

<b>Policy Title</b>	<b>Consultation</b>		
<b>Date of Issue</b>	May 17, 2011	<b>Related Procedure</b>	AP 1606-D
<b>Revision Dates</b>	February 21, 2012 (rev. Rationale-Strategic Plan); February 20, 2018	<b>Related Forms</b>	
<b>Review Date</b>	February 1, 2023	<b>Originator</b>	Board of Trustees
<b>References</b>			
Education Act; R.R.O 2010, Reg. 612 (as amended by O.Reg. 330/10); (c) International Association for Public Participation <a href="http://www.iap2.org">www.iap2.org</a>			

**1.0 RATIONALE**

- 1.1 Bluewater District School Board policies will support and provide direction necessary to achieve the board’s Vision, Mission and Strategic Plan priorities.
- 1.2 Bluewater District School Board recognizes that the input of its stakeholders plays an important role in the provision of high quality educational services.

**2.0 DEFINITIONS**

**Consultation** means to seek advice, to confer, to discuss or to deliberate on the views and opinions held by others. Consultation is not shared decision making - it is the collection of opinions and input to assist the board/committee in its decision making process.

**3.0 POLICY**

- 3.1 Consultation with public, stakeholders, parents, students and staff is a key component of Bluewater District School Board’s decision making process. The decision-making process involves the board and/or staff and consultation provides a useful mechanism for gathering information which enables informed decision making.
- 3.2 This policy provides a framework for consultation, and applies to all consultation processes.
- 3.3 Core Values for the Consultation Process (*adapted from (c) International Association for Public Participation [www.iap2.org](http://www.iap2.org)*)

The following are the core values that will be applied to every consultation that Bluewater District School Board performs:

- i. Consultation is based on the belief that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be heard as part of the decision-making process, and therefore the board seeks and facilitates their involvement;
- ii. Consultation includes the premise that public, stakeholders’ and staff contributions will be considered in the decision-making process;

- iii. Consultation promotes sustainable decisions through recognition and communication of the needs and interests of all participants, including decision makers;
- iv. Consultation seeks input from public, stakeholders and staff regarding how they can best participate;
- v. Consultation will be managed in an equitable and inclusive manner; and
- vi. Consultation communicates to participants how their input affected the decision.

#### 4.0 SYSTEM EXPECTATIONS

- i. Consultation is an important step in reaching informed decisions and shall be taken on matters that will have an impact on the Bluewater District School Board community, as determined by the board in accordance with AP 1606-D “Consultation” or as legislated.
- ii. To ensure timely and comprehensive consultation the board will:
  - a. Consider a variety of consultation types and consultative methods;
  - b. Identify the constituent group(s) and/or individuals to be consulted; and
  - c. Actively seek the views and engage in dialogue with a variety of interested, affected groups and/or individuals and key sources of information.
- iii. The board will consult with broad range of stakeholders, both internal and external, who might be interested in education-related issues, including, but not limited to:
  - a. Statutory committees, as applicable (Special Education Advisory Committee, Supervised Alternative Learning Committee, and Central Occupational Health and Safety Steering Committee)
  - b. Students and their parents/guardians;
  - c. Student Senate;
  - d. School Councils and Parent Involvement Committees (as legislated by R.R.O 2010, Reg. 612, as amended by O.Reg. 330/10);
  - e. Taxpayers without students in the system;
  - f. Government at different levels (municipal, regional, provincial, federal);
  - g. Service agencies/organizations (covering a range of interests: social services, recreation, arts and culture, business, faith, and so forth);
  - h. Professional organizations;
  - i. Elementary and secondary school principals, vice-principals, teachers, office staff/ administrators, and facilities personnel;
  - j. Education consultants and those providing student support (from education assistants to those involved in special education);
  - k. Bluewater District School Board Education Centre staff at all levels;
  - l. Board/union representatives.

Depending on the nature of the topic and time lines imposed, the board will engage in consultation with some or all of these groups.

- iv. Trustees have a multi-dimensional role that includes being an advocate for their constituents during consultations and/or for general board business.
- v. Any system consultation process under consideration will be brought forward to the Executive Committee for their input.
- vi. Consultation will not always be appropriate, or possible. For example, when a decision is mandated or required by law (e.g., policy implementation before system review to comply with legislated deadline).