

Report to Committee of the Whole

January 23, 2012



**Waterloo Region
District School Board**

A handwritten signature in black ink, likely belonging to the Director of Education.

Director of Education

SUBJECT: RECOMMENDATIONS RESULTING FROM THE FOREST HILL/TRILLIUM ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BOUNDARY STUDY

ORIGINATOR: This report was prepared by Marilyn Marklevitz, Executive Superintendent of Business and Financial Services and Treasurer, Dennis Cuomo, Manager of Planning, Nathan Hercanuck, Senior Planner and Lauren Manske, Senior Planner, in consultation with Executive Committee.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to provide recommendations to the Board for the boundaries in the Forest Hill/Trillium study area to ease enrolment pressure on Forest Hill P.S. and optimize the enrolment at Trillium P.S.

BACKGROUND:

In February 2011, a boundary study for the Forest Hill/Trillium area on the west side Kitchener was initiated. The purpose of this study was to address the enrolment situation at Forest Hill and Trillium Public Schools.

The study area includes only two schools – Forest Hill P.S. and Trillium P.S. (see Appendix A). Enrolment at both Trillium P.S. and Forest Hill P.S. has been declining over the past 10 years. Enrolment at Trillium P.S. has declined by 50% since 2001 and Forest Hill P.S. by 13% over the same period. In June 2010, the Board approved an 8 classroom addition on Forest Hill P.S. to replace the school's temporary classroom structure (porta-pack) and to address the needs of the school for Full-Day Kindergarten (FDK). This addition was reduced to 6 FDK rooms subsequently.

A Working Group was made up of two parent representatives from each of the schools, the school's Principals, WRDSB Planning staff, and the Superintendent of Education for the area. The first meeting of the Working Group was held on May 17, 2011 and the Group met a total of 7 times throughout the study. The Working Group established the objectives for the study and developed accommodation options for students in the study area. Feedback from the broader public was solicited at two public meetings held on October 27, 2011 and November 30, 2011.

STATUS:

Facilities and Program

Table 1 below, shows the current Forest Hill/Trillium study area enrolment and capacity.

TABLE 1: Forest Hill/Trillium Enrolment and Capacity as of October 31, 2011

School	Full-Time Equivalent Enrolment	Total Enrolment	Grades	OTG Capacity	Functional Capacity
Forest Hill P.S.	553	553	FDK-6	483	455
Trillium P.S.	178	204	JK-6	236	224

Forest Hill P.S. was built in 1957 and is located on a 7.25 acre site with an abutting City of Kitchener park of approximately 6 acres. The school currently has 7 portables on site, two of which are accommodating classes during construction. This past spring, a 6 classroom porta-pack was demolished and replaced by a 6 classroom FDK addition which opened in September 2011. Further construction is taking place at the school with an estimated completion date of August 2012. This construction will create a new double-gymnasium that will be more appropriately sized for the enrolment and capacity of the school. An additional phase of construction is anticipated in the future to convert the old gymnasium to a library and office and to install an elevator with access to the second floor of the school. This work will only be completed if the funding becomes available. Forest Hill P.S. currently houses the ESL ABLE class which results in a high concentration of English as a Second Language (ESL) or English

Language Learner (ELL) students attending the school. This presents a challenge because there is often limited support in place for these students because of staffing allocations.

Trillium P.S. is a small single-storey structure built in 1972. It is located on an 8.00 acre site with abutting open space/hydro corridor of approximately 8.5 acres. The school currently has 1 portable on site that is being used by Board staff and not by the school. Full-Day Kindergarten will be implemented at this facility in 2012 and as a result, interior renovations will be taking place to convert two of the existing classrooms into one FDK room. This will result in the placement of two portables on the site to compensate for these lost classrooms.

Enrolment at the two facilities is expected to remain constant over the next 10 years, with a bit of growth built in. Table 2 shows the status quo enrolment projections to 2021.

TABLE 2: Forest Hill/Trillium Status Quo Enrolment Projections 2011-2021 (Total Students)

School	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019	2021
Forest Hill P.S.	553	557	565	564	550	538
Trillium P.S.	204	217	226	235	238	237

Scenarios

Many different options to accommodate students in the study area were explored by the Working Group. The challenge was coming up with options that could create a better enrolment balance between the schools while recognizing there is minimal or zero capacity to accommodate increased enrolment at either school. Further, enrolment at Forest Hill P.S. is high for a JK-6 school as it exceeds Board Policy 3002 – Elementary School Size and Configuration guiding principles for size (Board Policy 3002 recommends a JK-6 school be between 350 and 400 students). Conversely, enrolment at Trillium P.S. is well below Board Policy 3002 recommendations.

The Working Group presented four different options for accommodating students in the study area at two public meetings. After the first public meeting, the Working Group agreed that Scenarios 9 and 11 best met the objectives (see Appendix B) that were developed at the onset of this study. Both scenarios had students in the Chandler-Mowat area of the Forest Hill P.S. boundary moving to Trillium P.S. In an attempt to combine the elements of Scenarios 9 and 11 that the Working Group and the public favoured, and to come up with a solution that satisfied the objectives of the study, the Working Group developed Scenario 12. This scenario was presented at the second public meeting as the Working Group's recommended solution.

Scenario 12

This Scenario would see approximately 35 students move from Forest Hill P.S. to Trillium P.S. The affected area, as shown on Appendix C, includes the south side of Chandler Drive between Mowat Boulevard and Elmsdale Drive, and all addresses on Mowat Boulevard and Leacrest Court (see Appendix C).

This boundary change would bring Forest Hill P.S.'s enrolment closer to its built capacity; however, due to specialized programs and other room usage, the school would likely still require a few portables. It would also bring Trillium P.S.'s enrolment above 250 students, which is above its built capacity and therefore would also require portables.

Table 3 shows the enrolment projections for the two schools under this scenario with proposed transitions built in.

TABLE 3: Forest Hill/Trillium Scenario 12 Enrolment Projections 2012-2021 (Total Students)

School	2012	2013	2015	2017	2019	2021
Forest Hill P.S.	518	520	532	529	516	502
Trillium P.S.	243	254	259	270	272	273

Since Trillium P.S. is a walking school, (meaning there are no students in the boundary that qualify for Board transportation), the desire to maintain a boundary that does not require the use of buses to get students to and from the school was one of the key considerations in the decision to draw the boundaries as they are in this scenario. Since Kindergarten students in the affected area currently qualify for transportation to Forest Hill P.S., the proposed new boundaries would actually reduce the number of students requiring transportation as they would be able to walk to Trillium P.S. The City of Kitchener currently supplies an adult crossing guard at Ottawa Street South and Howland Drive who can assist in the safe crossing of Ottawa Street South.

This scenario also creates a better balance of enrolment that addresses the diverse needs of the student populations in the area. This means that neither school will be overwhelmed by these needs (specifically ESL), and the students will have greater opportunities to get the supports they require.

The students in the affected area go on to Laurentian P.S. for Grades 7 and 8 and this will be maintained under this boundary change. The advantage will be that they will be attending the same senior school as all of their cohorts at Trillium P.S. This creates more consistency for these students as Forest Hill P.S. is currently a feeder school for both Laurentian P.S. and Queensmount P.S.

Implementation and Timing

It is recommended that this solution be put in place for September 2012. A timely approval of this boundary change is important because Kindergarten registration begins in early February. If the September 2012 boundaries are finalized prior to February, any new students living in the affected area would be directed to the appropriate school for Kindergarten registration.

Since this area operates with a separate senior elementary school, students are required to transition after Grade 6 to a new school (Laurentian P.S.). To minimize the frequency of transitions for students, it is recommended that students entering Grade 6 in the 2012/13 school year in the affected area be given the option to remain at Forest Hill P.S. or to make the move to Trillium P.S. This option would affect approximately 2 students. Therefore, full implementation of the boundary changes would not be in place until September 2013.

Conclusion

Administration recommends that Scenario 12 be implemented in its entirety for September 2012. This scenario meets the objectives set out for the study while recognizing the limitations with respect to capacity and ancillary spaces at the two facilities. This is a long-term solution that will maintain the viability of Trillium P.S. and make some historic boundaries that are now somewhat awkward more logical.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Public Meetings were held on October 27, 2011 and November 30, 2011, to inform the broader community about the study, and to present accommodation options. Notices for the public meetings were sent home to each of the students in the study area, as well as published in the local newspapers and on the Board's website. A letter was also sent home with students in the affected area in November to inform families of the boundary study process and inviting them to attend the second public meeting to share their thoughts.

A link on the Board's website was also set up to provide access to all relevant materials to the boundary study. The same information that was available on the website was also made available in hard copy at the two schools.

The minutes of the public meeting are attached as Appendix D. Generally, comments received from the Forest Hill/Trillium community indicated that Scenario 12 was a positive change for the community.

In addition to Working Group and public meetings, staff received comments and suggestions via electronic correspondence (the Board's *boundaryfeedback@wrdsb.on.ca* address) and telephone conversations.

Following decisions on the boundaries, a newsletter with that information, including a map, will be prepared for distribution to the affected students as well as posted on the Board's website.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

To implement Scenario 12, Trillium P.S. will likely require 2 portable classrooms for the 2012/13 school year (in addition to the portables required for the implementation of FDK). The approximate cost to relocate a portable is \$15,000 and to purchase a portable is approximately \$70,000.

Future permanent space will be considered as part of the capital needs priority setting for funding opportunities from the Ministry of Education.

Since there is a reduction in the number of students requiring transportation, there may be a cost-savings to the Board if the existing runs to Forest Hill P.S. can be reduced.

SYSTEM SUCCESS PLAN:

This implementation of this boundary change relates to the Caring and Connecting areas of focus by addressing the following priorities:

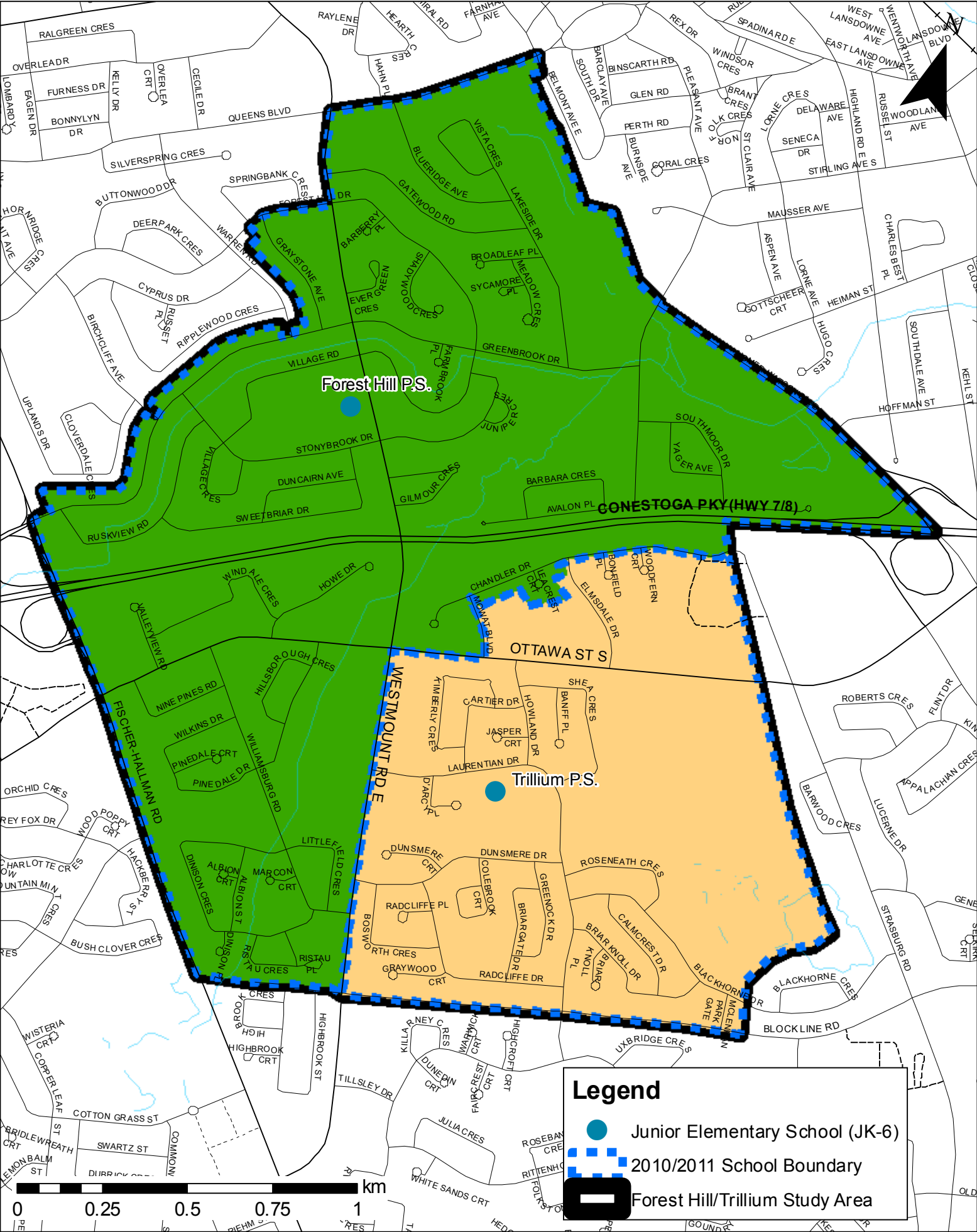
- safe and secure learning environments
- caring and supportive school cultures and communities
- communication with students and parents and consultation with community members and staff
- operational effectiveness and efficiency
- quality information for planning, decision-making and accountability.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended:

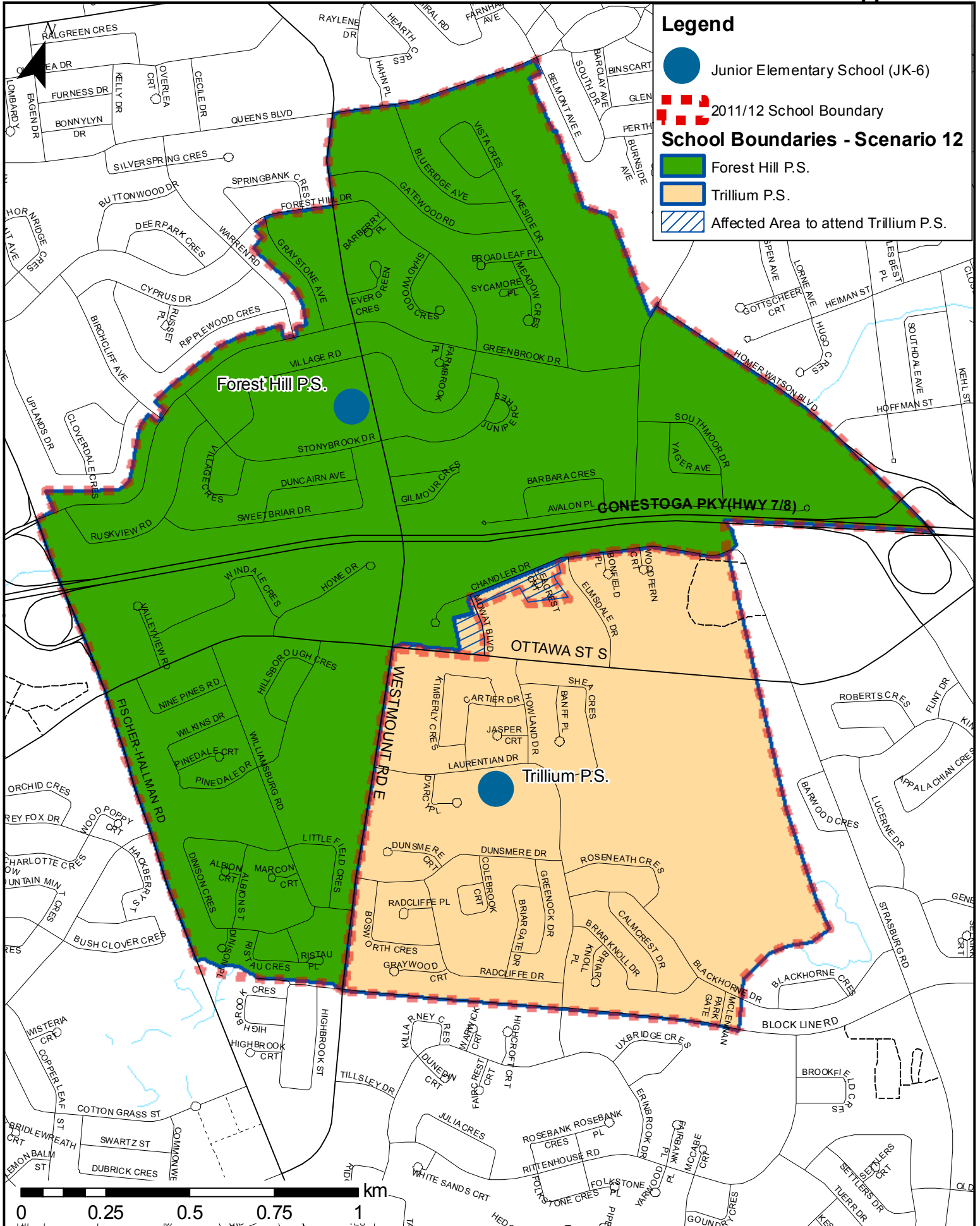
That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve the boundary change between Forest Hill and Trillium Public Schools for Junior Kindergarten to Grade 6 students, as illustrated on Appendix C attached to this report, dated January 23, 2012, effective September 2012;

And that Grade 6 students in the 2012/13 school year in the affected area, as illustrated on Appendix C attached to this report, dated January 23, 2012, be given the option to enroll at either Forest Hill Public School or Trillium Public School during the 2012/13 school year.



Study Objectives for the Forest Hill / Trillium Elementary Schools Boundary Study

- To develop a solution that is long-term (approximately 10 years) by:
 - Balancing enrolment to capacity using [Board Policy 3002 – Elementary School Size and Configuration](#), as a guideline for school size.
 - Addressing the diverse needs of all students by creating a balance of enrolment that recognizes these needs.
 - To increase the number of students within a ‘safe’ walking distance to school.
 - To keep in mind the impact on the senior elementary and secondary school boundaries.
 - To minimize the impact on students where transitions are proposed.
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Forest Hill / Trillium Elementary Schools Boundary Study
Minutes of Public Meeting
October 27, 2011
Trillium Public School 7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

The first Public Meeting of the Forest Hill / Trillium Elementary Schools Boundary Study was held at Trillium Public School on October 27, 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:

Gregg Bereznick, Area Superintendent, Barbara Brown, Principal of Trillium P.S., and our host for the evening, Steve Zack, Principal of Forest Hill P.S., Abigail Dancey, Manager of Communication, Nathan Hercanuck, Senior Planner, Andrea Kean, Administrative Assistant who will be taking minutes of tonight's meeting.

Approximately 37 members of the public were also in attendance.

Purpose of Public Meeting: why are we here?

- Ms. Manske gave a brief background on the 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 the over-crowding at Forest Hill P.S. and the declining numbers at Trillium P.S.
- The purpose of tonight's meeting is to share with you some boundary scenarios that have been developed and to get your comments on them, or to suggest other scenarios you might think could work.
- Two important things to note:
 1. We are looking at possible boundary changes that could be implemented for this coming September 2012.
 2. We are not looking at any school closures.

2. What is a Boundary Study?

- A public process that ensures a decision made by a school board regarding the realignment of attendance boundaries has the involvement of an informed local community.

Reason for a Boundary Review

- Ms. Manske led the group through the presentation (available online at <http://www.wrdsb.ca/planning/boundary-studies/forest-hill-trillium-elementary-schools-boundary-study>) to discuss the reasons.
- The key reason for this study is: Balancing enrolment and facilities.

Rationale for Forest Hill/Trillium Study:

- This study was initiated at the request of the school's principals for three main reasons:
 1. School size
 2. Enrolment changes/shifts
 3. Implications of Full-Day Kindergarten

School size: (Enrolment & Capacity)

Trillium P.S. is a small organization of approximately 200 students and does not have quite the same amount of opportunities as a school of a larger size would have.

Forest Hill P.S. is almost 550 students and at the time this study was initiated, did not have appropriately sized ancillary spaces (library, gym etc.) for the number of students that attend there. The Board is now working on a gym addition and possible future library conversion/expansion.

Enrolment changes/shifts:

Since 2001 both Trillium P.S. and Forest Hill P.S. have seen some significant drops in enrolment. Trillium's enrolment has declined by 50 percent and Forest Hill's has declined by 13 percent. Projections indicate that the current numbers will hold fairly steady into the next 10 years with perhaps a bit of an increase because of the area's popularity with new immigrant populations and the types of housing available.

Implications of Full-Day Kindergarten (FDK):

- This program effectively doubles the Kindergarten population at the school on a daily basis (see chart on slide 9 of the online presentation)
- Forest Hill P.S. implemented FDK in September 2011
- Trillium P.S. will offer FDK in September 2012
- Funding for the FDK program comes from the Ministry of Education but does not cover the cost of upgrading all the other spaces these student will use (libraries, gym, etc.)

3. How does the WRDSB Boundary Process Work?

- Once the Board has identified a boundary study area, Planning asks the Principals at each of the schools involved to seek out up to 2 community representatives to sit with them and Planning staff on a Study Working Group.
- This Working Group represents the larger community and:
 - a) confirms the actual accommodation and/or program issues identified in the area
 - b) develops objectives for the study (and these are important because we go back to them to determine the "fit" of each scenario)
 - c) assists with developing scenarios.
- The Working Group may have several meetings to get to a recommendation.

- The key for the 1st Public Meeting is to get your collective input on the scenarios developed with the Working Group; what you like, what you don't, how can we improve on them, and often once there is a recommended scenario, what is the plan to get from here to there?
- We will take the feedback from tonight, emails, and phone calls, etc. back to the Working Group and evaluate these scenarios. We might have a front-runner we can build on or we may have a fairly wide range of thoughts.
- Usually the Working Group will come up with a recommended option which we will bring back to the community for another look.
- After one more opportunity for public comment, staff will then take a recommendation to the Board of Trustees, who ultimately make the decision.

Timing

- We would like to try and get a recommendation to the Board in December or January, with possible changes to take place for this coming September (2012); however, we may decide to phase the implementation of changes. (grandfathering options)
- We would like to have the decision before January 2012 so that boundaries can be in place for the February 2012 Kindergarten registration process.
- The next public meeting is tentatively scheduled for November 30th, 2011, but that date may change if the feedback tonight tells us that there is still a lot of work to do!

4. Draft Objectives

- The Working Group has discussed the key issues within the study area, and has developed a set of objectives that we hope to achieve through this boundary study in order to address these issues.
- It is important to note that these objectives are not weighted in any way. We do use them for the scenarios, only on a meets or doesn't meet basis with respect to each objective. So, the order of the objectives is unimportant.
- Ms. Manske reviewed each objective:

To develop a solution that is long-term (approximately 10 years).

Ms. Manske noted that we typically use a 10 year timeframe because this is the time it takes a student to get through an elementary school from JK to Grade 8.

- Addressing future development plans and demographic shifts;
 - There is not much in the way of residential development within this study area – and no other major development plans at this point.
 - Demographics refer to the characteristics of a population (including: age, income, educational attainment, home ownership, employment status, etc.)
- Balancing enrolment to capacity;
 - Forest Hill's enrolment is more than double that at Trillium, so there's the opportunity to look at better distributing this enrolment between the two facilities.
- Addressing the diverse needs of all students by creating a balance of enrolment that recognizes these needs.
 - This community has very diverse needs especially the number of English Language Learners students we have at both schools. The Working Group wanted to make sure

that we take this into consideration when developing scenarios or moving students around.

To increase the number of students within a safe walking distance to school

- Current transportation policy states that a safe walking distance is 800 metres for Kindergarten students and 1600 metres for Grades 1-8 or Grades 1-6 in the case for both these schools.

To keep in mind the impact on the senior elementary and secondary school boundaries

- Although we are not looking at secondary or senior elementary school boundaries as part of this study, we still have consideration for these boundaries to maintain consistency. Currently within our study area, we have students attending Queensmount and Laurentain senior elementary schools and move on to attend Forest Heights C.I. and Cameron Heights C.I. secondary schools.

To minimize the impact on students where transitions are proposed.

- Consider phasing-in changes so that they impact the least amount possible.

5. Scenario Presentation

- The Working Group has put together several different scenarios or combinations of boundaries, but has chosen only to show 4 scenarios they felt were the most logical solutions here for you tonight.
- Ms. Manske ran through the scenarios, and advised the group that they would have a chance to view the details more closely on the display boards after the presentation.

Status Quo

- Status quo means no changes made.
- Trillium's enrolment is projected to remain in the low 200 range which fits pretty well to the 236 built capacity of the school.
- Forest Hill's enrolment is projected to be in the 550 range over the next 10 years; with a built capacity of 532 and would result in being over capacity.
- This is always a scenario we can consider – provided it meets our objectives.

Scenario 6

- Moves the southernmost area of Forest Hill's boundary to Trillium.
- This area, identified as Area H, contains Littlefield, Dinson and Ristau Crescents, Albion Street and some of Williamsburg Road (south of the hydro corridor).
- All of Area H would be within walking distance to Trillium for the grades 1-6 students. There would be some JK/SK students eligible for transportation.
- Area H would add just fewer than 60 students to Trillium's population.

Scenario 9

- Moves areas labeled Area O and Area P of Forest Hill's boundary to Trillium.
- Would affect approximately 45 students living along Chandler Drive, including Leacrest Court.

Scenario 10

- Adds an additional Area N, to the boundary created under scenario 9.
- Would add an additional 60 students to Trillium's population.

Ms. Manske commented that with all these scenarios, we would be bringing Trillium's enrolment above its built capacity. This means that there is the possibility that not all students attending there would be able to be accommodated inside the building unless we were able to construct an addition. Anything that would require capital for construction needs to be approved not only by our Board, but also the Ministry of Education (they provide the funding). It could take several years before we see any money to complete the project. Ms. Manske noted that it is possible that the money could flow quickly but in the meantime Trillium PS may be faced with a few portable classrooms until any built solution to implement these scenarios is realized.

6. Next Steps:

Ms. Manske advised that the 4 shared scenarios don't come with a lot of information other than projected numbers and boundaries. The Working Group will review the comments received tonight and refine the scenarios – perhaps there is something we have missed. If there is a front-runner or more than one scenario that meets the objectives, then we will gather a bit more information on that scenario. This information could be related to cost, additions, transportation, staffing, building requirements, and possible transitions (or grandfathering options).

Ms. Manske noted that ultimately the Working Group will be bringing recommendations to the Board of Trustees to make the final decision on whether boundaries should be adjusted or not.

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

7. Questions/Other:

Q: Do the projected enrolment numbers include Full-Day Kindergarten?

R: Yes.

Q: For scenarios 9 and 10 – will most of those areas if moved to Trillium PS be within walking distance to Trillium PS?

R: Yes, for grades 1-6.

Q: How likely is Status Quo going forward?

R: That would depend on if it meets the objectives. That's why we are here tonight for you to tell us and for the Working Group to figure out.

Q: Scenario 6 moves a portion of Williamsburg Road; what part of Williamsburg exactly?

R: The South side of the green space (hydro corridor), closer to Littlefield Crescent, near the community trail, where Fischer Hallman meets Westmount Road.

Q: Still referring to Scenario 6; how many less Forest Hill PS bussed students would be walking to Trillium PS?

R: Approximately 60 less bussed children, but there are some Kindergarten students that may require bussing to Trillium PS.

Q: Currently 10 students on Littlefield are being bussed to Forest Hill PS; would those students be in walking distance to Trillium PS?

R: Yes, all students JK-6 would be within walking distance to Trillium PS.

Q: Would there be a Crossing Guard?

R: The City of Kitchener hires the crossing guards, and the Board would work with the City to see if one would be required.

Q: Is there currently a Crossing Guard in that area?

R: I don't believe so; there isn't any need for one at this time since there aren't any students needing to cross to Trillium PS (they are transported to Forest Hill PS).

Q: Earlier you mentioned demographic information; where does that information come from and is it available to the public?

R: The demographic information comes from Statistics Canada data and a summary of that information is available on the Board's web page for this study.

Q: What type of information is demographic?

R: Demographic information refers to the characteristics of a population and includes: income, housing type, age, languages spoken, etc.

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

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 the 4 scenarios and invited those in attendance to place a sticker to indicate if the scenario does or does not meet the study objectives. Ms. Manske, Mr. Hercanuck, Superintendent Bereznick and Principals Zack and Brown made themselves available to answer any questions one-on-one.

- The Public Meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.
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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.