

School Sites and Facilities Criteria	
Adopted: February 28, 1984	Last Reviewed/Revised: February 18, 2025
Next Scheduled Review: 2027-2028	
Associated Policies & Procedures: N/A	

Purpose

It is the policy of the Halton Catholic District School Board (HCDSB) to meet the following school site criteria and standards, to the extent possible, when identifying and acquiring new school facilities/sites.

Application and Scope

The Planning Services and Facility Management Services departments are responsible for implementing this policy. The policy applies to all school site purchases and identifies the necessary physical attributes and location criteria to meet future student accommodation needs within the Region of Halton and its communities.

References

[O. Reg. 20/98: Education Development Charges](#)

[Section 51 \(24\) \(j\) of the Planning Act](#)

[Section 195 and 196 of the Education Act](#)

Requirements

Requirements for School Sites:

1. The size and shape of school sites must be able to house the desired school facility size for the area and associated outdoor facilities.
2. Schools can be organized in the following grade distributions depending on the sustainable long-term pupil accommodation needs of a community:
 - i. Junior Kindergarten to Grade 8;

- ii. Grade 9 to Grade 12;
 - iii. Junior Kindergarten to Grade 12; and,
 - iv. Grade 7 to Grade 12.
3. The maximum size of an elementary school site should not exceed the site areas in relation to the facility pupil capacity as reflected in Part I, Section 2, Subsection (5) Table 1 of *Ontario Regulation 20/98*, which reads:

Table 1: Elementary Schools

NUMBER OF PUPILS	MAXIMUM AREA (ACRES)
1 TO 400	4 acres
401 TO 500	5 acres
501 TO 600	6 acres
601 TO 700	7 acres
701 OR MORE	8 acres

4. The maximum size of a secondary school site should not exceed the site areas in relation to the facility pupil capacity as reflected in Part I, Section 2, Subsection (5) Table 2 of *Ontario Regulation 20/98*, which reads:

Table 2: Secondary Schools

NUMBER OF PUPILS	MAXIMUM AREA (ACRES)
1 TO 1000	12 acres
1001 TO 1100	13 acres
1101 TO 1200	14 acres
1201 TO 1300	15 acres
1301 TO 1400	16 acres
1401 TO 1501	17 acres
1501 OR MORE	18 acres

5. Staff has the discretion to reduce the size of a school site where there are opportunities for shared uses with contiguous lands, such as (but not limited to) parks and other municipal or publicly owned facilities.

6. The shape of the site should be essentially rectangular and configured in such a way as to allow for the full utilization of the site for school buildings and related educational, play, recreational and athletic facilities.
7. If a school site is irregular in shape, whereby its developability and site efficiency is hindered, the size requirements as identified in Table 1 or Table 2 may be required to increase to adequately accommodate a school facility.

Site Criteria for School Sites:

8. The site criteria for school sites shall be as follows:
 - i. The site should be located central to the communities and neighbourhoods it will serve and have regard to the future catchment area in order to place the school within the shortest walking distance for the majority of students.
 - ii. The site should have access to active transportation routes, corridors, and infrastructure to reduce vehicular-dependant modes of transportation.
 - iii. An elementary school site should have a frontage along a collector road to accommodate the school's personal and public transportation needs.
 - iv. A secondary school site should have two frontages along an arterial and collector road to best accommodate the school's personal and public transportation needs.
 - v. The site must have adequate frontage to control appropriate traffic designs and vehicular movements. If a school site is irregular in shape, the frontage requirements may increase to accommodate traffic circulation needs.
 - a) Elementary schools – 145-metre frontage minimum
 - b) Secondary schools – 220-metre frontage minimum
 - vi. When the HCDSB is to acquire a site from a developer through a municipal development application, the site must have access to municipal services such as water, sanitary and storm sewer, natural gas, fibre optic, and hydro at the lot line to supply the construction of the proposed facility and its intended use.
 - vii. The site should be adjacent or nearby other public facilities in order to achieve a “campus effect” and to provide coordinated services and avoid duplication of services. Public facilities include but are not limited to municipal parks, community centres, libraries, other schools, and arenas.
 - viii. The site is to be a safe distance from physical and environmental hazards of all kinds, on-site, and adjacent to the site to ensure student safety.
 - ix. The site must exclude any archaeologically significant lands.
 - x. The site is to be unencumbered by natural features that would have the effect of reducing the developability of the site.
 - xi. The site is to be free from noxious gases and fumes.

- xii. The site should avoid being adjacent to a high-voltage hydropower line right of way or a natural gas pipeline or station, wherever possible.
- xiii. The site should be easily drained and free from underground water problems and other underground soil conditions, which would present construction difficulties.

Early Identification of School Sites:

- 9. To ensure the provision of adequate services to students, school sites should be identified and secured at an early date in the planning approvals process.
 - i. The number, size requirements, and site characteristics of elementary and secondary school site(s) will be identified when a secondary plan is circulated to the HCDSB.
 - ii. The Board will cooperate with the municipality to locate a school site adjacent to municipal parkland or other services that have synergies with a school use.
 - iii. The precise size, shape, and location of the school site(s) will be identified when the Tertiary Plan or Draft Plan of Subdivision is developed and circulated.
 - iv. Title to the school site(s) shall be transferred to the Board by entering into an agreement with the vendor as a condition of Draft Plan Approval of the subdivision.
 - v. The vendor shall supply the HCDSB with all engineering reports and soil tests conducted by the owner to ensure that a school facility can be constructed. In the event of a dispute, the Board may perform its own studies prior to Draft Plan Approval.

Responsibility of the Vendor:

- 10. The Vendor shall be required to perform the following on behalf of the HCDSB:
 - i. Construct and maintain a sign of a type approved by the HCDSB on the school site advising prospective home purchasers of school accommodation in the neighbourhood. The sign will be placed in a clearly visible location.
 - ii. Ensure that all planning permissions are available to fully permit the construction of school, which includes but is not limited to the Official Plan and Zoning By-law requirements of the in-effect municipal plans and by-laws.
 - iii. Provide an environmental soil test suitable to the HCDSB.
 - iv. Provide archaeological clearances from the Province of Ontario.
 - v. Provide testing of underground water and soil conditions relevant to school construction and provide results.
 - vi. Construct the necessary temporary and permanent fencing as determined by the HCDSB along all boundaries of the school site(s), where required.
 - vii. Carry out and provide all necessary stormwater management studies. The HCDSB must be satisfied that the stormwater plans are compatible with school use and do not impede the development of the site.

- viii. Grade the site as necessary and establish adequate ground cover for the expected period between the acquisition and construction of the school building.
- ix. Unless otherwise permitted by the HCDSB, no fill or other materials shall be stockpiled on the school site.
- x. Provide all other reports, data or other information available on the school site.

Legal Requirements:

11. The HCDSB's actions shall conform to the requirements of the *Planning Act*, *Education Act*, and *Province of Ontario Regulations* or, as the same may be amended from time to time. If anything within this policy is inconsistent with the Acts or Regulations of the Province of Ontario, the Acts and Regulations shall take precedent.

APPROVED: Regular Meeting of the Board

AUTHORIZED BY: _____
Chair of the Board