

POLICY BBBC– Ward Boundary Review

Effective representation is fundamental to any democratic electoral system and is the primary goal of a ward boundary review. Effective representation ensures that voters have the ability to access their elected representative equal in strength to the rest of the population. Effective, efficient and representative governance must find a balance between population and geography to ensure the rural voice is heard.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline the criteria to be used when developing options for ward boundary changes. The policy will establish responsibilities in the ward boundary review process and define the framework of the review including timing and stakeholder involvement.

DEFINITIONS

Population - the number of people who live in an area.

Ward - division of the electoral boundaries into areas to achieve equal and effective representation.

GUIDELINES & PROCEDURES

1. **Criteria:** Electoral ward boundaries will be established based on the following criteria:
 - a) Service Efficiency – ward boundaries are to be designed to consider ease of transportation and communications within the ward, commonality of culture and interest; service or trading area, location of schools and high school boundaries;
 - b) Future Growth - ward boundaries will be designed with the intent of lasting a minimum of two school authority elections and therefore the potential for growth in each ward over the next ten years will be taken into consideration;
 - c) Communities of Interest - all efforts will be made to ensure that residential subdivisions are kept within the same ward;
 - d) Geographical Features - wherever possible, ward boundaries will be readily identifiable to the public by using both natural and human-made geographical features including significant topography and major highways;
 - e) Least Number of Changes - to provide stability in elected representation, ward boundary proposals should include the fewest changes possible to achieve the desired results;
 - f) Contiguous Wards - all portions of a ward are physically connected insofar as possible;
 - g) Financial – it is incumbent upon all organizations to ensure that available financial resources are distributed and used in the most efficient and effective manner possible.

2. Responsibilities

- a) The Board will:
 - i) advise Administration of any recommendations or changes that are desired to the ward boundaries;
 - ii) direct Administration to conduct a ward boundary review and prepare boundary proposals for the Board's consideration;
 - iii) decide on the manner in which the ward boundary review will be conducted;
 - iv) provide direction on the proposals and recommendations presented by Administration;
 - v) decide upon and adopt any changes to the ward boundaries by passing the required bylaw no later than October in the year prior to a general school authority election.
- b) Administration will:
 - i) work closely with internal and external stakeholders to understand the impact of any changes to the ward boundaries;
 - ii) present to the Board the ward boundary proposals;
 - iii) bring forward a bylaw to the Board to adopt the ward boundary changes;
 - iv) implement the approved ward boundaries.

REFERENCES

Cross References:

Legal References:

[*Education Act*](#)-Section 76

[*Local Authorities Election Act*](#)

BM#: 20200528.10

Next Review: 2022/2023