

February, 2015

Planning and
Transportation

With the significant increase in enrolment in the Calgary Board of Education (CBE), many schools are at capacity enrolment. The Board of Trustees has approved a [lottery process](#) as the most appropriate selection process when registrations exceed available space. Walk zone plays an important role in determining priority categories for lottery acceptance – students living inside walk zones have priority for registration over those who do not. CBE is often asked to allow students living ‘just outside’ the walk zone; however, we are unable to make exceptions for students living near, but outside, the walk zone boundary.

[CBE Administrative Regulation AR 6095 – Student Transportation](#) was approved in May 2008 at the conclusion of a public engagement. The regulation created transportation services areas which will effectively create a walk zone and a transportation zone for each school.

The Transportation Advisory Committee was also established by the Planning and Transportation Department in 2008, to help establish walk zones and resolve issues resulting from the former practice of walk limits.

The Transportation Advisory Committee is composed of:

- Director, Planning and Transportation
- Manager, Transportation
- System (Assistant) Principal
- Elementary school Principal
- Middle school Principal
- High school Principal
- External Agency members, as required
- CBE Resource persons and or Representative of Learning Support (Educational Support Services) as required
- Representative of a charter bus carrier
- Representative of the Calgary Association of Parents and School Councils
- Parent representatives from each CBE administrative area

Between 2008 and 2011 this committee reviewed all existing school walk zones and made adjustments to maintain consistency and equity within and between communities.

Since 2011, the committee continues to meet as required to review new walk zones for schools under construction, or extraordinary circumstances (i.e. when a new walk zone was required for Elbow Park School due to flooding and the temporary relocation of the school to the Earl Grey School site).

Provincial funding for school transportation is based on an estimate of the number of students living 2.4 km or more from their designated school. CBE current walk zones are between 1.6 km and 2.4 km, depending on grade configuration in the school.

Walk zones are developed using specialized ArcGIS and Google Earth Pro mapping software. CBE staff create buffers around the new schools to determine which residential lots are within walking distance. These areas are exported to Google Earth Pro and fine-tuned by analysing the satellite imagery to consider naturally occurring boundaries for the school walk zone.

CBE continues to look for the best ways to accommodate students across our system in their program of choice. The intent is for students to attend school as close to home as possible within the existing constraints of system resources.