

# Greater Essex County District School Board

---

## Regulation: Naming and Renaming of Board Facilities

Reference No: R-PL-01

1. When a building or facility is to be named:

When selecting a name for a new school (or while renaming a currently operating school or board facility) the objective is to reflect excellence in public education, the diversity of our region, and a safe, positive and welcoming school environment – while highlighting the expressed values of the GECDSB and its character education principles

The primary interest in the name of any school or Board facility is retained by the Board. A name is a primary branding element and allows the Board to promote its objectives in the community and communicate its mission, vision and values. Appropriate branding also assists the Board in the development of a strong identity for the school community.

A school name should be distinctive and readily identifiable as a public school within the Greater Essex County District School Board.

Generationally, the nature and identity of communities, in which any school exists, changes. Schools are built to overlap generations. Naming schools based on the character of a community as it is currently constituted, or once was, will not always be relevant to the present residents or users.

Ideas (concepts) – based on the Board’s ongoing, foundational, operational and philosophical criteria are encouraged to be the fundamental consideration of a new, or revised, school name.

Names to be considered should be thoroughly examined so as not to perpetuate or represent a legacy of discrimination, oppression or harm to members of this or any GECDSB school community.

The Director of Education along with the area Superintendent will bring forward to the Board of Trustees a report requesting a Naming Committee be established once land has been purchased and the design and budget have been approved.

2. Through a media release, social media and communication to the school community, an appeal for applicants for the committee will be solicited. Once the applications are received the area Trustees and Director of Education will determine the makeup of the committee. (See Appendix A for application.)

The Naming Committee shall, where applicable, consist of at least:

- Two members of the Board of Trustees, including the area Trustee(s) whenever possible, recommended by the Striking Committee (one shall act as committee chair)
- The Director of Education
- One school administrator or manager
- Two staff members
- One school council member (or one from each school involved in a consolidation)
- Two student representatives (two from each school involved in a consolidation) (elementary student accompanied by parent/guardian)
- Two community representatives who are public school supporters
- The Superintendent of Accommodations
- The area Superintendent
- The Public Relations Officer (non-voting member and advisor to the committee)

\* A staff appointed recording secretary will be provided to the committee

NOTE: In the case of a non-school facility the membership may vary.

3. The committee will hold a minimum of two (2) meetings which will be open to the public to attend, but not to provide any direct input at that time.

The Public Relations Officer will collect historical/cultural information on the area, community and neighbourhood in which the building or facility will be/is located. The report will help establish suggestions of concepts, names and/or themes for the committee to discuss. It will be provided to all members of the committee prior to the first official meeting.

4. Following the guidelines set out in this regulation for the selection of a school / facility name, community input will be sought through an open survey, which will be promoted through a variety of mediums (i.e. News Release, on social media platforms, websites, etc). A summary report will be provided to members of the committee prior to their first meeting which will also include previously proposed vetted district names.
5. The purpose of the first meeting will be for the committee to review the information provided and, if desired, ask questions of the Public Relations Officer for clarification. Members will then assess any ideas/suggestions which have already come forward or provide one of their own. A list of potential names will be created.
6. The list will then be reviewed through an equity lens and for propriety and adherence to the GECDSB name selection criteria. Consultation will take place with, but not limited to various GECDSB advisory committees. All appropriate names will then be submitted to focus groups of students and/or staff and/or community members for their impressions and preferences. The results of these sessions will be summarized and provided to the committee prior to their second meeting.

At its second meeting the committee will select a minimum of 2 and a maximum of 4 possible names that will be forwarded to the Board of Trustees for their consideration.

**Naming Criteria:**

Must be distinctive and appropriate with an emphasis on, but not limited to:

- Local historical events;
- Geography;
- Culture;
- Traditions of the community; or
- Representations of diversity.

Careful consideration should be given before naming a school or board facility after an individual. No school or facility names will cause harm to any member of the GECDSB community based on grounds protected under the Ontario Human Rights Code. No school or facility will be named after a living person (persons).

7. At a public meeting of the Board of Trustees, the area Superintendent will present a report on the deliberations and actions of the Name Selection Committee. This will also include the short list of suggested names. Trustees will then vote to choose one of the suggestions or provide an alternative.
8. Following the selection of a name, the school community will then be engaged in a process to determine its branding elements (colours, logo, mascot and motto). The Public Relations Officer and area Superintendent will supervise the proceedings to ensure that they conform to the GECDSB standards for justice, equity, inclusion, and diversity as well as for distinctiveness and marketability.
9. All meeting notes on the determination of a school name or renaming of a school are to be kept in the school archives.

**Renaming of Existing Schools and/or Facilities**

10. School names across the district are to be reviewed every 5 years to allow for evolving and enlightened understanding of justice, inclusion, equity, and diversity to be considered.

If there is a concern of a school name prior to the review date, concerned members of the school community or general community should complete the School Naming Request Form (see Appendix D).

See Appendix B for a list of current and former school names and themes in the GECDSB.

11. Should the Board pass a motion to proceed, an ad hoc naming committee will be established, in accordance with this policy and regulation.

The naming of internal facilities is the responsibility of the school community. The school will consider the Naming Criteria as listed in #6.

**Appendix A:** Application to Serve on the Greater Essex County District School Board's Naming and Renaming of Board Facilities Committee

**Appendix B:** List of current and former school names and themes in the GECDSB

**Appendix C:** Script/Guide for Chair of the Naming Committee

**Appendix D:** School Renaming Request Form