

School Site Selection Policy

Policy Overview

This policy describes how the Halifax Regional School Board (HRSB) meets its responsibility to identify potential locations for the construction of new schools.

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development approves new school construction projects and is responsible for final approval of a new school location.

Table of Contents:

- 1.0 Legislative Context**
- 2.0 Principles**
- 3.0 Authorization**
- 4.0 Policy Review**

Policy and Procedures History

- Created in April 2016

1.0 Legislative Context

The School Site Selection Policy aligns and complies with the following:

- 1.1 *Nova Scotia Education Act and Regulations;*
- 1.2 *Nova Scotia Sustainable Procurement Policy 2009*
- 1.3 *Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development School Site Selection Process 2011*

2.0 Principles

- 2.1 HRSB is committed to ensuring a comprehensive process when determining site selection;
- 2.2 HRSB is committed to working with school communities through School Advisory Councils (SAC).

3.0 Authorization

- 3.1 The Superintendent is authorized to develop and implement procedures in support of this policy.

4.0 Policy Review

- 4.1 This policy will be reviewed every five (5) years or on an as needed basis.

School Site Selection Procedures

Table of Contents

- 1.0 Project Announcement**
- 2.0 Assignment of Site Selection Committee Facilitator**
- 3.0 Formation of the Site Selection Committee**
- 4.0 Site Selection Committee Meetings**
- 5.0 Site Selection**
- 6.0 Staff Report to Governing Board**
- 7.0 Community Engagement**
- 8.0 Site Selection Committee Process Timeline Flowchart**

Appendix A Sample Site Selection Committee - Terms of Reference

Appendix B Governor in Council Education Act Regulations

1.0 Project Announcement

Upon formal announcement of a new school construction project by the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development, the Superintendent will establish a Site Selection Committee (SSC).

2.0 Assignment of SSC Facilitator

The Superintendent will choose a Facilitator to lead the Site Selection process.

2.1 The Facilitator is responsible for:

- 2.1.1 Facilitating the SSC from the formation of the committee to the final reporting to the Superintendent, including chairing all meetings and community engagement sessions;
- 2.1.2 Acting as a liaison between the SSC and the Halifax Regional School Board staff;
- 2.1.3 Organizing and scheduling meetings, site visits, etc.;

- 2.1.4 Reviewing the Site Selection Policy and Procedures with the Committee;
- 2.1.5 Reviewing the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development School Site Selection Process with the SSC;
- 2.1.6 Establishing the Terms of Reference with the SSC (Appendix A);
- 2.1.7 Reviewing site information from HRSB staff, Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) and Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal (DTIR) with the SSC.
- 2.1.8 Ensuring additional requests for information from the SSC are forwarded to the Superintendent;
- 2.1.9 Presenting the SSC's final report to the Superintendent.

3.0 Formation of the Site Selection Committee

- 3.1 The Superintendent will establish a SSC.
- 3.2 The Superintendent will request that the SAC from each of the schools being replaced by the new school construction appoint one member to the SSC. This representative cannot be an employee of the Halifax Regional School Board.
 - 3.2.1 Where a new school is announced that is not replacing an existing school, the Committee members will be SAC chairs from adjacent impacted schools.
- 3.3 Where, in the opinion of the Superintendent, an additional committee member(s) is required to represent perspectives not represented by the SAC's, the Superintendent may appoint additional member(s). This representative(s) cannot be an employee(s) of the Halifax Regional School Board
- 3.4 The Governing Board member representing the electoral district in which the new school is located, the African Nova Scotia representative and the Mi'kmaq representative will be invited to sit on the SSC.
- 3.5 Where community enhancements have been approved by council, the HRM will be invited to designate a member of recreation staff to the committee.
- 3.6 Only SSC members assigned by the Superintendent will be voting members.

- 3.7 **Site Selection Committee Members** are responsible for:
 - 3.7.1 Following the Site Selection Policy and Procedures;
 - 3.7.2 Establishing Terms of Reference for the SSC (Appendix A);
 - 3.7.3 Reviewing and assessing potential locations to create a short list of sites;
 - 3.7.4 Participating in all meetings and community engagement sessions;
 - 3.7.5 Writing the final report to the Superintendent.

- 4.0 **Site Selection Committee Meetings**
 - 4.1 SSC meetings (including site visits) are working meetings and will be closed to attendance by the public.
 - 4.2 The SSC may invite other individuals to the working meetings in order to assist the committee in its work.
 - 4.3 Meeting minutes will be posted on the HRSB website once approved by the SSC.

- 5.0 **Site Selection**
 - 5.1 Information and data regarding potential sites will be provided by the Halifax Regional School Board, Halifax Regional Municipality, Halifax Transit, Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal and Department of Education and Early Childhood Development staff.
 - 5.2 The SSC will create a short list of potential school sites in accordance with the mandate and the Governor in Council Education Act Regulations (Appendix B).
 - 5.3 The SSC will prepare a report for the Superintendent with a recommendation of three potential construction sites for subsequent approval by the Governing Board.

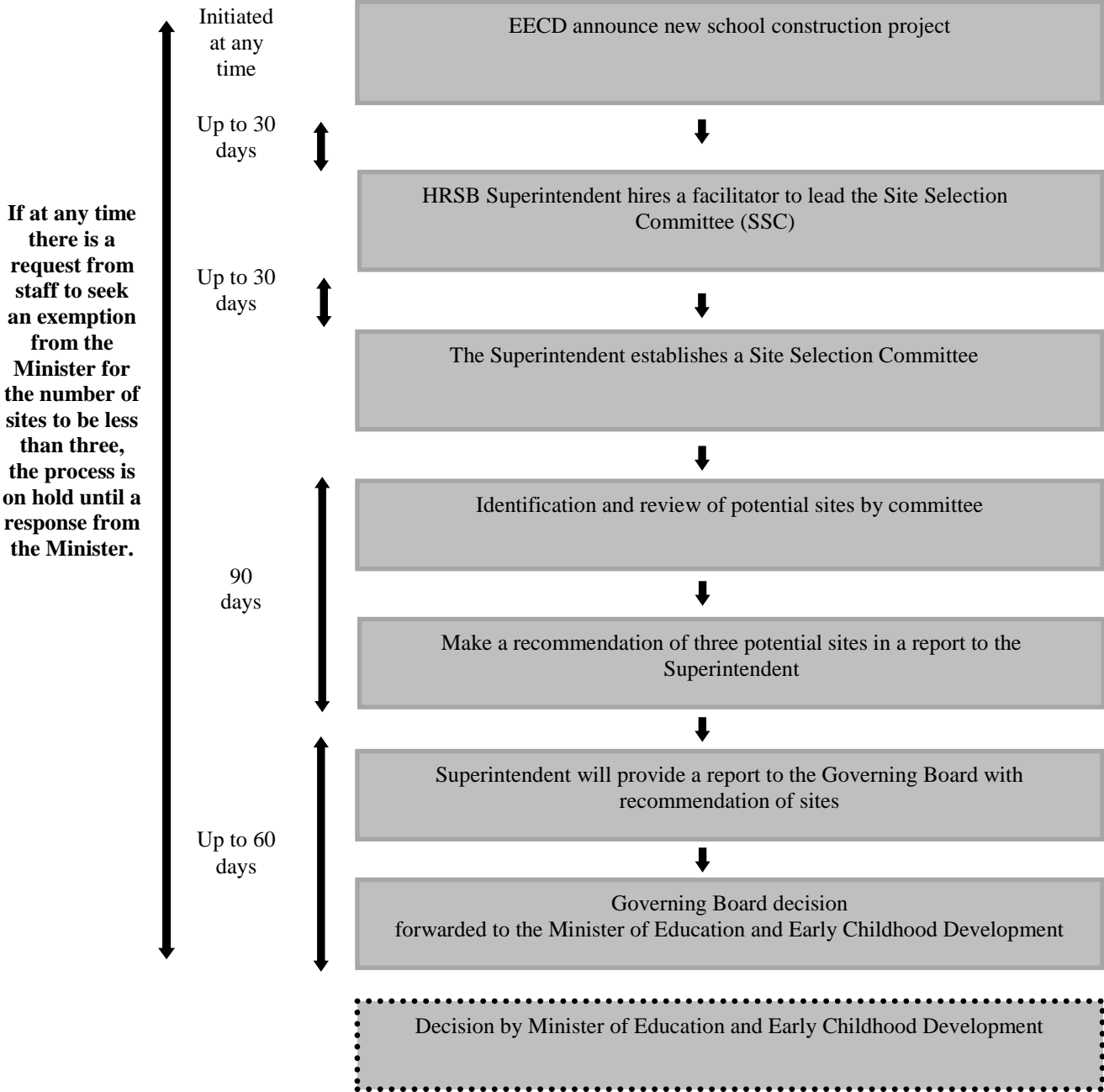
6.0 Report to Governing Board

- 6.1 The superintendent will consider the SSC site proposals in preparing the recommendation to the Governing Board.
- 6.2 Upon approval by the Governing Board, the recommendation of sites will be forwarded to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development for final approval by the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development.

7.0 Community Engagement Sessions

- 7.1 Community engagement and communication opportunities will be organized to encourage all members of the school community to engage in a meaningful dialogue with the SSC. These community engagement meetings are open to the public.
 - 7.1.1 The HRSB will communicate through its website, the times and locations of community engagement sessions.
 - 7.1.2 Public input will also be collected in various ways that may include the HRSB website and social media.

8.0 Site Selection Committee Process Timeline Flowchart*



**This timeline may be adjusted if impacted by the timing of the project announcement or unforeseen weather that may impair visual assessment of the potential sites.*

Appendix A Sample Site Selection Committee Terms of Reference

Mandate: *Insert mandate which will include the requirement to determine three potential sites for construction of a new “XXX School”*

It is important that instructions to the Site Selection Committee include specific reference to outcomes expected in the recommendations. These could include:

- *time commitment for decision*
- *optimal accessibility to communities being served*
- *making the best use of available resources (financial, labour and capital) across the board, or*
- *limiting factors such as transportation time limits, geographically isolated schools, topographic limitations, etc.*

The Site Selection Committee reports to the Superintendent of the Halifax Regional School Board. The Final Report with recommendations will be forwarded to the Halifax Regional School Board. The Governing Board will approve recommended sites to be forwarded to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD).

Timeline: The Site Selection Committee will complete its mandate within three months following the first SSC meeting. The final report must be submitted to the Superintendent no later than 150 days following the Superintendent’s mandate.

This timeline may be adjusted if impacted by the timing of the project announcement or unforeseen weather that may impair visual assessment of the potential sites.

Meetings: The SSC shall meet weekly at *<insert location>* starting on *<insert start date>*. Meetings will be held at *<insert start time>* every *<insert day of week>* evening. Additional meetings may be scheduled at the discretion of the Site Selection Committee Facilitator.

- Minutes:** Minutes of key decisions and key actions will be taken at each meeting and approved at the subsequent meeting.
- Quorum and Voting Procedure:** Whenever possible, decisions should be by consensus. Where consensus cannot be reached a vote shall be taken to determine a decision.
- Quorum for a meeting will require 50% +1 attendance of SSC members.
- For voting purposes a majority vote shall be two thirds of voting members present.
- The process for voting shall be by show of hands and the count will be recorded in the meeting minutes.
- Officers:** The SSC secretary shall be chosen from among the members of the Site Selection Committee at the first meeting.
- Supporting Document:** Governor in Council Education Act Regulations - Subsection 7 (Appendix B).

Appendix B

Governor in Council Education Act Regulations made under Section 146 of the *Education Act*

S.N.S. 1995-96, c. 1

O.I.C. 97-405 (June 24, 1997), N.S. Reg. 74/97

as amended to O.I.C. 2015-96 (March 31, 2015, effective April 1, 2015), N.S. Reg. 94/2015

School buildings and site selection

7. (5) Subject to subsection (5A), after receiving notice of the Minister's approval in principle of a capital project for the construction of a new public school building by the Province, a school board shall
- (a) recommend 3 proposed sites for the building to the Minister; or
 - (b) if unable to recommend 3 proposed sites for the building under clause (a), recommend fewer than 3 sites and submit the reasons why it is unable to do so to the Minister in writing.
- (5A) If a new public school building is replacing one or more existing public school buildings, a school board's recommendation under subsection (5) must include
- (a) a recommendation for at least one of the sites of the existing public school buildings being replaced; or
 - (b) written reasons why it is unable to recommend one of the sites of the existing public school buildings.
- (5B) On receiving a school board's recommendations for sites for a new public school building, the Minister may
- (a) if one of the sites of the existing public school buildings being replaced is included in accordance with clause (5A)(a),
 - (i) accept the 3 sites recommended, or
 - (ii) if fewer than 3 sites are recommended,
 - (A) accept the reasons provided by the school board under clause (5)(b) for not recommending 3 sites, and accept the sites recommended, or

- (B) reject the reasons provided by the school board under clause (5)(b) for not recommending 3 sites, and request that the school board provide the required 3 sites under clause (5)(a);
 - (b) if one of the sites of the existing public school buildings being replaced is not included in accordance with clause (5A)(b),
 - (i) accept the reasons provided by the school board under clause (5A)(b) for not including one of the sites, and either
 - (A) accept the 3 sites recommended, or
 - (B) if fewer than 3 sites are recommended,
 - (I) accept the reasons provided by the school board under clause (5)(b) for not recommending 3 sites, and accept the sites recommended, or
 - (II) reject the reasons provided by the school board under clause (5)(b) for not recommending 3 sites, and request that the school board provide the required 3 sites under clause (5)(a), or
 - (ii) reject the reasons provided by the school board under clause (5A)(b) for not including one of the sites, and request that the school board include one of the sites of the existing public school buildings being replaced in its recommendations under subsection (5).
- (5C)** The Minister shall refer the recommended sites for a new public school building accepted under subsection (5B) to the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal and that department shall evaluate the sites and recommend the most appropriate site to the Minister.
- (5D)** If the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal does not recommend any of the sites for a new public school building after its evaluation under subsection (5C), the Minister shall select the site for the building on the advice of the Department of Transportation Infrastructure Renewal and in consultation with the school board.