

Section 6: Guiding Principles

To ensure that Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB) provides equitable, affordable and sustainable learning facilities, the following LTFMP Guiding Principles have been created. These principles guide and assist in creating the framework for determining the viability of our schools, which is a key component in the development and implementation of the Long-Term Facilities Master Plan.

The following guiding principles are consistent with the commitment to provide quality teaching and learning environments that are driven by the needs of students and programs:

1. HWDSB is committed to providing and maintaining quality learning and teaching environments that support student achievement (HWDSB Strategic Directions, Annual Operating Plan 2011-12)
2. Optimal utilization rates of school facilities is in the range of 90- 110%
3. Facilities reflect the program strategy that all students need personalized learning, pathways, schools with specialization and cluster and community support (*Learning for All: HWDSB Program Strategy*)
4. The scheduled length of time on a vehicle provided through HWSTS shall not exceed 60 minutes one way. (*Transportation Policy, 2014*)
5. School facilities meet the needs of each of our students in the 21st century (*Education in HWDSB, 2011*)
6. Accessibility will be considered in facility planning and accommodation (*Accessibility (Barrier-Free) "Pathways" Policy, 1999*)
7. School facilities provide neighbourhood and community access that supports the well-being of students and their families (*A Guide to Educational Partnerships, 2009*)
8. School facilities have flexible learning environments including adaptive and flexible use of spaces; student voice is reflected in where, when and how learning occurs (*Education in HWDSB, 2012*)
9. Specific principles related to elementary and secondary panels:

Elementary

- a. *School Capacity* - optimal school capacity would be 500 to 600 students, which creates two to three classes for each grade
- b. *School Grade/Organization* –Kindergarten to-Grade 8 facilities
- c. *School Site Size* - optimal elementary school site size would be approximately 6 acres
- d. *French Immersion* - In dual track schools a balance between French Immersion and English track students is ideal for balanced program delivery

Secondary

- a. *School Capacity* - optimal school capacity would be 1000 to 1250 students
- b. *School Site Size* - ideal secondary school site size would be approximately 15 acres, including a field, parking lot and building

(NOTE: Not meeting the aspects of the program specific principles above (#9), does not preclude that a school has been pre-determined for automatic closure or other accommodation strategies. The principles are intended to be guides).