



Forest Hill / Trillium Elementary Schools Boundary Study
Minutes of Public Meeting #2
November 30, 2011
Forest Hill Public School 7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

The second Public Meeting of the Forest Hill / Trillium Elementary Schools Boundary Study was held at Forest Hill Public School on November 30, 2011.

1. Welcome/Introductions

Lauren Manske, Senior Planner, welcomed members of the public, school communities, and Board staff present for the evening, and made the following introductions:

Andrea Kean, Administrative Assistant, who will be taking minutes of tonight's meeting.

Study Area Principals:

Steve Zack, Principal of Forest Hill P.S., and our host for the evening,
Barb Brown, Principal of Trillium P.S.,

Ms. Manske noted that Area Superintendent of Education, Greg Bereznick sends his regrets.

Approximately 30 members of the public were also in attendance.

Ms. Manske led those in attendance through tonight's presentation, available on line at:
<http://www.wrdsb.ca/planning/boundary-studies/forest-hill-trillium-elementary-schools-boundary-study>

Ms. Manske noted the purpose of tonight's meeting is to share a proposal for a boundary change between Forest Hill Public School and Trillium Public School and informed the audience that there would be an opportunity for questions and comments at the end of the presentation as well as an opportunity to speak one-on-one after the meeting. Ms. Manske also asked those in attendance to provide feedback by filling in a comment sheet located at the gym entrance.

2. Boundary Study Process/Background

Study Area

Small study area involving two JK-6 schools:

- Forest Hill Public School boundary
- Trillium Public School boundary

Background/Rationale for Forest Hill/Trillium Boundary Study

On February 14, 2011 the Waterloo Region District School Board Trustees authorized staff to do the Forest Hill/Trillium Elementary School Boundary Study in this part of Kitchener initially because of the concerns with:

- School size
- Enrolment changes/shifts
- Implications of Full-Day Kindergarten

School Size (Enrolment and Capacity)

Ms. Manske noted that the main reason for this study was school size as can be seen from the table on Slide 5 of the presentation.

Trillium is a small organization of around 200 students which means that staff and students do not have quite the same opportunities that a larger school would have.

Forest Hill is above 550 students and until recently, when the Board decided to do a gymnasium addition, really does not have appropriately sized ancillary space (library, gym, resource areas) for the number of students that attend here.

Enrolment Changes/Shifts

The Waterloo Region District School board has experienced a small increase in enrolment over the past decade, but most of that growth is concentrated in the area of new residential development. In contrast, more established neighborhoods (such as the majority of this study area) have been declining. Since 2001, both Trillium and Forest Hill have seen some significant drops in enrolment.

- Trillium PS enrolment has declined by 50 percent.
- Forest Hill PS enrolment has declined by 13 percent.

Full Day Kindergarten

The implications of the Full-Day Kindergarten (FDK) program on schools have come up more recently as an issue. The Board is in its second year of implementation of the Ministry of Education mandated program and Forest Hill PS is one of the Board's 17 schools to offer FDK this year. Ms. Manske noted that FDK effectively doubles the Kindergarten population at a school on a daily basis. Previously the kids were only there for half a day, so we could use the same classroom for two classes – now that classroom can only be used for one class.

Ms. Manske noted that the Board has received some funding from the Ministry to construct or renovate classrooms for the FDK program, but this funding only covers the costs for the FDK program, not the other spaces that all students in the school use (libraries, gyms, etc.)

Trillium will be getting FDK next year and will get some internal renovations to accommodate the program.

Boundary Study Process

Ms. Manske noted that once the Board has identified a boundary study area, Planning asks the Principals at each of the schools involved to seek out 2 community representatives to sit with them and Planning on a Study Working Group to represent the larger community and through a series of meetings the Working Group:

- Confirm the actual issues identified in the area
- Develop objectives for the study
- Assist us with developing scenarios

The Working group has met 7 times to get to the stage we are at today and tonight's second public meeting is nearly at the final step in the process.

Ms. Manske noted that the key here tonight is to get your collective input on the proposed boundary change before staff takes a recommendation to the Board of Trustees, who will ultimately make the final decision.

Timing

Our goal is to get the recommendations to the Board in January 2012 with possible changes to take place for this coming September 2012.

Ms. Manske noted that there is no confirmed meeting date set for bring the recommendations to the Board yet, but the aim is for either January 16 or 24, 2012.

3. Proposed Boundary Recommendation – Scenario 12

Ms. Manske noted that the proposed boundary change that the Working Group has chosen to for sharing here tonight is Scenario 12, which means there have been several other alternatives that have been considered but Scenario 12 is the one that the Working Group felt best meets the [study objectives](#) of the boundary study.

Affected Area

Slide 11 of the Presentation shows a map of the affected area which includes:

- The south side of Chandler Drive between Mowat Boulevard and Elmsdale Drive - odd number addresses from 155-215 Chandler Drive.
- Three addresses on Mowat Boulevard (15, 25 and 35)
- Three addresses on Leacrest Court (6, 10 and 14)

Enrolment Projections

The proposed boundary change would bring Forest Hill Public School's enrolment closer to its built capacity; however due to specialized programs and the use of some school rooms, the school would likely still require a few portable classrooms.

The proposed boundary change would bring Trillium Public School's enrolment above 250 students, which is above its built capacity. Presently, there are no plans for an addition at Trillium PS and this increase in enrolment would have to be accommodated in portable classrooms. The Working Group is recommending that the Board add to its capital priorities, an addition at Trillium PS for the future to accommodate this increase.

Objectives

Ms. Manske noted that the objectives for the boundary study are located on the back of the comment sheet and available online and went on to explain how the Scenario 12 met the objectives (Slide 13 of online Presentation)

First Objective

Balancing enrolment to capacity – This objective was met for Forest Hill PS but not for Trillium PS (hopefully will be addressed in the future by an addition).

Use [Board Policy 3002](#) as a guideline for school size – this policy indicated that the ideal school size for JK-6 schools is between 350 and 400 students; we have not met this part of the objective for either school; however, working with what we have, we have been able to get closer to this ideal size for both schools.

Second Objective

Addressing the diverse needs of all students by creating a balance of enrolment that recognizes these needs – the working group was met as neither school has been overwhelmed with populations that may have some diverse needs such as English Language Learners. This helps to ensure these students can get the supports they need.

Third Objective

Increase the number of students within a safe walking distance – this has been met. In fact, the entire affected area can walk to Trillium PS (JK through Grade 6). Those students in the affected area who currently receive transportation to Forest Hill PS will be able to walk Trillium PS. Ms. Manske noted that there is a crossing guard at Ottawa and Howland that will assist students with crossing there.

Fourth Objective

Keeping in mind the impact on the senior elementary and secondary school boundaries – the affected area currently attends Laurentian PS for Grades 7 and 8, as do all students in the Trillium PS boundary. Students north of the expressway in the Forest Hill PS boundary attend Queensmount PS for Grades 7 and 8. This change would create a bit more consistency for the affected area. All students in the affected area would continue to go to Cameron Height Collegiate Institute for secondary school.

Fifth Objective

Minimizing the impact on students where changes are proposed – Ms. Manske noted that this final objective is addressed in the implementation of the change.

4. Implementation/Timing

Ms. Manske noted that implementation of the boundary change is expected for this coming September 2012. This would mean that any students in JK-Grade 5 in the affected area will attend Trillium PS.

Grade 6 students (approximately 2 students) will be the only ones given an option to enroll at either Forest Hill PS (to finish there as one year later they will be going to Laurentian PS) or if they choose, they may also attend Trillium PS.

This option will only be given for the one year, meaning it will only be available to students who are currently in Grade 5 in the affected area.

Full implementation of the boundary change will be in September 2013.

5. Next Steps

The Working Group will review the comments we receive here tonight or sent electronically via boundaryfeedback@wrdsb.on.ca and finalize the recommendations based on the comments received.

Ultimately, staff will be bringing recommendations to the Board of Trustees who will make the final decision on whether the boundaries should be adjusted or not. The aim is to have the decision in January before Kindergarten registration begins in February 2012.

Website:

Ms. Manske invited the community to visit the Board's website and advised that there is additional information posted on the website for viewing. Ms. Manske also noted that Forest Hill PS and Trillium PS each have a binder with the same information for those people who do not have access to the web and instructed them to ask the Principal to see the binders.

Contact Information:

Ms. Manske noted that all are welcome to contact us if there are any questions or to share comments and noted that the contact information is also available on the bottom of the comment sheets.

Website: <http://www.wrdsb.ca/planning/boundary-studies/forest-hill-trillium-elementary-schools-boundary-study>

Email:

boundaryfeedback@wrdsb.on.ca

Phone:

519-570-0003 ext. 4419

6. Questions/Other

Ms. Manske opened up the floor to any questions or comments from the audience.

Q: Why is the option to stay at Forest Hill PS only being offered to the Grade 6 class?

R: When grandfathering is offered to more widely is becomes complicated for the Board to track. It is being offered to the Grade 6 class (approximately 2 students) to minimize the number of transitions as they will have to change schools again the following year to attend Laurentian PS.

Q: There is one more address on Mowat Boulevard, the building on the corner, why isn't it included?

R: That building is actually a Chandler Drive address.

Q: How many students in JK-4 will move from Forest Hill PS to Trillium PS?

R: Ms. Manske responded that she doesn't have that break down with her but the move effects mostly the younger students and there are only 2 students currently in Grade 5.

Q: When will the voting take place and can the community vote?

R: The Board's elected Trustees will vote on the Report which will be available on the website the Friday prior to the Monday Board meeting in which it will be presented. So if the Report goes to the Board on Monday January 16 the report will be available on Friday, January 13th. If the Report goes to the Board on January 23 the report will be posted online on Friday, January 20th.

Ms. Manske also noted that the community can [register as a delegation](#) to go before the Board to speak on the recommendations or than can contact the [Trustees](#) who will consider their input.

Q: Does the Board consider the feelings of the students involved? The kids love this school and don't want to move.

R: Ms. Manske responded that, that is normal but has seen over with past experience that the students come to love their new school as well and generally make new friends easily and fit in quickly. The move is sometimes harder on the parents.

Ms. Manske thanked all for coming out, and asked those in attendance to fill out the comment sheets. The contact numbers and Board website information were shared. The formal presentation concluded and Ms. Manske asked those in attendance to take a look at the display boards outlining Scenario 12. Ms. Manske and the members of the Working Group including Principals Zack and Brown made themselves available to answer any questions one-on-one.

The Public Meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

The Working Group met briefly after the Public Meeting to discuss the outcome/comments of the meeting.

The Working Group decided to go forward with Scenario 12 as the recommendation as the feedback at the meeting was positive. It was decided to cancel the meeting scheduled for December 6, 2011.