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## **Policy 2345 – Community Planning and Partnerships**

### **1. Rationale**

The Simcoe County District School Board's (SCDSB) mission, to inspire and empower learning for life, and vision, a community of learners achieving full potential, provide direction for the board's strategic plan.

Development and maintenance of cooperative and collaborative relationships between school boards and community organizations aligns with the board's mission and vision and are part of the foundation of a strong, vibrant, and sustainable publicly funded education system. It is the responsibility of all levels of government to make the best use of public assets. Confidence in public education, and responsible stewardship of resources, are supported by the practice of optimizing board resources through purposeful facility partnerships within the context of the board's responsibilities for student achievement, well-being of students and staff, safety, and pupil accommodation strategies. School boards are encouraged to reach out to community organizations on a regular basis to share planning information and to support effective planning with community partners.

Offering space in schools to facility partners can reduce facility operating costs, improve services and supports available to students, strengthen relationships between school boards, community partners, and the public, maximize the use of public infrastructure through increased flexibility and utilization, and provide a foundation for improved service delivery for communities.

The Community Planning and Partnerships Policy fulfills the requirements of the Ministry of Education Community Planning and Partnerships Guideline (March 2015).

### **2. Policy**

It is the policy of the SCDSB that it may enter into facility partnerships when building new schools, undertaking significant renovations, and when considering the use of unused space in schools.

### **3. Definitions**

- 3.1 Facility partner - any group deemed suitable by the board as potential partners.
- 3.2 Facility partnership - mutually beneficial relationship developed to improve services and supports available to students and their families to maximize the use of school board facilities.
- 3.3 Unused space - portions of a facility that are unoccupied and not deemed surplus.

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#### **4. Guidelines**

- 4.1 In keeping with the intent of this policy, the following provisions shall apply:
- 4.1.1 Facilities suitable for partnerships may be identified through the board's accommodation planning process. Both schools and other board-owned facilities will be considered. Suitable space for partnerships may also be identified through other circumstances.
  - 4.1.2 The board will determine what facilities are suitable and not suitable for facility partnerships, what entities are suitable and not suitable partners, and when to enter a partnership. Partner suitability considerations shall include protection of student and staff health and safety, the appropriateness for the school setting, and potential impact on student achievement.
  - 4.1.3 Where unused space is declared surplus, the board will follow the circulation process outlined in Ontario Regulation 374/23 Acquisition and Disposition of Real Property.
  - 4.1.4 Where unused space is available for partnerships, or where the partnership opportunity involves new construction, information will be provided to potential partners through a notification process.
  - 4.1.5 At least one dedicated Community Planning and Facility Partnership meeting will be held per year to discuss planning and potential partnerships with public and community organizations.
  - 4.1.6 Where potential pupil accommodation reviews are identified in the accommodation plan, consultation with affected municipalities and public community organizations will occur in addition to the annual meeting.
  - 4.1.7 When considering the building of new schools or significant additions and/or renovations, as identified in the accommodation plan, entities listed in Ontario Regulation 374/23 and other public and community organizations will be notified.
  - 4.1.8 Facility partnerships should be based on a full cost-recovery basis for the board.

#### **5. Confidentiality**

Information received from potential partners will be held in confidence in accordance with the *Education Act*, the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and the *Broader Public Sector Accountability Act*.

#### **6. Administrative procedures**

The Director of Education is authorized to provide the administrative procedures necessary to implement this policy.

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Administrative procedures linked to this policy include:

[APM A5015 – Facility Partnerships](#)

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