

SOUTHWEST KITCHENER SECONDARY BOUNDARY STUDY



The first Working Group meeting of the Southwest Kitchener Secondary Boundary Study, involving, Cameron Heights Collegiate Institute, Forest Heights Collegiate Institute and Huron Heights Secondary School, was held at Forest Heights C.I. on Tuesday, November 27, 2018 from 5:00 to 6:30 PM.

ATTENDEES:

Ray Teed, Principal, Cameron Heights CI; Tina Rowe, Principal, Forest Heights CI; Jeff Klinck, Principal, Huron Heights SS; Judith Coatts, Parent Representative, Cameron Heights CI; Hadbaa Al Ghazy, Parent Representative, Forest Heights CI; Liya Ghannaiman, Student Representative, Forest Heights CI; Amanda Young, Parent Representative, Huron Heights SS; Amberlee O'Connor, Parent Representative, Huron Heights SS; Debra Zanon-Barclay, Parent Representative, Huron Heights SS; Melanie Bender, Parent Representative, Huron Heights SS; Shaelie Mendes, Student Representative, Huron Heights SS; TJay Jandles, Student Representative, Huron Heights SS; Ron DeBoer, Superintendent of Student Achievement & Well-Being; Graham Shantz, Superintendent of Student Achievement & Well-Being; Bill Lemon, Superintendent of Student Achievement & Well-Being; Nathan Hercanuck, Manager of Planning; Sarah Galliher, Senior Planner; Emily Bumbaco, Senior Planner; Shelby Selig, Recording Secretary

REGRETS:

Della Sousa, Parent Representative, Forest Heights CI; Matthew Gerard, Superintendent of Business Services & Treasurer of the Board

1. WELCOME/INTRODUCTIONS

Nathan Hercanuck, Manager of Planning, welcomed members of the Working Group and Board staff at 5:05 PM.

The Working Group members did a round of introductions.

Mr. Hercanuck and Ms. Galliher led the group through the presentation (available online at <https://www.wrdsb.ca/planning/southwest-kitchener-secondary-boundary-study/>)

2. EXPLANATION OF BOUNDARY STUDY PROCESS

What is a Boundary Study?

Referring to slide 3 of the online presentation, Mr. Hercanuck explained the reasons the Board undertakes a Boundary Study.

Mr. Hercanuck advised that the reason we are undertaking a boundary study in Southwest Kitchener is to address enrolment pressure, primarily at Huron Heights Secondary School. Mr. Hercanuck noted that the Board's long term plans include additional capacity in the form of an addition or new school, and he recognized the boundary study is an interim solution. The Board's Education Development Charge Background Study identified the need for one or, possibly two new secondary schools in Southwest Kitchener. However, the soonest a new school could open given our lack of a site and funding approvals is approximately 10 years away. Mr. Hercanuck advised that there is potential to build an addition to increase the capacity at Huron Heights SS although the Ministry of Education does not currently have a capital program to fund additions or new schools.

Role of the Committee

Referring to slides 4 & 5 of the online presentation Mr. Hercanuck identified the composition and roles of the Working Group. Mr. Hercanuck noted that any changes to school boundaries require the approval of the Board of Trustees and advised that the report will be presented at a Committee of the Whole (Board) Meeting for a final decision.

Mr. Hercanuck reviewed the boundary study process shown on slide 6.

A slight difference was noted in this boundary study process, Planning staff have presented two accommodation options intended to spark conversation for the Working Group. These could be considered as viable options, could be tweaked through consultation with the Working Group and public meetings, or could be removed from consideration as alternative scenarios are developed by the Working Group.

Q: *What is the likelihood or possibility that Trustees do not approve the working group recommendation, and if they did not approve it what would happen?*

R: *Mr. Hercanuck responded that he has never been involved in a boundary study where the Trustees have opposed the final recommendation. He believes that the Trustees respect the process and the work that Board staff and Working Group put into developing a final recommendation. There have been boundary studies in the past where two options were presented and it was up to Trustees to make the final decision. In terms of what happens next if the Trustees voted no, no changes could be implemented and Trustees would need to approve undertaking a new process should there be a will to do so.*

Q: *Would it be fair to say that the Trustees have made small tweaks to the proposal brought forward by the Working Group, but nothing substantial?*

R: *Mr. Hercanuck responded yes, that would be accurate.*

At this point Mr. Hercanuck introduced Sarah Galliher and Emily Bumbaco, Senior Planners.

3. BOUNDARY STUDY OVERVIEW

Study area map (slide 7)

Ms. Galliher shared a map of the study area, noting the white flags are elementary schools, Huron Heights SS boundary is included in green (which includes some farm and future residential development). It was also noted that Huron Heights SS is located within an industrial area. The boundary in purple is Cameron Heights CI, and the boundary in salmon is Forest Heights CI, including the Development Areas assigned to it. Ms. Galliher explained Development Areas are new subdivisions or new housing developments that are redirected to schools that have room to accommodate them. The grey hatched boundaries on the map are currently 'to be determined', which means they do not have a school assigned to them yet.

Q: *To clarify, the grey hatched areas have no houses in them currently?*

R: *Ms. Galliher responded that currently there are no houses in the 'to be determined' areas, but there has been some marketing materials going around for a section referred to as Wallacetown so we need to establish a holding school assignment in the near future.*

Q: *There wouldn't be a child living in the 'to be determined' area right now attending one of our schools at this point?*

R: *No.*

R: *Mr. Hercanuck stated that a Development Area is an area that can be designated, with Trustee approval, before houses are sold or constructed. The grey hatched area on the map is a Development Area that will need to be assigned to a holding school prior to closings/occupancies. This process allows the Board flexibility to assign areas to holding schools until such time as their local school has the space to accommodate the enrolment for the long term.*

Q: *When a holding school is assigned is there a time frame proposed for the assignment?*

R: *Mr. Hercanuck responded no, we don't like to have students at holding schools any longer than we need to but this is a way to reduce the enrolment increases we are experiencing at Huron Heights SS. Mr. Hercanuck acknowledged that the DA assignment puts pressure on the transportation budget. We understand the use of DAs are not ideal for the Board or for the community but it is a necessary step in ensuring we can accommodate students.*

Q: *So to clarify what a feeder school is, is it where the student lives, or where they attend grade 8 (feeder school) that determines where they attend secondary school?*

R: *It is where a student lives that determines their secondary school eligibility. Some of our grade 8 classes have a split feed meaning they can be directed to more than one secondary school. Right now, some students attending Doon PS will be directed to Forest Heights Secondary School while the rest will be directed to Huron Heights Secondary School. Where there is an opportunity to reduce those split feeds we do.*

Q: *The small white flags on the map are the feeder schools?*

R: *The white flags represent elementary schools, some are JK-8 schools, some are JK-6 schools and some are grade 7 & 8 schools.*

Projected Enrolment - Status Quo

Ms. Galliher shared the status quo - no change enrolment projections (slide 9), operational changes made to accommodate enrolment at Huron Heights SS (slide 10) as well as implications if there was no change to the current enrolment situation at Huron Heights SS (slide 11).

OTG (on-the-ground) Capacity was defined as a Ministry of Education measure describing school capacity, which does not consider programs other than special education. The following loading of classrooms were noted:

- 23 students per standard classroom
- 9 students per special education classroom
- 12 students per resource classroom

By applying these standards to each classroom in the building the Ministry of Education comes up with what they call the OTG rating, the actual utilization of spaces varies school to school with special programming.

Q: *(Referring to table 1 on slide 8) what is the percentage statistic referring to?*

R: *Ms. Galliher responded that it is the projected enrolment divided by the capacity, which we refer to as the utilization rate.*

Q: *Does the utilization rate include portable classroom capacity?*

R: *Ms. Galliher responded that no, the utilization rate only refers to the OTG capacity, and does not include the temporary accommodation such as portables. OTG capacity is considered the permanent (non-relocatable) capacity of the physical school building.*

Q: *What is the upper limit on the utilization of the schools before they reach the breaking point from enrolment pressure?*

R: *Mr. Hercanuck responded that the Ontario Building Code, curriculum requirements as well as site constraints all factor into the discussion on what a maximum utilization might be.*

S: *Temporary capacity options don't add science labs, gymnasiums, library space or school resources, therefore, portables can only do so much to support a school's enrolment.*

R: *Mr. Hercanuck responded that we can add as many portables as are allowed on each site but we are unable to provide specialized spaces such as science labs in these portables. It is the specialty spaces that we are experiencing challenges with at Huron Heights SS.*

4. TWO ACCOMMODATION OPTIONS FROM INITIAL REPORT

Ms. Galliher advised that Planning staff in consultation with the senior team have put together two scenarios to spark discussion and act as a jumping off point for further scenario development:

Scenario 1 (slide 12)

- Country Hills and Glencairn PS boundaries (illustrated with the salmon hatching on the map) removed from Huron Heights SS boundary and directed to Forest Height CI.
- As noted earlier it appears that Huron Heights SS is removed from its own boundary area; however the school is surrounded by an industrial area, not residential.
- Development Areas (illustrated in salmon on the map) would continue to be assigned to Forest Heights CI
- Cameron Heights CI experiences no change in this scenario.

Projected Enrolment – Scenario 1

Ms. Galliher shared the enrolment projections as well as the implications for scenario 1 on slides 14 and 15 of the online presentation.

Scenario 2 (slide 16)

- Country Hills and Glencairn PS JK-6 boundary (illustrated with purple hatching on the map) removed from Huron Heights SS boundary and directed to Cameron Heights CI.
- W.T. Townshend, Williamsburg and a portion of the Alpine PS JK-6 Boundary (illustrated with salmon hatching on the map) removed from the Cameron Heights CI boundary and directed to Forest Heights CI.
- Development Areas (illustrated in salmon) continue to be assigned to Forest Heights CI.

Projected Enrolment – Scenario 2

Ms. Galliher shared the enrolment projections as well as the implications for scenario 2 on slides 17 and 18 of the online presentation.

Q: So would Forest Heights CI be considered a holding school for the DA's until a new school is built or is that a permanent assignment?

R: Ms. Galliher responded no, this is not a permanent assignment for the DA's; they could be re-directed at such time as space became available.

Q: Where do all the children who live in Centreville, Fairway Road and Chicopee Hills go to high school?

R: Mr. Hercanuck responded that these students would attend Eastwood CI.

Q: How come Eastwood CI and Cambridge secondary schools weren't included in the boundary study?

R: Mr. Hercanuck responded that Eastwood CI is fully utilized so we didn't see that offering a solution as it doesn't have any room.

Q: How did Cameron Heights CI end up with its elongated boundary?

R: Mr. Hercanuck responded that the boundaries look that way as a result of the close proximity of Eastwood CI and Kitchener-Waterloo CI, on either side of Cameron Heights CI. The three secondary schools are only separated by approximately 2-3 kilometers which presented a bit of a challenge in creating balanced boundaries. In a previous accommodation study one of these three schools was being considered for closure however, the Board decided not to close any of these schools.

Q: How close is Preston Heights Secondary School to the study area?

R: Mr. Hercanuck showed the location of Preston Heights SS on the map and responded that Preston is also well utilized, with an 'On-The-Ground' capacity of 1116 and current enrolment of 1070 (Full Time Equivalent). This leaves about 46 pupil places available in the current year and represents a utilization of 96%. Preston HS does not appear to be a viable solution in terms of relieving pressure at Huron Heights SS and as such was not included in the boundary study.

Q: Why does the area surrounding Huron Heights SS get redirected in Options 1 and 2?

R: Ms. Galliher responded the way we modeled this was based on the JK-6 boundary for Country Hills PS, which includes the industrial area around Huron Heights. This portion of the boundary could be hatched out for clarity as it is non-residential and does not include any residences. We will make sure it is clear to everyone in future maps as well.

Q: Is redirecting the Development Areas being contemplated as part of the boundary study?

R: Mr. Hercanuck responded the two options we have shared so far do not contemplate returning the DAs to Huron Heights SS. Through the Working Group discussion and scenario development there is a possibility of discussing the future assignment of the DAs

Q: Is there a way to make the grades 7 & 8's join the high schools?

R: Mr. Hercanuck responded that there are boards in Ontario that have implemented Kindergarten to grade 12 facilities, there are also grade 7 to 12 facilities. That is a model that this Board has not pursued, we have been operating JK-6's, JK-8, 7 & 8 and 9-12 schools. Changing the Board delivery model is outside of the scope of the Working Group.

5. ACCOMMODATION OPTION CRITERIA

Ms. Galliher shared the draft boundary study objectives that we have used in previous boundary studies on slide 19 of the online presentation

6. STUDY TIMELINE/MEETING SCHEDULE

Referring to slide 21 & 22 Ms. Galliher reviewed the timeline goal for the boundary study and advised that for a September 2020 implementation, the Trustees would need to make a decision by June or September 2019. To ensure maximum time for communications our goal is to have a final decision in spring 2019.

Q: Is the working group's final recommendation needed by late spring 2019 or trustee decision in late spring?

R: Ms. Galliher responded that we are hoping for both the Working Group recommendation and the final Trustee decision in spring 2019. The Working Group will come up with a recommendation, Planning staff will prepare a report that they will present to Trustees, who will vote on the recommendation. It is important to note that there will be Public Meetings where members of the public can come out and voice their opinion which will be taken into account in the recommendation the Working Group comes up with.

Q: How long does it take staff to develop the final report presented to Trustees?

R: Ms. Galliher responded that it usually takes a couple of weeks to prepare the report.

Public Meetings

At least two Public Meetings are required, the Working Group members are welcome and encouraged to attend although they are not required to do so. If members cannot attend, it is important that they read the minutes and comments received. Minutes and presentations from the Public Meetings will be posted online and feedback received (via boundaryfeedback@wrdsb.ca and/or a survey) will be shared with the Working Group.

Communication

- Parent representatives are asked to share this information with their communities.
- An email address has been established for the public to share concerns or ask questions about the boundary study which Planning staff monitor and Trustees have access to - boundaryfeedback@wrdsb.ca. We ask that the subject line be Southwest Kitchener Secondary Boundary Study as we currently have two boundary studies in progress.
- Planning staff will be involved in a staff meeting with each of the three study area schools
- A boundary study webpage has been published: <https://www.wrdsb.ca/planning/southwest-kitchener-secondary-boundary-study/>
- The boundary study online posts have been directed to study area school websites as well as grade 8 feeder school websites.

Ms. Galliher noted that you are able to subscribe to the [Planning website](#) however as there are two boundary studies in progress the notifications could be for either study. Working Group meeting minutes will also be shared online once they are approved.

7. ROUNDTABLE

Q: Can we go back to school council with information and ask for input?

R: Yes.

Q: Could we get more data, numbers, projected numbers from the DA's?

R: Yes, Mr. Hercanuck advised that we will provide more numbers, it will be within a range as subdivisions mature they tend to peak and tail off.

Q: Will the presentation be posted online as well?

R: Mr. Hercanuck advised that we will post the presentation along with the minutes online.

Q: Referring to the timeline schedule on slide 21, if there is a public meeting happening in January, is there anything we need to accomplish next meeting in order to go forward with that public meeting?

R: Ms. Galliher advised that ideally at the next Working Group meeting we would make a plan for the first public meeting. Generally the first public meeting is providing information on the process of the boundary study and receive feedback, as well as share the two scenarios provided, unless it was decided that the Working Group did not want to share the initial two options

Q: How does the feedback given by the public come back to the Working Group?

R: The Working Group members are welcome to attend the public meetings but are not required. Feedback may be solicited from the public in a variety of ways which could be summarized and brought back to the group. The boundary feedback email address (boundaryfeedback@wrdsb.ca) will also continue to be monitored and summarized for the group.

Q: How will we implement the change, would current students or future students at the study area schools be impacted?

R: Mr. Hercanuck advised that the projection numbers that are shown in the initial 2 options model all students moving in 2020. Implementation and opportunities for grandparenting will be reviewed and discussed by the Working Group.

Q: If a family has a child who currently is attending Huron Heights SS by 2020 would a younger sibling have to go to another school if their boundary changed?

R: Mr. Hercanuck answered that siblings are always a consideration with respect to boundary changes -that will be an important part of the transition conversation for the Working Group.

Q: So implementation is also a part of the Working Groups recommendation to Trustees?

R: Yes.

Q: Mr. Klinck, Principal at Huron Heights SS sought clarity on the potential for grandparenting to negate the impacts of the boundary change on reducing enrolment pressure at Huron Heights.

R: Mr. Hercanuck stated that we will be able to model out the grandfathering numbers in the scenarios depending on discussions in the Working Group. It is important to note that with generous grandparenting we may not achieve the results we are looking for in terms of the impact on enrolment projections.

Mr. Hercanuck thanked the Working Group for attending and adjourned the meeting at 6:35 PM.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Mr. Hercanuck asked the Working Group to reflect on the presentation and scenarios provided and think of any issues or implications members may want to address through this boundary study. He asked members to bring their ideas and concerns back to the next Working Group meeting.
- Planning staff will provide detailed projection data (i.e. projected numbers for Development Areas, school enrolment numbers, communities/subdivision projections)

FUTURE MEETINGS:**Working Group Meetings:**

- **Working Group #2:** Tuesday, December 11, 2018 from 7:00-8:30 pm at Huron Heights SS
- **Working Group #3:** Tuesday, January 8, 2018 from 7:00-8:30 pm, location TBD
- **Working Group #4:** Tuesday, January 22, 2018 from 7:00-8:30 pm, location TBD

Public Meetings:

- Public Meeting #1: TBD January 2019
- Public Meeting #2: TBD February or March 2019
- Committee of the Whole Meeting: TBD