a school review. These include:

- a school or group of schools is unable to, or projected to be unable to, provide a suitable and equitable range of learning opportunities for students, due to declining enrolment;
- reorganization involving a school or group of schools could enhance program and learning opportunities for students;
- reorganization involving a school or group of schools could optimize use of school facilities across the school board;
- a school's combination of teaching or learning spaces is not suitable to provide programs/is not accessible/does not serve the community, and retrofitting and/or enlarging the facility may be cost prohibitive;
- one or more of the schools in a group is experiencing higher building maintenance expenses than average for the school board and/or is in need of major capital improvements; and
- safety and/or environmental concerns are associated with the building.

Based on the circumstances above and review of the LRO, staff considers enrollment capacity utilization and age/condition of infrastructure as the main factors determining the Action Plan priorities.

*Overutilization* of schools requires alterations to program space (sometimes changing its intended use) or portable classrooms to accommodate increasing numbers of students. There are areas within the Board where enrollment is already above capacity at schools and is projected to continue to increase.

*Underutilization* of schools results in a surplus of space and inefficient operation of facilities. It may also impact program options at some schools. There are schools within HRSB that have steadily declining enrollment which require consideration to optimize use.

With *aging infrastructure*, as an increasing number of school buildings reach or go beyond their intended design life cycle, the cost of maintenance continues to increase. If deferred maintenance is not addressed then major capital improvements such as renovation or replacement of schools is required. HRSB has many schools that would be considered as aging infrastructure beyond their intended useful life and must determine a strategy for upgrade, replacement, consolidation or possible closure.

Other factors to be considered regarding the future state of schools include optimal enrollment sizes, grade configuration, student transportation, geography, equitable learning opportunities, residential development, fiscal accountability, community partnerships, and more. These will become part of the discussion and decision during the action processes listed below.

The action plan priorities identified below were determined considering the Long-Range Outlook and the factors discussed above. Each proposed school review will be initiated by a *Recommendation to Review* report from staff for approval by the Governing Board.

School Year	Item #	Family of Schools	Action
2015-16	1	Citadel High	School Review
	2	Cole Harbour District High	deferred
	3	Eastern Passage	School Review
2016-17	4	Cole Harbour District High & Auburn Drive High	School Review
	5	Citadel High Phase 2	School Review
2017-20	6	Dartmouth High & Prince Andrew High	School Review
	7	J.L. Ilsley High	School Review

School Reviews may result in recommendations for new school construction and Additions/Alterations funding requests to the province.

A list of capital construction projects was approved by the Governing Board in March 2016 (Report #2016-02-06) and submitted to the province as a capital funding request. Staff will continue to apply the data from the Long-Range Outlook to develop proposals for future capital construction funding requests.

- COST:** N/A.
- FUNDING:** There are no costs associated with this report.
- TIMELINE:** It is anticipated that the school reviews listed above for 2016-17 will be initiated through a recommendation to the Governing Board in September 2016.
- APPENDICES:** N/A
- RECOMMENDATIONS:** It is recommended that the Governing Board receive the Long-Range Outlook Action Plan for information.
- COMMUNICATIONS:**
- From:** Ron Heiman, Director Operations Services  
Phone: 464-2000 ext 2144  
E-mail: [rheiman@hrrsb.ca](mailto:rheiman@hrrsb.ca)
- To:** Senior Staff: July 6, 2016  
Board: August 31, 2016