



Preston Area Elementary Schools Boundary Study
Minutes of Public Meeting # 2
April 29, 2009
Preston High School, 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

The second Public Meeting of the Preston Area Elementary Schools Boundary Study was held at Preston High School on April 29, 2009.

Welcome/Introductions

- Nathan Hercanuck, Senior Planner, welcomed members of the public, school communities, Trustees, and Board staff present for the evening, and made the following introductions:

Trustee Cindy Watson, Trustee Colin Harrington, Rob Rebellato, Principal of Grand View P.S., Don Oberle, Principal of Preston P.S., Greg Jespersen, Principal of Parkway P.S., Chris Smith, Manager of Planning, Lauren Manske, Planner, Mary Hingley, Recording Secretary.

Approximately 62 members of the public were also in attendance.

Purpose of Tonight's Meeting/Agenda

- Mr. Hercanuck asked for a show of hands from the group to survey how many had not been at the first Public Meeting.
 - Approximately a third of the group were new.
- Tonight we have scenarios for you, which some have seen before and another one developed as a result of public feedback. Our goal tonight is to receive additional feedback to narrow down the list to one or two preferred scenarios, so that we can do some more detailed work around costing and implementation.
- We will follow the same format tonight as we did at our last public meeting.
 - General session here in the cafeteria with the presentation (which is available on our website at: www.wrdsb.on.ca/boundary-studies.php?studyid=9)
 - Break out sessions where smaller groups will discuss the scenarios.
 - Reconvene back in the cafeteria and have the facilitators report some of the comments/common themes/questions for all to hear.

Why a boundary study?

- A boundary study is undertaken when the Board is considering a change to one or more school catchments. We change school catchments for a number of reasons:
 - We may be opening a new school and need to define its boundaries and refine the boundaries of the adjacent schools.
 - We may change the grade structure of an elementary school. For example from a JK-6 school to a JK-8 school.

- We may need to balance enrolment and facilities, one school may have too many students for its facility while another in the study area may have too few.
- A municipality may approve a new development and that area may need to be assigned to a school where capacity exists.

Current Situation

- In November of 2008 the Board authorized the undertaking of a Boundary Study in the Preston area.
- This was primarily brought about by the enrolment pressure new development from the Pioneer Tower Area was having on the Preston P.S. facility (they currently have 5 portables).
- It was also recognized that Grand View was being underutilized and there were concerns about a declining enrolment situation there.

Preston Site

- Preston P.S. is almost 100 students over capacity and has 5 portables.
- The school site is small, and while we have a number of other sites in the Board with five portables, it is Preston's site size relative to the number of portables that makes it such a concern. The lot size is less than 3 acres (one of the Board's smallest sites).
- With increasing enrolment, the portables are infringing on play space as well as making supervision difficult with obscured sight lines.

Development

- Mr. Hercanuck displayed maps (in the presentation) showing the current and future development slated to occur in the Preston area.
- There is significant future development in the Pioneer Tower Area as well as adjacent to Parkway P.S. The large development area in the Blair area only represents a few houses left to be built.

Timelines/Process

- In terms of timelines, where are we right now?
 - The Working Group has identified the issues and objectives and developed some scenarios.
 - At the first Public Meeting we received feedback and comments, existing scenarios were modified, new ones were created and evaluated.
 - At tonight's meeting we want to receive comments and feedback on the 3 scenarios presented to hopefully narrow down to one or two preferred scenarios.
 - For those preferred scenarios, we will work out details such as costing and how we're going to implement the transitions.
 - We hope to have another public meeting around the end of May, to go over the details and confirm a preferred scenario.

- Report to the Board of Trustees hopefully in early June recommending an option. Trustees vote on the recommendation, ultimately the decision is up to them.
- Mr. Hercanuck advised that the Board meeting where the vote will take place is public, everyone is welcome, and they can register as a delegate to speak for or against the recommendation.

Objectives

- Mr. Hercanuck ran through a re-cap of the Study Objectives:
- *Addressing over and declining enrolment issues, aligning facilities and enrolment in the longer term.*
 - When we refer to long-term, we are talking about one generation through a JK-8 school or about 10 years.
- *Have regard for organizational and class objectives of the Good Schools Standing Committee.*
 - The Good Schools Committee report recommended a minimum number of classes per grade level, in a JK-6 school it works out to about 350 – 400 students.
 - The challenge in this Boundary Study is that this number is larger than the capacity of any school in the study.
 - Instead the Working Group felt that we should try as best we can to balance enrolment between the schools to create more equitable programming opportunities at the schools.
- *Be financially feasible.*
 - We want the eventual solution to be financially feasible. We get asked often if this means the Board will go with the cheapest option. The answer is no that is why there are other objectives.
- *Address any resulting student transitions, and avoid fragmentation of communities.*
 - Once we have narrowed the scenarios down, how are we going to get there? If the solution involves moving students from one school to another how can we transition them with the least disruption, perhaps looking at some grand parenting options.
- *Determine any facility issues or upgrades that would facilitate boundary changes, enhance program delivery, and address accessibility concerns.*
 - Once we have the solution, what are the opportunities at the facilities for upgrades or enhancements that will help with the transitions and having equitable facilities. I know there are some concerns around Grand View and accessibility, part of the recommendation could be that accessibility upgrades are looked at, and receive higher priority.
- Mr. Hercanuck reviewed the Scenarios:

Status Quo

- Preston P.S.'s boundary is comprised of Areas A, B, C, and D.
- Parkway P.S.'s boundary is comprised of Areas E and F.

- Grand View P.S.'s boundary is comprised of Areas G and J.
- Mr. Hercanuck noted that as a result of feedback from the last public meeting, we have included in the scenarios the number of JK-6 students projected to be in the area in 2010 (the year of the proposed boundary change).
- Also from the feedback we received we no longer refer to the scenarios with letters (i.e. Scenario A or B) as people commented that it was confusing with the areas being identified by letters as well.

Status Quo – Projections

- As you can see from the projections, Preston P.S.'s enrolment will continue to increase as the development in Pioneer Tower continues, putting further pressure on its small site.
- Parkway is under capacity, however its enrolment increases as future development within its boundary comes on.
- Grand View is currently under capacity and is expected to remain under although relatively stable.
- To address this situation, the Working Group with the help of feedback from the public at our last meeting, has developed many scenarios to try to meet the study objectives. Not all of the scenarios are here tonight; some were put aside in favour of ones that did a better job meeting the objectives. If anyone is interested in looking at all of the scenarios as well as notes from the Working Group meetings, they are available on our website: www.wrdsb.on.ca/boundary-studies.php?studyid=9.
- The scenarios that are here tonight are felt to best accomplish the objectives.
- What we would like to do is further narrow them down so we can do some costing and work out details such as implementation and transitions.
- Mr. Hercanuck noted that the scenario numbering in no way implies any sort of ranking; the scenarios were numbered according to the order in which they were brought up and developed.

Scenario 1 (*Grand View gets Area D from Preston*)

- Scenario 1 moves Area D or that portion of Preston's current boundary on the southwest side of King Street to Grand View.
- As a result, Preston's numbers come down in the short term but increase in the mid term as the Pioneer Tower development peaks. For the peak in 2014 Preston would have one less portable than it currently does, so four before coming down once again.
- No changes are proposed for Parkway under this scenario, its numbers come up once development starts in its own boundary.
- Grand View's enrolment increases to about capacity.
- A point that should be made that applies to all of the scenarios is the programming change for kindergarten that would occur for some areas. All the scenarios involve the movement of an area to a school with a different kindergarten day (all day/alternate day versus every day/half day).
- So in Scenario 1's case, Area D would change from a school running all day/alternate day to a school running every day/half day kindergarten.

- With respect to the Study Objectives, aside from the mid term peak as the Pioneer Tower development occurs, this scenario does a good job in aligning facilities and enrolment in the longer term.
- This scenario would more evenly distribute the students between the 3 facilities, creating more equitable programming opportunities for students.
- Mr. Hercanuck noted that this scenario is financially feasible. The only scenarios that could not be considered financially feasible in this study are ones that don't take advantage of existing facilities and infrastructure.
- Regarding student transitions; Scenario 1 would see 90 students having to change schools in 2010. This number is without any transitioning or grand parenting and is intended just to be a method of fair comparison between scenarios.
- It would avoid the crossing of King Street which was a concern for some parents but not all.
- Where this scenario does not meet our objectives, is the fragmentation that would occur between Area's C and D. We received much public feedback that Area's C and D feel as though they are a continuous community. As well, we had a number of comment forms stating that the crossing of streets with no light to assist was more concerning to some than crossing King Street at a light.
- In terms of facility upgrades and accessibility concerns, it would be part of our recommendation that Grand View be considered for priority on the accessibility projects list. As well, based on information we received from our library consultant we would recommend upgrades to the Learning Resource Centre/Library.

Scenario 3a (*Grand View gets Area A from Preston*)

- Scenario 3a involves moving Area A or the Pioneer Tower area to Grand View from Preston. All other areas remain where they are.
- Originally this started out as Scenario 3, which had Area B moving to Grand View as well.
- We had a great deal of discussion at the Working Group around Area B. Every scenario we looked at had at least some variation involving moving Area B to a new school.
- To simplify matters, it was decided that since Area B represented such a small population it would not make or break any scenario. It would be left as an optional piece of any scenario, some considerations for Area B were discussed however:
 - That if they were to be moved from Preston, that they be moved with another area to a new school. That they should make a transition to a new school with a significant number of peers.
- This scenario sees Preston's enrolment decreased to just under or at capacity, probably needing at least one portable in the mid term.
- Parkway remains unchanged from Scenario 1.
- Grand View's numbers increase due to the large number of students in Area A and are immediately over capacity, and would likely require an addition.
- With respect to the objectives and aligning facility and enrolment, this scenario takes the largest area, the growth area to Grand View.
- Preston would be for the most part within its building eliminating all the portables there except for maybe one or two in the mid term.

- With respect to the Good Schools Standing Committee Report and creating more equitable programming between the schools this scenario creates the best enrolment distribution where in the mid and long term the schools are pretty much equal enrolment wise.
- Mr. Hercanuck noted that this scenario is financially feasible, even though it is likely the most expensive option, with the additional facility upgrades being recommended.
- Regarding student transitions, this scenario would see the largest number of students making a move to a new school (133 JK-6 not considering grand parenting). This scenario does avoid community fragmentation, as Area A stays together, as does Area's C and D.
- With this scenario Areas G & J kindergarten program would change to all day/alternate day.
- Under this scenario we would recommend the accessibility and Learning Resource Centre pieces, but also because the increase in enrolment to over capacity is projected to be long term we would recommend a small addition as well

Scenario 6a (*Grand View gets Area A2 from Preston*)

- Scenario 6a was developed as a result of feedback received at the last Public Meeting.
- It involves splitting Area A, one half (A1) remaining at Preston and the other (A2) going to Grand View. This was a difficult area to divide, the street pattern and geography did not make it easy to choose a logical boundary. It was decided to make the split at the narrowest part of the neighbourhood.
- The line comes down north from the river through the golf club house west on Deer Ridge Drive, south on Fall Harvest then east along the closed portion of old Pioneer Tower Rd. before heading south down a laneway. This essentially divides the older part of Pioneer Tower from the newer part. The newer part has the larger population so it was taken to Grand View.
- This scenario sees enrolment reduced at Preston slightly more in the mid to long term compared to Scenario 1.
- Scenario 6a represents no change for Parkway, as numbers increase as development occurs within its boundary.
- Grand View's numbers increase to just below or at capacity.
- With respect to the objectives and aligning facilities and enrolment in the longer term, Preston's numbers do come down and Grand View's come up. We would still be looking at some portables at Preston, but it would be a reduction from what they currently have. Grand View and Parkway are right at capacity.
- This scenario does better distribute enrolment between the three schools than the current situation, and would be financially feasible.
- In terms of transitions, Scenario 6a represents the fewest number of student transitions (75 JK-6 not considering grand parenting). As with the other scenarios, there would be a change in the kindergarten delivery model for Areas G and J.
- Scenario 6a does fragment Area A, thereby not meeting that study objective.
- Under this scenario, we would recommend Learning Resource Centre and accessibility upgrades.

- Mr. Hercanuck concluded the scenario review section, and thanked the Working Group members for their dedication and hard work in the Boundary Study process.

Q – You have thanked the Working Group, but I have not met them, where are their names identified? I have checked the meeting notes but don't see them.

R – Mr. Smith noted that the three principals of the schools involved in the study as well as Planning Staff are on the Working Group, but due to consideration for their personal privacy we will not list the other volunteer community members publicly. This is to avoid any possible inappropriate communication between the public and the Group members. As stated in our first Public Meeting, the Working Group meetings are open, observers can attend to view the process, and have done so.

- Mr. Hercanuck advised that we will provide 4 break-out rooms for smaller group discussion of each scenario, and explained how their comment sheets, picked up at the beginning of the meeting pre-selected their room. A facilitator will lead the group through each scenario, and have someone scribe any comments/questions. We are asking you to provide feedback on the scenarios and objectives presented to you today.
- We take these sessions seriously and we will use your feedback and suggestions to further develop the objectives and scenarios, working our way to the best possible solution.
- We will then reconvene back here for a wrap up and a report on some of the comments/questions that were raised.
- Facilitators:
 - Room # 1: Don Oberle
 - Room # 2: Greg Jespersen
 - Room # 3: Rob Rebellato
 - Room # 4: Lauren Manske
- Break out sessions began at 7:35 pm.

The group reconvened at 8:30 pm. for general discussion:

- Mr. Smith addressed the group with a few common questions he heard throughout the sessions:
- Regarding new development and the enrolment projected for 2010 for each scenario, you show the numbers for JK-6, can we see the grade level break down as well?
 - Yes, those numbers are on our Board website by grade.
- Mr. Smith noted that in general for the transition to an approved scenario there are a number of pieces to it. There will be no changes for the 2009/10 school year, the earliest would be 2010. This is to give staff/parents/students time to make plans, as well, if there is construction involved we need the time to complete this.
- There may be busing implications as well.
- There will be no job losses for the teachers as long as we have the students, but if you move 80 or 100 students there will be an impact on the school losing these students and on the new school receiving them. There is a process in place to follow for these types of transitions.
- Regarding phasing in or grand parenting, in general this isn't something we look at for JK-6 shifts and we wouldn't see it happen here due to staffing and busing. If the decision

is made to move the students, we move them with the year notice. Staffing is one of the biggest issues at a school, and decisions would need to be made around the students coming in and the staff required, etc.

- Please feel free to comment on this issue.
- Questions were raised about another or larger addition at Grand View for the accessibility deficiencies – would the Board reject it?
 - The Board is obligated to make schools accessible, and this study recommendation could be a good way to package an upgrade while getting rid of some portables.
- Mr. Smith asked each of the facilitators for any questions/comments that came out of their break out session discussions:
 - Mr. Rebellato – Room # 3: It was felt in this group that Scenario 1 fractures the community and the walking distance seems great, also the numbers are high in 2014. Regarding Scenario 3a, it keeps Area A together. Scenario 6a splits the community and did not please the group.
 - Mr. Oberle – Room # 1: Similar comments received. In the evaluation chart for the scenarios, speaking to the Good Schools Report and the ideal being 2 classes per grade. It was felt that maybe this needs to be re-visited regarding the meets/doesn't meet basis. Also, are the mid range #'s accurate? Not really solving issue in 2014. Is an addition at Preston a consideration? Mr. Oberle said that there was good discussion, opportunities and challenges brought forth on all 3 scenarios.
 - Mr. Jespersen – Room # 2: Scenario 1, concern with Area D walking to Grand View between the High School and Catholic School. Parkway seems bypassed in this study, but it was noted that development is coming in their boundary. Taking Area A to Parkway wouldn't address the declining enrolment at Grand View. There was a comment about future growth in Area A – it does not represent a whole lot. In discussion of Area B, it was looked at to balance the numbers, could be used as a swing in the scenarios.
 - Ms. Manske – Room # 4: Similar discussion took place. General consensus was that Scenario 3a was preferred. No fragmentation, Area A stays together as a group, Areas C and D stay together. Concern over costs, and how the money is to be spent.
- Mr. Smith noted that the Good Schools Committee Report recommends ideal school size at 350 – 400 students with at least 2 classes per grade. We cannot achieve this here with the small total enrolment of about 711 and smaller built school capacities unless we close a school. The Board did not authorize us to look at this, so our goal with this study is to achieve a better balance with all the schools. We need to get and sustain new enrolment from development areas to offset the decline in older neighbourhoods. None of the schools will reach a total enrolment of 400 however.
 - Q – On the objective evaluation chart you have the 3 scenarios as a meet when it comes to the Good Schools Report, this is not really a meet then. Also you should choose a better word than fragment; Areas G and D never were together.
 - R – Comments were made that we look at Preston as one community; but then there is division via neighbourhoods.

- Mr. Smith noted that comments were made in the break out sessions regarding an addition at Preston, and would this be possible? It would make one large school to address the overcrowding, but the school site is small and could have issues with parking, play space, etc. It also doesn't speak to the other schools, and could eventually lead to an Accommodation Review down the road with possible school closures. Our focus here has been balancing the programs.
- Another comment was that Parkway is not really being used in solving the issues. Mr. Smith noted that the proposed subdivision by Mattamy Homes Development west of Parkway (where the proposed Hwy 8 bypass used to be shown) is in their boundary and the development and new students coming from there will increase enrolment at Parkway.

Q – The development behind Preston (Kanmet) is not represented on the maps, are the numbers included in the projections?

R – The numbers have been put in; our data is from the Region. At last check the City has not approved the zone change yet, so it is not showing on the map as a development area.

Q – They are selling units now, so why the inconsistent data?

R – The numbers have been included, so there is no inconsistent data, but we will adjust the maps and specify the Kanmet and Appleton development areas with an asterisk. With regards to potential growth, it looks big but there is not much future growth in Deer Ridge, it will be fully built out by 2018.

Q – Regarding Area A2 slated to go to Grand View in Scenario 6a. There will be further development in that area, 2 buses would go now, and with the extra development a third bus would be needed.

R – Yes, based on capacity we may need to add an extra bus. Bus capacity needs are a constant in all the scenarios. Regardless of where students attend, an additional bus would be needed.

Q – Scenario 6a in 2014, the numbers would be better balanced if Area B were moved to Grand View. We are here to look at the numbers.

R – Yes, and other issues as well. It's not all about the numbers, and while we all have opinions, we can't speak for other areas.

- Mr. Smith advised that Area B (Blair) represents about 22 students. There was no representation at the meeting from Area B. A comment was made that the Public Meeting Notice went out to everyone; the Blair community included, why are we trying to hunt them out to get their feeling? Mr. Smith advised that we have heard from the group present tonight and it would be nice to hear from them as well, we do try to represent everyone involved. He also noted that Area B has gone to Preston for a long time, and typically because of the housing in Blair there is not a high number of students in the primary grades.

Q – A concern was voiced that the Working Group putting together the scenarios for all the areas have to speak for everyone, and they are making decisions for us, when has my opinion been asked?

R – Through the Public Meeting comment sheets, our online feedback website, and our telephone contact lines. At our next Public Meeting we hope to have a preferred scenario to present to you. It's quite possible we don't hear from every specific group; if we don't, we don't.

Q – Our objective tonight is to get down to one or two scenarios to take to the Trustees, our group (room # 4) did pinpoint 3a, did other groups do the same thing?

R – Rob Rebellato, room # 3: 3a

Don Oberle, room # 1: no, looked at strengths and weaknesses of all 3.

Greg Jespersen, room # 2: no, we did the same.

- Mr. Smith noted that it would be great if we could get down to one or two scenarios, we will take the feedback from tonight back to the Working Group, and based on the comments, we may start to see a recommendation emerging. There will be one more public meeting to present the potential recommendation going to the Board. The Board meetings are open to the public and you can register as a delegate to make comments at the meeting.

Q – Please note that while our group favoured Scenario 3a, it was by about 50%.

Q – When do you plan on having a decision for this?

R – We hope to have our final public meeting at the end of May; to share the recommendation going to the Board, notices will go out for this meeting. We hope to go to the Board in June at a Committee of the Whole meeting, then the final meeting in June is a Board Meeting and ratification/decisions are made. We can send notification of these meeting dates out through the schools so that parents and school communities are aware of them.

Q – How many students in total fit on a school bus?

R – With JK-6 we can seat 72 maximum, but we usually load at 68-70

With Grade 7/8 and high school we can seat 48 maximum

Q – 2014 shows that we will have a third bus going to Grand View won't this be a loading problem with the parking issues at that school?

R – Mr. Smith responded that this is something that needs to be looked at in a revised layout at the school along with parking, etc.

Q – I want to ask the Principals here what are their staff feeling?

R – Mr. Oberle, Principal of Preston fielded the question, since his school is the one most affected. He has encouraged them to remain neutral, and would not ask them their preferences. He said that we all serve the school community in the same way.

- Mr. Smith reiterated that there will be no job losses for teachers, there may be some re-jigging; some changes to be made however. The numbers are all around programming.

Q – Costing analysis of the Scenarios: 1, 3a and 6a. Are they on the website?

R – Not at this point. We started out with maybe 9 scenarios, and have been trying to get them down to 1 or 2 preferred scenarios. We will begin the detailed costing analysis when we have narrowed it down (due to the time and work it takes to fully cost out a scenario).

Q – Based on comments received to narrow down to a preferred scenario, 3a was preferred by 2 of the groups tonight, is that all that is needed?

R – Besides the comments tonight, we include our online feedback, phone calls into Planning and any letters received. That is why we created the random break out sessions tonight, to mix people up from different areas. Staff will work towards a recommendation. We will take the costing information to the Working Group. At this time, we are looking at the last week of May for the next public meeting.

Q – On the objective evaluation charts for the scenarios, can you trim the fat, and remove the Parkway information since it has no affect?

R – Yes, we can look at that since Parkway does not have any proposed boundary changes in these scenarios; however it is in the study area and that community will be looking at impacts for them.

Mr. Smith and Mr. Hercanuck thanked all for coming and gave the contact numbers and Board website information for the public to access with any questions or comments:

Website:

www.wrdsb.on.ca

- Under: Boundary Studies and Accommodation Reviews, follow link to: Preston Area Elementary Schools Boundary Study

Email:

boundaryfeedback@wrdsb.on.ca

Phone:

519-570-0003 ext. 4419

The Public Meeting adjourned at 9:15 pm.

Public Meeting #2 Break out session Comments

Scenario 1

Opportunities	Challenges
Reduces portables, reduces pressure Preston has one less portable	Only reduces pressure to mid range (only by 1 portable) projection and does not reduce portables enough
Decreasing the # of areas	Short-term fix Numbers are high 2014 at Preston
Crossing Guards?	Crossing streets without stop signs (would like stop sign at Vine)
Balances Grand View enrolment	Seemingly cyclical that the Preston core is affected by change
Makes south Preston more contiguous from community point of view (POV)	Traffic on cross streets – Eagle St Crossing may be problematic for young children ie Westminster and Lowther
Allow for continuing ½ JK + SK for group going to GVPS	Rapid increase of student population at Grand View. Effect on GV students?
Area A stays together	Addition issue for GV shouldn't it apply to this scenario?
	Historical precedent
	Community fragmentation
	Changes ½ day vs full day for JK & SK benefits and detractions exist for both schedules
	Fragments C & D from community (POV) – Area C/D is a community
	May be a long distance to walk for younger students

Additional Comments:

- Does this need to be adjusted in the summary of the scenario – meeting the Good Schools objective of Preston meeting 2 class/grade objective (this is a concern in each of the scenarios)
- Comments made that Preston is a community vs Deer Ridge as a separate community
- Keep area “A” together
- Scenario 1 stays at ½ day kindergarten
- Child care arrangements for D area in C – affects after school programs for D and C

Scenario 3a

Opportunities	Challenges
Opportunity to utilize land space at Grand View	Cost of additions, portables Parking needs to be upgraded at GVPS
Addresses portable reduction longer term Fewer portables required	Numerous portables - 6 too much
Addition to Grand View rather than just moving portables from 1 site to another	Greatest amount of strain on smallest capacity school (other scenarios better met #s/cap)
Addition better utilizes space	Isn't available transition plan for bussed students – at least not cost effective
Balances registration (admin benefits) Best balance of students throughout the schools	No where for buses at Grand View
Keeps community area A unfractured	Area D walking
All kids welcomed to GVPS	Is there going to be further development in A resulting in a 3 rd bus – how will Preston handle it?
Most cost-effective	Historical precedent
Area A stays together as a group	Fractures PPS community
	Does over capacitate GVPS to a degree, portables would have to do in 2010 until plans can be completed for addition/renovation
	Transition of JK & SK program for GVPS

Additional Comments:

- Would an addition at Preston be better?
- An addition would not be ready for 2010
- Construction would infringe upon playground
- “A” they are a community (lot in favour)
- Pushing improvements forward at Grand View may not be economically feasible for Board to do – why not just portables?
- How big would addition at GVPS be?
- Consensus that group 4 favoured this option

Scenario 6a

Opportunities	Challenges
Geographically keeps most things the same “A” more spread out is more suited to a split than “D” from “C”	While A looks enormous it is not a huge distance and children do travel back and forth from A1 to A2
No disruption to children’s routines	Mid range goal is not met as well in Sc. 1
Smallest transition #s	Fragmentation of A Comments made that other areas also suffer fragmentation already
Overall numbers to be guiding factor	Increases the # of areas we are dealing to 7 #s not as good in terms of distribution
	Busing transition challenge possibly worse than
	Fragmentation of community
	Least beneficial for distribution of kids with respect to capacity – distribution of kids at each school lop sided.

Additional Comments:

- Areas A1 and A2 feel connected just as D & G feel connected
- Could this scenario look at Area B going to Parkway?
- Could an addition at Preston be a part of this scenario?
- Issues around Good Schools Standing need to be better addressed
- How do the #s fall in A1 ie. Settlers Gove, Deer Ridge
- New Scenario 6A and B to Grand View
- Numbers flip 3a/6a
- Doesn’t solve anything, gets you back to where you are now (POV)
- Not a clear cut division of A

**Preston Area Elementary Schools Boundary Study
Public Meeting #2
Wednesday April 29, 2009**

Comments/Feedback Received

Scenario 6A (Best scenario)

Add section B to Grandview P.S. boundary. Should even out the numbers.
-Preston Public School Parent

I would select 3a, provided that the backyard would not become a portable pack.
An addition would be best.

Too much anger from area D, GRAND VIEW IS FABULOUS.

Scenario 3a seems the most viable in that there is no community fracturing and
can balance out capacities simply with an addition, re improvement, to the school

Addition to Grand View seems to have the least impact as well due to its larger
(than Preston PS) land area (especially considering that the school needs
structural improvements anyway)

*Improving an old building and balancing capacities = win win!!! (3A)

Once a decision is made, if it is not a priority to Sept 09, will kids starting school
(JK & SK) be able to start @ new school 1 year early?

It was mentioned that dividing Area A was difficult, but I believe there are two
buses servicing the area so why not separate by bus line?

Scenario 6a clearly makes the most sense as less children are displaced and it is
really about the children and their learning habits.

Morning routine will be least impacted by this when considering students from all
schools that walk bused students will still be bused and have the same morning
rituals with 58-75 of them arriving at a different school with all of the same
students they had bused with to Preston in the past.

3A also seems to achieve this same result except the bus split.

I heard an interesting addendum of moving "B" to Parkview to help balance out
and reduce portables where sites are smaller.

Ultimately, the decision should be based on numbers and not by the emotional or historical significance of the residents and areas and what is the best for both affected schools, population-wise not long term ties.

-Grand View parent

Scenario 3a is first choice

Scenario 6a is 2nd choice

Scenario 1 is least favoured

My daughter is from Area D and I wish for her to finish at Preston Public school

-Preston Parent

Alter Scenario 6a – students from Area B go to Parkway. Would reduce #s at PPS to target reduces portables makes #s in all schools close to equal.

Or addition at Preston – avoids change for all areas

Scenario 3a. No communities fragmented

-Preston Parent (Area C)

Scenario evaluation/discussion – for each scenario:

- Get rid of Parkway – not in the mix
- You: “the Working Group” have dressed up these evaluations as far as meet/doesn’t meet – they are inconsistent, give me the “meat” only

Scenario 3a – you were told at last Public meeting that Area A as a whole bursts any school. It needs to be split. Why are we still looking at something that does not solve our problems?

How many “high level” board employees live in Deer Ridge?? Humm

It sounds like the board/working group already have their minds made up. This is all just window dressing – D is moving – end of story

-Preston Parent

6a creates the most balanced numbers!

6a splits growth of A into two schools instead of a band-aid solution – the more A grows continued pressure on Preston Public School

Scenario 3a does not sever communities

3a best scenario

-Preston Parent

Parking at Grand View if the #s go up

Supervision difficult – proposed scenarios still maintain up to 4 portables in 2014 projections

Again major inconsistencies in notes – posted notes need careful attention to detail...many people use this info who are unable to attend public meetings.

Kindergarten will eventually be all day every day – should not be a factor for consideration in this boundary study, this transition is slated to occur before 2014.

Feedback provide by Preston Public School – Who provided it? Was it representative of community? School council? Were parent given opportunity to complete a feedback form?

How representative are comments around traffic lights/crossing King, etc. I think it should not be posted as a Meet/Doesn't Meet unless a significant # of concerns have been brought forward – not just 1 or 2.

Safety issues Area D increased – Area A still safely bussed

*Priority – C and D are not separate 'areas', we are a community/neighbourhood with close knit relationships. People who live here have in many cases purchased their homes so their children could attend PPS. Area A can not claim this.

In Scenario 1 – many students are provided daycare in Area C – this compounds transitional difficulties...new school...new babysitter – TOO MUCH.

*Transition JK-6, what happened to Grand Parenting??

Concerns over bias around [REDACTED] *Senior WRDSB Administration* living in Area A *Comment paraphrased*

Thank you for explaining why the working committee is kept confidential. I understand BUT I don't agree
-Preston P.S.

Re: Scenario 6a

The comment that a bigger area being split is better suited for a change is not factual but based in opinion. Splitting a community is no better for one than another.

Buses are not well thought out. Not based on buses, all of these children mix and play together – unfair split!

More buses > more expense!

*None of these scenarios are solving all of the issues.

Parents of Area 'A' make up the majority of parent volunteers/fundraising, etc. which better Preston PS as a whole!

Re: Scenario 3a and 6a – why would you want to send buses to two schools?
This would disrupt JK/SK at Grand View while PPS already has bus model

Scenario 1 has overall the most stable numbers

Issue of whether A or D wants to move from PPS should be off the table as both are important parts of the PPS community. Need to choose based on most stable numbers and least \$ cost

At PPS – parents of Group A are most active volunteers and on parent council – area D does not show up at council and have less parent volunteers per capita – if feelings are being considered – as an area c resident I would rather keep A and lose D

Adding buses to Grand View changes their kindergarten program and potentially costs money Moving D to Grand View is less disruptive. It really “reunites” that side of King St. All students living on that side would be together. Why fragment 'A' when you could blend D with their neighbours?

Please keep in mind another factor. Preston thrives because of the number of volunteers from Section A. Preston went from raising ██████ to ██████ last year. This is due to the Deer Ridge volunteer's time and initiative. Hot lunches, home reading, Parent Council, are all majority of Section A parents. I point this out because the things that make Preston as great as it is, is due to Section A. This affects the experience of the students. *Edited, unverified amounts*

It is obviously a hard decision, let the Board decide.

Area A provides so much parental support to Preston Public, that should not be ignored

I am in Area C, but I would vote for Scenario 1.
-Preston Public School Parent

It's such a hard decision so I think it should be looked at objectively in terms of numbers and the least amount of disruption to students. Obviously #1 and 3A work in terms of numbers, but community fragmentation issues arise. Should A be split in half? That would destroy any sense of community in a new development. If D goes to Grand View, you could look at that as the re-unification of an already split community, with a lesser degree of disruption for students.

-Preston Parent

Transition concerns for Area D moving to Grand View – these students would have to change schools, change babysitter, change route to school. Bus students keep babysitters, have the same way to school (get on the bus – get off the bus).

Preston Core Community

At the end of the school day, parent/caregivers and children play and socialize – sense of strong community – easily arranged play dates (bus kids leave immediately – no parent are ever seen)

Area C&D share community parks, Ed Newland pool, Preston Public Library and the many Downtown Preston festivals and events and community events – A very tight community. Deer Ridge Kitchener families never seem to participate or share in with Preston Core. Bus students only share the school.

3a or Scenario 6a would best ensure and keep strong community roots – least amount of students affected in transition. Make Preston Public School a larger one – Portapack.

Area C & D families bought their homes for the community – downtown core and Preston Public School. Bus students families bought their homes for the house itself – Area A is not part of a ‘Community’ – no parks, churches, schools, public library or pool, etc.

Preston is our home C & D – our children are from Preston. Area A calls Kitchener home – they go to school in Preston

-Preston Public Parent (Area C)

Transition and “grandfathering” needs to be clearly communicated before boundary decision is made.

-Grand View Parent

I recommend Scenario 3a for the following reasons:

- It has the best distribution/balance of students in the schools
- There is no fragmentation of the communities/neighbourhood; however, I have the following concerns about Grand View
 - Parking (for pick up/drop off of students) needs to be upgraded – add more spots!
 - The bussing issue – need to add a bus parking area (currently no one is bused at this school)

Suggestion: There needs to be a microphone for the public to ask questions so that everyone else can hear the question! (Otherwise it is wasting the other people’s time)

-Area A resident

Prefer scenario 3A

Hopeful that we are kept “in” with Grand View communications immediately once decision is made (if A goes to GV) so that we can start to feel that we are a part of GV ASAP (even though we won’t be yet a part of the family)

Hopeful that some “new” catchment area parents have input with respect to planning for any additions should a parent component be welcomed.

Within PPS or GVPS – whomever is getting Area A, please know that we have a group of “pro” French Immersion families coming!

-Area A parent

Scenario 6B

- Move Zone B to Grand View
- Preston A1, C, D
- Grand View A2, B, G, J
- Parkway E, F

-Preston Public Parent

One of the draft objectives is to avoid fragmentation of communities. Area C and D have historically been Preston Public Schools Community.

Area A became part of the Preston Community after their community school was closed several years ago. I do not know why the decision was made to move to Preston Public and not Parkway.

My first concern is the safety of children who walk to school. This concern was raised at the last public meeting and has continues to be raised.

Nothing is mentioned in any of the working group notes about traffic to Preston High School at 550 Rose Street with a student population of 1030 and a staff of over 100 or St Josephs Catholic Elementary School with a population of 250 students and a staff of 30.

There is a traffic issue here, especially on Eagle St and Westminster.

I am so thankful that my 2 children attended Preston Public School crossing at the light at King and Westminster and were not required to make that walk to Grand View.

Area A2 is going to continue to be developed with the possibility of the need for a third bus to Preston as stated in the working group meeting #3 notes.

Another of the draft objectives is to where possible reduce bussing to reduce environmental and transportation costs.

Having three busses drive by Parkway does not meet that goal.

The Kanmnet development is taking place in area C and there is still the possibility that the Appleton Electric development may move forward in the future. Which will increase enrolment at Preston Public.

Fragmentation of communities and the number of students affected by change are all key factors to be considered with each scenario, but the first priority needs to be, the safety of the students who are in walking distance of Preston Public School. For this reason I am requesting that Scenario 1 be disregarded.

Boundary Feedback

Received Friday March 27, 2009

Hello. I'm a parent of two children from Area A currently attending Preston Public School, and have a couple of comments regarding the Boundary Study.

First, I would like to acknowledge what a difficult process this is for the review committee and the school board. There is obviously no way of achieving the goals set out and making everyone happy.

That being said, I have a couple of comments on the Draft Study Objectives.

1) I think one of the objectives should be to re-align the boundaries without further fragmenting areas. There are already enough arbitrary lines on the map; I don't think it would be in anyone's best interests to add more. In particular, I don't think Area A should be split up. Sending half the children to one school and half to another would have a severe impact on our sense of community. If Area A needs to be moved to a different school to balance the numbers, the community could probably live with it (though we would obviously prefer to stay at Preston). But we have no desire to be split up.

2) Another objective should be to minimize the number of students impacted by the change. Moving many areas around to different schools makes no sense if the same thing could be accomplished by moving just one or two areas.

3) Consider transition plans up front. Being able to transition students gradually (e.g. let students in grades 5 & 6 finish in their current school) is an important consideration. Obviously this is much more difficult to achieve with students who are bussed.

4) Consider the impact of bussing. If Area A (or parts of it) were moved to Grand View or Parkway, those schools would likely be forced to switch to all-day-every-other-day Kindergarten. I haven't seen this brought up in the minutes.

The overall goal should be to balance the numbers and keep as many people happy as possible. In my (perhaps somewhat biased) opinion, the only scenario that accomplishes this is Scenario D (Grand View gets Area D from Preston). It balances the numbers, minimizes the number of students that need to move, can have a viable transition plan, and, while I can't speak for people in Area D, I suspect that some portion of them would actually prefer to go to Grand View.

Received April 7, 2009

On March 31, 2009 I attended the Preston Area Elementary School Boundary study Working Group Meeting #6 as an observer.

As a resident of Preston for the past 27 years I have difficulty understanding how the working group decided that Scenario 1 should remain for further analysis.

In Scenario 1, Area D students would walk to Grand View. It is noted in the minutes of this meeting that "Crossing streets leading up to Grand View may be an issue. There is a lot of through traffic and no stop signs."

In Area D at 550 Rose Street we have Preston High School with a student population of 1030 students and a staff of over 100. At 980 Westminster Drive South we have St Joseph Catholic Elementary School with a student population of 250 and a staff of 30.

As population increases in Area A and, the completion of the 2 proposed subdivisions, the growth in these three areas will impact the population at both Preston High School and St Joseph Catholic Elementary School with increase traffic in Area D.

I am aware that Preston High School does have earlier bell times, but traffic to Preston High School still impacts Area D throughout the day.

I had 2 children attend Preston Public School and I was also employed at Grand View for 2 years walking from Area D to Grand View. I was thankful that my children where able to cross King Street at a controlled traffic light.

Preston Public School has always been the home school for Area D students. Considering the traffic in the mornings and afternoons in this area, Preston Public School is the safest choice for walking students.

All of the other scenarios in this study involve students who are provided with bus transportation by the Waterloo Region District School Board. The Waterloo Region District School Board is obligated to provide families in Area D with the safest walking route to school.

Fragmentation of communities and, the number of students affected by change are all key factors to be considered with each scenario, but the first priority needs to be, the safety of students who are in walking distance of Preston Public School. For this reason I am requesting that Scenario 1 be disregarded.

Received April 22, 2009

I regret that I will be unable to attend as I will be out of town on business. We live in Area A and our two children attend PPS. I feel very strongly that the move to Grandview or the splitting of the area would be very disruptive to the children in the neighborhood.

Regardless this is a disruption to all the children, moving schools is never easy, but I believe the adjustment would be easiest if Scenario 1 was instated for the children on the West side of King St. They would still be attending school in their own neighborhood and they won't have to cross King St. which is a very busy road.

Unfortunately in Area A we don't have an elementary school in the neighborhood so regardless our children have to be bussed.

I think that the children are the ones that need to be considered most in this boundary discussion and **to split neighborhoods is not beneficial and also to have young children crossing a busy road is very risky!**

If you look at the maps, scenario 1 makes the most logical sense.

Received April 23, 2009

For your consideration:

It will be a very poor decision if half the children in Deer Ridge / Pioneer Tower community go to one school and the other half to another as suggested in Scenario 6!

The community would be split and the relationships between the two groups of children would be changed as NOW most attend similar after school and sporting events . The strong community relationships in the Deer Ridge area is fostered in many ways by the bond between the children who know one another both at school and on the bus. That bond extends to the parents and to the family events that are sponsored by the community associations such as the Deer Ridge Estates Community Association. We are a new community, without things such as churches and community centres or libraries to draw us together. School is one of the only things we have in common and to date it has been very successful in bringing families together

The School Board must recognize that their decision on boundaries will effect the integration of the families into the physical community of Deer Ridge / Pioneer Tower area in which they reside. The projected growth in the area will be affected if the schools are split as potential new families to the neighbourhood will want their children to attend the same school.

We have a strong and successful Community Association of families and we feel strongly that our ongoing community spirit is directly linked to the schools that our children and grandchildren attend.

Received April 28, 2009

Thank you to everyone at WRDSB involved in the Preston Area Elementary Schools Boundary Study for their professionalism in addressing this issue.

It seems to me there are many stakeholders in this issue, some with competing interests. The most important stakeholders, of course, are the students. After reviewing the three remaining scenarios, #1, #3a, and #6, and keeping in mind students come first, it becomes evident Option #1 is the only real choice. Not to overstate the obvious, but this is likely why it was selected as Option #1 in the first place.

Option #1:

- provides the most even distribution of 100+% capacity student populations across the 3 schools;
- supports the fullest student programming across the 3 schools;
- supports the most balanced programming opportunities for students across the 3 schools;
- does not require changes (and associated costs) to Kindergarten schedules at GVC
- preserves the energy, and positive socio-economic impact of the Deer Ridge Area (Area A) on PPS
- Deer Ridge area neighbours have invested a lot of heart and soul, and money, into transforming Preston Public School into what it is today. Most of the program initiatives, financial support, School Council Chairs and members, and facility upgrades in the past eight years have come from the result of leaders and volunteers from Deer Ridge. This valuable community contribution to student enrichment would likely cease, or be severely curtailed, if the Deer Ridge area was suddenly broken up or switched whole to a new school under Options #3a or #6.
- preserves the successful and seamless integration of two distinct student populations, spanning a wide socio-economic range, from two communities; a model to the parents and other adults in the two cities of Kitchener and Cambridge in particular, and Waterloo Region in general.
- provides the WRDSB the opportunity to offer a path to both the community and school staff for the least disruptive, least expensive transition plan
- just as attrition in the workplace is a preferable social alternative to cutbacks, students in Area D who walk to school could be transitioned to Grandview over time, especially for senior students (not feasible for bussed students); new students in Area D would be enrolled in GVC.
- parents of senior students currently attending PPS could choose if, or when, to change from PPS to GVC (not feasible for bussed students)
- school population changes and staff changes could be less sudden and less disruptive

At Public Meeting #1, outside of the NIMBY reaction typical of school boundary reviews, there were really two main concerns raised by the community members of Area D:

- Were the infrastructure facilities and programs at GVC equivalent to those at PPS?;
- Will children be abruptly transitioned from PPS to GVC?

If the WRDSB addresses these two concerns, it would go a long way toward ensuring a successful resolution.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide public input.

Received April 30, 2009

I'm sorry I couldn't attend last night's meeting at Preston High School. I wanted to express my opinion on the boundary changes about to take place. We have 3 children. My oldest attends Preston High School, my middle child is at William G. Davis and my youngest is in Grade 2 at Preston Public School. All 3 of my children have attended Preston Public so our family has a history with the school. We feel very connected with the Preston Public School community under the leadership of Don Oberle.

Living in Deer Ridge geographically puts us in a state of limbo. We have a Kitchener address but you have to look us up in the Cambridge phone book. When my children were old enough to join a team sport, we made a decision to head down to Cambridge for soccer, hockey, skating, gymnastics etc. However, when our son wanted to tryout for a rep. hockey team, we were forced to join Kitchener Minor Hockey simply because we are zoned Kitchener and not Cambridge. My son's peers from school all play for Cambridge but we had to make the switch to Kitchener Minor Hockey. My point with all of this is that our community desperately needs a cohesive school where our whole area is sent to. The idea of splitting up our neighbourhood to two different public schools will further break our sense of community.

Also, there is a the psychological component of dealing with children that will find this move devastating. This will have ramifications on the school front. If the change needs to take place, have you considered starting with the kids entering JK to minimize the stress that the children who are already attending Preston Public will have.

Thanks for allowing feedback via e-mail.

Received May 1, 2009

Hello,

As a resident of "C" (north of King street) I would like it to be heard that the boundary changes proposed for Preston Public School greatly affects us and more importantly our children. Before purchasing our home in Preston I spent a great deal of time researching the community and we finally settled here, not just for house but more significantly the community. Preston is an absolute jewel and I challenge you to find another community with pools, library, arenas, shopping and beautiful parks and trail systems just a short walk away. Quite noticeably, Preston is a proud little community and still maintains that small town charm. There is no border between north and south Preston. Kings St. is just that - a street- one I cross every day. The school is the hub of this community. Look out on the playground on any given day. It's parents from "C" and "D" making connections and friendships both for us and our children. I fear that if area "D" is moved from Preston School, it will become in effect a rural school. With half of it's students leaving on buses and the parents of those children rarely at the school, it greatly affects school spirit and directly impacts the children in area "C". (the supposed "safe area".) Areas "C" and "D" are a community 12 months a year. We share the same parks, trails libraries and pools. Our children WALK to school together, they play sports together and she should attend the same school. Part of the reason we chose to send our children to Preston Public was because it is a neighbourhood school. We thought of the children making friends, riding there bikes to their friends houses and extending school friends to after school friends. Living in "C" we frequent the homes of our friends in area "D". Social get togethers are common among families at Preston Public School. Both families from north and south Preston come together throughout the year, but our hub is the school. As a parent in area "C" our thoughts need to be heard. We do not feel comfortable because we are in the "safe" area. In fact I dare to stay these proposed changes affect us the most. We do not want the school to become a desolate place just because school is out. The last two scenarios presented at the meeting are clearly in the best interest of Preston Public School students and families.

Received Saturday May 2, 2009

To Whom it may concern:

My name is [REDACTED] and our family lives in Deer Ridge. All our children have attended Preston Public since kindergarten and our oldest is going into grade 6 next year. We were unable to attend last Wednesday's boundary meeting, but would very much have liked to. Our concerns regarding the boundary changes are mainly connected to the way it will impact on us as a community. We don't have a church, community centre or even a variety store that joins us as a group. The nearest park we need to drive to. (there is a small park put up by the neighbourhood association, but the location makes it unsafe) School has been the common denominator for us all these years. Preston Public has always been our school and so, we identify ourselves as part of the Preston community. A few weeks ago, we participated in garbage clean up. My children happily cleaned up garbage in Preston and didn't think for a minute that they were

outsiders or visitors to that community. I find it sad that on some level this issue has caused divisions that seem more about class than the real issue which is trying to address over crowding in one of the schools. My kids have never seen themselves as different than any of their peers at Preston Public except that maybe they ride a bus. I believe some very hurtful and ignorant things have been said about Deer Ridge, as though because we are bused we are somehow less involved, less connected or even less deserving of attending Preston Public. My children love Preston Public. Why wouldn't they, it is a great school with wonderful kids, fantastic teachers and an amazing principal. Most important though, for me and for my children is that they remain with their peer group. When I think back over all my years at school, it was the social aspect. I realize that a change needs to take place. I can appreciate that on some level the bussed kids might be an easy solution, but it may not be the best one. I hope you take into consideration that Deer Ridge is a community and for the most part, it is Preston Public that has joined us together. Thanks for the opportunity to share our views.

Received Sunday May 3, 2009

As I am watching this boundary review unfold and progress there are two key points that need to be considered. And no we are not back at primary school but again history and geography are central to this discussion. First, it is a reasonable argument to state that C & D have a shared history. I am certain no one can argue this point. I do however, find it is interesting that Area D does not, all of a sudden share a history with the Grandview area. In fact, they do share quite a history. It is very clear there are many family and student connections between the two areas which although it may be a transition at first, the shared history and sheer geographical location will make any adjustment easier. For example, it will be easier for new friendships to be cultivated when they can walk to school together and play after school together. This is a luxury that will not exist for bus students and will make their transition even more difficult. And as it has been said many times, the Preston area has been together for hundreds of years. I am certain this shared history doesn't stop between Vine and Westminster and it will be precisely this history that will facilitate children from this very area walking to a "Preston" neighbourhood school.

Second, I am astounded that in this recession the Board would consider spending hundreds of thousand dollars when there is a solution that will minimize costs. Children walking to Grandview makes the most fiscal sense in any economy let alone the cash strapped economy that currently exists. There would be no changes to JK SK programs or upgrades for bussing. Teachers will also not lose their current positions. In fact, more will have to be hired at Grandview. Additionally, children would be able to walk to a school and children who are bussed will not have to ride even longer. Both are more environmentally friendly to the Preston community.

Finally, I am aware of the importance to maintain communities. But, there are new families that join old communities everyday, all around the world. This is a global village, that we live in. Even downtown Preston is not exempt. It is my hope that at some point this core community will not view the students from the new community as outsiders. It is these outsiders who not only keep their current schools from closing (Preston, William G. Preston High & soon to be Parkway) but also add to the lives of all students in the Preston community. Perhaps, the Parkway community will better adjust to the new growth and development from Mattamy than Preston has from DeerRidge.

It would be beneficial to provide a fiscal and cost analysis to implement each scenario at the next meeting.

Received Monday May 4, 2009

We used to laugh at the petty rivalry expressed among residents of Preston, Galt and Hespeler. Comments like "I wouldn't breathe the air in Hespeler", or "Flush twice, it's a long way to Galt" were at one time amusing. But it's been almost four decades since the Province of Ontario formed the City of Cambridge and the Region of Waterloo. Two generations later it's time for us to evolve beyond petty geography and consider the interests of all students in Waterloo Region.

So far, the Preston Area Boundary Review has been plagued by the bigotry still rife in Preston after all these years. And, whether naked or thinly disguised by the rhetoric of 'tradition', much of this residual bigotry against 'foreigners' has been front and centre in the process for all to see. For shame. Would it be acceptable for parents to say your child shouldn't attend a school because he or she is from a foreign land? No. Or black? Or gay? Of course not. So why should it be acceptable for parents to discriminate against children from Deer Ridge or Blair? It's not. Bigotry in all its forms is unacceptable in today's society. The fact the discrimination in this case is based on local geography rather than global geography, or race, or sexual orientation, makes it no less tolerable.

Sadly, parents of children from outside of Preston have been intimidated by the Area D comments of "We don't want you here" and "You're not from Preston, you don't belong." Volunteers from Deer Ridge entering the halls of Preston Public express concern about feeling intimidated and unwelcome as they cross paths with Area D parents. That should never happen. Our volunteers should never be allowed, or made, to feel uncomfortable for who they are or where they live. Many people, including some residents and former residents of Preston, would like to speak out against this offensive behaviour but are too afraid. Enough. Whether you are a student or a parent, and whether the action is subtle or overt, bigotry and bullying are reprehensible and unacceptable. Schools teach our

children to ignore bullies. We should do the same to stand up for what is in the best interests of the students.

Boundary reviews are always challenging. Emotions can run high. Care must be taken to ensure one community is not pitted against another and all are encouraged to work together. The key to success is leadership in an open process directed to maintain stakeholder objectivity and focus on what is important: the students. To ignore this basic and obvious tenet would be to undermine society's values and our own children.

We could learn a lot from our children. They are far more culturally progressive and tolerant than our generation. They readily accept the blending of the Deer Ridge, Blair and Preston communities. So should we.