



PROCEDURE

FT111

School Initiated Facility Upgrades & Capital Projects During Occupied Times

Board Received: May 31, 2021 Review Date: June 2025

Accountability:

1. Frequency of Reports – As needed
2. Criteria for Success – All facility upgrades, including school-initiated upgrades, are completed in accordance with statutory authorities and do not compromise the health and safety of students and staff and do not change a school's "On the Ground" (OTG) capacity without proper approval.

1.0 Procedures:

1. School initiated facility upgrades include all school buildings and grounds projects and all other facility upgrades, repairs or installations proposed by the school principal, regardless of the source of funding that:
 - i) will affect any change in the use of a school room or area;
 - ii) create any physical changes to a school building or grounds; or
 - iii) involve the installation of any equipment that will place an unusual load on the electrical, mechanical or other major building systems.
 - iv) will result in modifications to the Fire Code
2. All school-initiated facility upgrades shall be referred to Facility Services for review to ensure the following:
 - 2.1 All health and safety statutes and regulations must be considered and addressed, including all issues relating to asbestos and other designated substances. Facility Services will involve the board's Health and Safety Officer where required.
 - 2.2 Heating and ventilation upgrades must be considered and addressed to avoid indoor air quality (IAQ) issues resulting in health and safety risks.
 - 2.3 Fire, accessibility, asbestos and other code related issues must be considered and addressed.
 - 2.4 Converting a room from instructional to non-instructional or vice-versa impacts on the "on the ground capacity" (OTG) tracked in the Ministry's School Facility Inventory System (SFIS) and must be approved by Executive Council.
 - 2.5 All statutory requirements (e.g., Ontario Building Code, Electrical Safety Code, Fire Code, etc.) must be considered and addressed.
 - 2.6 Services such as plumbing and electrical capacity, etc. must be considered and addressed in the plan.
 - 2.7 Materials, equipment and procedural specifications must be employed to produce quality solutions that do not become a future financial liability for the Board.
 - 2.8 All work will be completed by qualified Board personnel or contractors. All approved projects will follow the appropriate procurement process as set out in Policy F6 – Purchasing including the requirement that all contractors engaged be in good standing with the WSIB and have the required insurance coverage
 - 2.9 A proper cost estimate of the work must be prepared that addresses all of the above issues.

3. Facility upgrades that will change the use of a room,
 - i) from unoccupied to occupied or vice-versa,
 - ii) from instructional to non-instructional or vice versa or
 - iii) in any other way changes the “On the Ground” (OTG) capacity, will follow the approval process outlined below:
 - 3.1 The School administrators shall forward a description of the proposed upgrade to the Planning Officer who will advise relevant staff of any impact on OTG the proposal may have.
 - 3.2 The school administrator shall complete an “Application for Change of Use Form” (Appendix A) and review the proposal with the Manager of Facility Services for viability. The application form shall include a description of the proposed upgrade along with the impact on the OTG of the school.
 - 3.3 Following review by the Manager of Facility Services (signed acknowledgment No.7 on Application for Change of Use Form), the application package will be presented by the school administrator to the Family of Schools Superintendent for approval (signed approval No.8 on Application for Change of Use Form). The FOS Superintendent will forward applications they deem beneficial for the school community to Executive Council for review and consideration. The school administrator will receive a debrief for applications that were not approved.
 - 3.4 The school administrator and the Manager of Facility Services will be notified of the Executive Council decision by the Superintendent of Business (signed acknowledgment No.9 on Application for Change of Use Form) and are responsible to ensure the requirements of Section 2 above are followed. The school administrator will receive a debrief for applications that were not approved.
 - 3.5 If the project changes the school OTG, the Board’s Planning Officer shall update the school’s OTG in the applicable databases, following the physical completion of the proposed project.

2.0 Completing Capital Projects During Occupied Times

Facility services may be required to carry out capital projects during the school year during occupied times. Listed below are a number of examples of the types of activities that could be considered capital work.

1. Roofing – Repair or Replacement
2. Paving & Sidewalk – repair or replacement
3. Lighting upgrades – Internal and external
4. Windows – replacement
5. Masonry – Repair or replacement
6. Additions/ Major Renovations

Construction/renovation activities can produce odours, dust and other environmental health concerns that may impact school environments. It is not always feasible or possible to plan construction and major renovation projects during non-occupied times.

Maintaining acceptable indoor air quality during a construction/renovation project is a collaborative effort amongst the general contractor, facilities services, school administration, as well as school staff. With some upfront planning and ongoing communications, safety and indoor air quality issues and complaints about construction work can be prevented or limited. The safety of students and staff is our priority and safety precautions will be taken during all activities.

1. **Process**

Prior to any work being carried out, Facility Services will review the proposed project and scope of work with the school administrator to provide them a full understanding of the project.

A Project Plan will be developed with the school administrator as part of this process. (Appendix B)

Once it is determined that the project is going to proceed then a pre-bid site meeting will be held on site and a copy of the site-specific project plan will be shared with all potential bidders.

After the project has been awarded a Prestart Meeting shall be held with the successful bidder, the project manager from the board or consultants, and the school administrator. They will review the project plan and the items outlined on the plan, so everyone is clear prior to the start of the project.

The school administrator will communicate with staff and advise them of the project and any impact to the school's operation. The school administrator will issue a letter to parents and school community advising them of the project and any impact relating to the school's operation. (Sample Letter Appendix C).

2. **General Safety**

At all times safety is paramount for school construction and renewal projects with special emphasis on students and staff and the general public for a project during the school year when the building is occupied.

Contractors will be required to provide full high wall perimeter fencing or barricades, locked and manned around their work and storage areas.

All materials and equipment will be stored in enclosed areas and protected from access by the general public.

Materials may be hoisted onto the edge of a roof during the school day but no materials will be hoisted over and across occupied areas.

When roof top ventilation equipment is moved for roof work the contractor will post a person inside the building to guard the interior area under the roof area affected.

Any and all vehicular traffic will be coordinated so that at no time will any vehicles be moving on the premises during the recess periods, lunch periods and/or other times when activities are taking place on the school grounds.

Delivery and removal of construction project supplies, garbage bins and equipment will be outside school hours.

The contractor will supply portable toilet facilities for their staff.

Contractors and all persons having business on the work site must wear safety hats and boots as well as other safety equipment as required by the municipal, provincial and federal building and safety codes.

3. Responsibilities

Facilities Services Construction Responsibilities

- Provide notification to Family of Schools Superintendent of construction projects
- Communication liaison between school administrator, school staff and General Contractor
- Receive and forward listed MSDS and Designated Substance Survey to Health and Safety for review and comment
- Provide updates and advisories to school administrator regarding changes to schedule, issues in-between bi-weekly meetings

School Administrator Responsibilities

- Attend mandatory Prestart Meeting and Biweekly site meetings
- Receive MSDS and make available to school staff
- Communicate with staff information from Preconstruction Meeting – scope of project, timelines, anticipated odours/dust, revised play area/entrance/exits (if affected), fire/emergency exit plans
- Communicate with School Council Chair, parents, and school community advising them of project in multiple modes (i.e., letter, newsletter insert, website, School Messenger, Social Media).
- Share project progress reports with staff and parents based on bi-weekly and site meeting information
- Consider moving classrooms temporarily to another space when they are directly affected by work.
- Notify Facility Services & FOS Superintendent immediately if concerns arise

General Contractor Responsibilities

- Provide project MSDS for identified materials, at start of construction or minimum 2 weeks before the commencement of work
- Provide project schedule at start of construction
- Update schedule and provide ‘two weeks look ahead’ at each site meeting
- Take appropriate separation measures to limit impact of construction on existing school and occupants; follow fire separation guidelines. Ensure all areas affected by work are fenced off by appropriate construction fence (solid fencing 6 feet high)
- Ensure no overhead hoisting takes place during occupied times
- Ensure no vehicles shall move about the school property when children are outside
- Be responsible for administering OH&S on site for construction personnel and all visitors, including the proper use and storage of all construction materials and processes
- Include MSDS update in bi-weekly meeting minutes

4. Health and Safety

Past experience has shown that the three most common health concerns and questions arising from major renovations and construction involve the generation of dust and odours (more specifically painting and roofing) as well as the exposure to hazardous materials such as asbestos. The following information was developed to provide the administrator some background knowledge in anticipation that these concerns could arise. In most cases, sharing

of this information will assist in alleviating any staff or parental concerns, however, in some circumstances individuals with a particular sensitivity may still need to be temporarily accommodated.

Top Four Common Health and Safety Concerns Arising from Building Construction/Renovation

a. Dust

Construction and demolition work will create dust, a major component being masonry dust. Control of dust into the occupied area of the school is achieved by physical separation (plywood barrier and/or polyethylene sheeting), and by limiting foot traffic between construction areas and occupied building areas. Ventilation to the work area should be shut down and intakes and diffusers sealed when possible.

There may be a need to increase housekeeping activities in adjacent occupied areas. Consideration should also be given to boxing up non-essential materials.

b. Odours

It is inevitable that odours will be noticed by building occupants during the course of construction/renovation. Roofing and painting operations are particularly odouriferous. New furnishings, carpeting, millwork, sealers, adhesives, caulking, etc. will all emit low levels of volatile organic compounds during a period of off gassing.

It is possible to detect the odour of these chemicals, but the low levels will not result in health effects.

It is often perceived by building occupants that an unfamiliar odour constitutes a health hazard. If an odour is not expected or is undesirable, it is understandable that building occupants can become concerned and complaints can arise. These complaints can be due to actual symptoms resulting from exposures or to a perceived risk of exposures to unknown materials, which may or may not be an actual health hazard.

The GEDSB specifies in all of our tenders that whenever possible water soluble/latex based products be used during the course of construction/renovation.

c. Noise

Noise will be more of a nuisance and interruption than a health and safety issue. For example, in a roof replacement project the noisiest operation is the removal of the old roof. In all projects the contractors will provide a schedule for the areas of the school that will receive work so that the impact on the students and staff can be minimized and the school may elect to make arrangements to move classes from one location to another in an effort to reduce the noise impact on the staff and student population.

d. Designated Substances (including Asbestos Containing Materials)

Ontario has regulations governing the exposure of workers to various substances; O. Reg 490/09 regulates designated substances in the workplace.

There are eleven designated substances, asbestos being the most common in our schools.

Before a construction project commences, the GEDSB is required to perform a detailed building survey for designated substances and provide this information to the general

contractor. During the course of construction an abatement project to remove asbestos containing materials may be required. O. Reg. 278/05 prescribes the measures taken to safely remove asbestos containing materials. You will be notified of such a project and provided with any air sampling results when applicable.

5. Working Together for a Successful Project

Effective communication between the general contractor, facilities services, school administration, building occupants and other board personnel as appropriate is essential. Good communication will help foster a climate of trust and confidence and will bring all invested parties together to work toward solutions to problems as they occur.

Communication – Key Points

- i. Attend all design/construction meetings so that you have a thorough understanding of the scope of work. Understand what precautions will be taking place to control hazards such as those discussed above.
- ii. Communicate the scope of work and precautions that will take place as well as any inconveniences that staff may encounter.
- iii. MSDSs for relevant products should be available and accessible to all staff upon request.
- iv. Provide regular updates to staff (staff meetings, e-mail, etc.). Depending on the scope of the project, frequency could vary. However, providing advance notice of activities known to generate odours or noise is highly recommended.
- v. Encourage staff to report concerns immediately to the identified designate and in turn promptly respond. If serious health concerns are reported, encourage staff members to see a physician for assessment. Their symptoms may not be directly related to the construction activities but may indicate some other medical condition.

Related Resources:

F3 Capital Related Fundraising and Community Donations



School Initiated Facility Upgrade Application for Change of Use Form

School Name _____

School Address _____

Principal _____

Superintendent _____

Proposed Facility Upgrade Project _____

1. **Details of Proposed Project** (attach additional page(s) as necessary)
N.B. – Each project must be submitted on a separate application form

2. **Budget and Funding Details of Proposed Project including municipal permits** (attach additional page(s) as necessary)

Item(s)	Specific Cost	Proposed Funding Source or Budget Account

3. **Description of Change of Use**

Current Use	Proposed Use

4. **Impact to School/Board/OTG if Change of Use Approved**

Net Impact of Change	Benefits of permitting or denying application	The Board's Planning Officer has reviewed this project to determine the merits of approval based on the impact of changes to the school's OTG.

5. **Anticipated Benefits for Students, School Building, Community, Board**

Students	
School Building	
Community	
Board	

6. **Administrative Acknowledgement**

Signature – School Principal	Date

7. **Facility Services Acknowledgement**

Signature – Manager of Facility Services	Date

8. **Superintendent Approval**

Signature – FOS Superintendent	Date

9. **Approve of Executive Council**

Signature – Superintendent of Business	Date



Project Plan

School Name _____

Address: _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Contacts

Contractor _____

Site Foreman _____

Project Number _____

Project Manager _____

Start Date _____

Finish Date _____

Scope of Work

Parking required

Staging and storage required

Fencing Required

YES ☐

NO ☐

Will Access be Modified?

YES ☐

NO ☐

Temporary Fire Plan Required

YES ☐

NO ☐

Use of Washrooms by workers

YES ☐

NO ☐

If yes, note location _____

Traffic Plan

YES ☐

NO ☐

DSR Required

YES ☐

NO ☐

Asbestos Plan Review

YES ☐

NO ☐

Permits or Notice of Project Required

YES ☐

NO ☐

Sample Template Letter to Parents for Roofing

Dear Families,

[Insert School Name] is scheduled to have a new roof installed beginning the week of [Insert date], weather pending. The projected time frame is approximately [Insert timeframe] to completion.

Although we will make every effort to minimize the disruption to student learning, students may have to periodically relocate classrooms.

[Insert transportation accommodation message, if applicable. For example: The renovations will also cause disruption to transportation. Busses will park in their same locations as the past. Students will walk along the outside of the fence as the inside will be a work zone and not accessible. Please leave walking room between the fence and your bus for the students to safely walk.]

Please be aware that the safety of staff and students is our priority and safety precautions have been established. [Insert details about equipment, access to school, areas to avoid. For example: The equipment will be set up along the front of the school and this will cause some changes for bus dismissal that will be outlined to the students. There will be arches erected over all entrances/exits to the school building and some areas will be cordoned off depending on which section of the school is the work zone.]

Some commonly asked questions are as follows:

1. I smell roof asphalt odours. Does this mean I am being overexposed to a chemical? NO. The sulfur compounds in roofing asphalt have very low odour thresholds. Smelling the odors does not indicate overexposure.
2. I smell roofing asphalt; my head aches; and I am feeling nauseated. Is this a short-term problem or can it result in chronic health problems? These can be short term or acute effects or exposure to roof asphalt odours. The symptoms should resolve within hours after exposure to the odour has stopped.
3. I have asthma, bronchitis and other lung problems. Can inhalation of roof asphalt odours aggravate my condition? While roof asphalt odors can irritate the respiratory tract and aggravate the condition of a person with asthma or other lung problems, this is normally not an issue for building occupants due to the lower levels of exposure as compared to the roof workers.

If at any time you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at [Insert phone number]. I will make every attempt to answer your questions or direct you to someone who may help.

Thank you for your patience during the renovation. We will make every effort to continue our school days and activities as planned.

Sincerely,

NAME