

Procedure Title	Consultation		
Date of Issue	May 17, 2011	Related Policy	BP 1606-D
Revision Dates	February 20, 2018	Related Forms	
Review Date		Originator	Administrative Council
References			
Thames Valley District School Board Procedure #9006 "Notification on items requiring public consultation"; (c) International Association for Public Participation www.iap2.org ; Ontario Regulation 612/00			

1.0 RATIONALE

- 1.1 Bluewater District School Board acknowledges that its decisions can be strengthened by input from School Councils, the Parent Involvement Committee and other internal/external stakeholders.
- 1.2 Bluewater District School Board will notify internal and external communities of consultation opportunities in a manner that is consistent, timely and transparent. These procedures apply to system-level consultations as well as board-sanctioned consultation processes that affect specific areas of the district.
- 1.3 Any system-wide consultation process under consideration will be brought forward to the Executive Committee to determine the appropriate level of public input using the criteria defined in Appendix A: Spectrum of Public Input (adapted from (c) International Association for Public Participation www.iap2.org – Spectrum of Public Participation). There are four levels, each with an increasing level of public input (see Appendix A):
 - 1. Inform
 - 2. Consult
 - 3. Involve
 - 4. Collaborate
- 1.4 Bluewater District School Board acknowledges that consultation may not always be possible (e.g., due to time constraints in which a decision must be made), or appropriate (e.g., personnel, legal, union matters, regulations).

2.0 PROCEDURE

2.1 Public Consultation – Initial Contact

The key staff contacts for each consultation will vary depending on the topic of consultation to ensure that the individual(s) responsible for soliciting information and providing feedback are those most knowledgeable regarding the topic.

It is the responsibility of the designated superintendent to provide the following information to the individual(s) accountable for coordinating the specific consultation, and subsequent feedback:

- i. deadlines for input;
- ii. from whom the input is being sought;
- iii. the format/guidelines (if any) that the input should take;

- iv. the name of the contact individual to whom the input should be provided, along with the appropriate contact information;
- v. any supporting documents that those being consulted with need to have in order to provide the requested input.

The key staff consultation contact will then confirm with the superintendent the preferred notification strategy. Some public input processes will simply require that past practices be followed (e.g., draft policy sent to the system for review).

2.2 Notification of Input Request

The following distribution/notification strategy will be followed for consultation processes, where/when appropriate. The Director's Office, and/or the key consultation contact, will complete the following:

- i. Ensure that the item for which input is being sought is posted to the web in the appropriate section, once it has been vetted by originating superintendent;
- ii. Distribute an e-mail memo to system principals and school administrators informing them of what has been posted, asking them to review the item with staff (if appropriate) and to provide copy to school community councils for review and input;
- iii. Encourage stakeholders, staff and students to print the item(s) from the website, rather than being supplied with paper copies;
- iv. Place a notice of request for public input on the board's home page so that web visitors see it as they come into the site;
- v. When/if required, coordinate with the Director's Office to place a public-input request ad in appropriate newspapers and/or send out a media advisory and/or prepare a flyer for schools to send home with students;
- vi. Ensure that appropriate background information is provided to those being consulted, in order to assist them in providing meaningful input within the appropriate context (if applicable).

Additional notification strategies may be utilized, when deemed appropriate (e.g., The International Association for Public Participation, Participation Toolbox (2006).

All input received will be considered by the board to be public information, unless noted otherwise. This will be explicitly stated in any newspapers ads requesting input.

2.3 Contacting Stakeholders

The originating superintendent, or key staff consultation contact, will be responsible for contacting specific constituencies (e.g., local community agencies, associations, advocacy groups, suppliers) that need to be informed of the public input stage. School Councils and Parent Involvement Committees are not included under this requirement as they will be notified routinely on all requests from the board for public input, as per R.R.O 2010, Reg. 612 (as amended by O.Reg. 330/10). When/if required the originating superintendent will make arrangements to have specific internal and/or external stakeholder groups contacted.

2.4 Follow-up

- i. The results and rationale of the consultation shall be communicated to all contributors to the process by the originating superintendent, or key consultation contact, in a timely manner. This communication can take the form of thank you letters, phone calls, e-mails or whatever approach is deemed appropriate. The approach taken may vary with each consultation.
- ii. The originating superintendent, or key staff consultation contact, will also be responsible for maintaining copies of the input received and for summarizing and sharing these as requested at the appropriate venue.

APPENDIX A

Spectrum of Public Input (adapted from International Association of Public Participation – Spectrum of Public Participation)

	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE
GOAL	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions	To obtain staff/ public/stakeholder feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with staff/ public/stakeholders throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the staff/ public/ stakeholders in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution
THE BWDSB COMMITMENT	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influences the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision(s).	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.
EXAMPLE TECHNIQUES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ board websites ▪ board Twitter and Facebook accounts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ public meetings ▪ surveys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ workshops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ public advisory committees
BWDSB SPECIFIC EXAMPLES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Transitions Updates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Budget Consultation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent Involvement Committee Annual Networking Meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Planning and Partnership Annual Meeting