



Doon South Elementary Schools Boundary Study
Minutes of Public Meeting #3
January 8, 2014
J.W. Gerth Public School
7:00 – 8:30 p.m.

The third Public Meeting of the Doon South Elementary Schools Boundary Study was held at J.W. Gerth Public School on Wednesday, January 08, 2014.

Approximately 130 members of the community were in attendance including parent representatives on the Boundary Study Working Group. Also in attendance were CTV News, The Record, MP Michael Harris, City Councillor Yvonne Fernandes, Activa Group VP Larry Masseo and Activa Group Manager of Planning Jennifer Voss.

1. Welcome

Laura Hodgins, Superintendent of Education for the area welcomed those in attendance and thanked them for providing their input and perspective to the process, their contributions are highly valued by the Board. She acknowledged that the process is difficult and challenging and advised that we all want is best for students. She advised that we are here this evening because there are more students at J.W. Gerth PS than can be accommodated at the school and that enrolment is projected to continue to grow and we cannot continue with the status quo. The new school will not be ready in the projected timeframe (Sept 2015) for reasons beyond our control; therefore a short-term holding solution is required until the new school opens.

The purpose of tonight's meeting is:

- To present additional details about Interim Option F and alternative options explored since Public Meeting #2, including Interim Option J, to be implemented as early as September 2014
- To present additional details about Scenario 16, to be implemented when the new south Kitchener (Groh Drive) school opens
- To share the draft recommendations that will be presented to the Board of Trustees on [January 20, 2014](#) with you this evening. We will be able to share with you the recommendations for the boundaries once the new school opens; however, recommendations for the interim options are still undetermined.

2. Introductions

Superintendent Hodgins gave the following introductions:

WRDSB Trustees:

Ted Martin, Board Chairperson and Kitchener Trustee
Margaret Johnston, Kitchener Trustee
Mike Ramsay, Kitchener Trustee
Kathi Smith, Kitchener Trustee (regrets due to Student Senate meeting)

Executive Superintendent of Business and Financial Services and Treasurer:

Marilyn Allen

Communications Assistant:

Lynsey Meikle

School Administrators:

Don Oberle, Principal of Doon PS
Laura Hagey-Nichols, Principal of Brigadoon PS
Glenn Kitamura, Principal of Pioneer Park PS
Susan Schaffner, Principal of J.W. Gerth PS
Sherri Davidson, Vice Principal of J.W. Gerth PS
Kim Bingeman, Vice Principal of Doon PS (regrets)

Board Planning Staff:

Dennis Cuomo, Manager of Planning (regrets due to illness)
Lauren Manske, Senior Planner
Nathan Hercanuck, Senior Planner
Andrea Kean, Recording Secretary

3. Boundary Scenario Summary

Lauren Manske, Senior Planner and Chair of the Working Group led the audience through tonight's presentation available online at:

<http://www.wrdsb.ca/planning/files/2013/08/08jan14publicmtgpresentation.pdf>

Ms. Manske advised that the main purpose of this boundary study was to establish a boundary for the new South Kitchener (Groh Drive) school which we had originally projected to have a September 2015 opening date. As a result of several factors, the Board is no longer able to adhere to that timeframe. The Board has been working closely with all the necessary parties, including the developer (Activa Group), and the City of Kitchener to get the school ready as soon as possible (September 2016 new targeted opening date). She advised that representatives from the Activa Group are in the audience tonight and will be available to answer questions during the Question and Answer portion of tonight's meeting.

Since the main purpose of this boundary study was to establish a boundary for the new South Kitchener (Groh Drive) school, the Working Group considered more than sixteen boundary scenarios. These scenarios not only considered boundaries, but also the configuration of each of the study area schools (e.g., converting a school from a JK-6 to a JK-8 organization). The chart on slide 3 (of the online presentation) provides a summary of the different configurations that were applied to the boundary scenarios.

Ms. Manske advised that two scenarios (14 and 16) which the Working Group felt created the most logical boundaries and school organizations of the scenarios explored throughout this study, while meeting the objectives that were set out, were presented at Public Meeting #2 to elicit feedback.

Ms. Manske noted that there were only subtle differences between the JK-6 boundaries established by Scenarios 14 and 16. The main difference in the scenarios is the grades offered at the new South Kitchener (Groh Drive) school. In Scenario 14 the South Kitchener (Groh Drive) school would be a JK-6 organization and in Scenario 16, it would be JK-8. Therefore, the Grade 7 and 8 boundaries between the two scenarios vary more significantly.

Since Public Meeting #2, the Working Group has met and determined that Scenario 16 is the preferred scenario to be recommended to Trustees on January 20, 2014 for their consideration for student accommodation in the Doon South Area.

Scenario 16 (slide 4 of the online presentation)

A description of this scenario as follows:

- New South Kitchener (Groh Drive) school as a JK-8 organization boundary takes in portions of the current Brigadoon and J.W. Gerth Public School boundaries (JK-6) and Doon Public School boundary (7-8).
- Doon Public School remains as senior (Gr. 7-8) school for Brigadoon, Pioneer Park and J.W. Gerth Public School students.
- Boundary modifications for Brigadoon, J.W. Gerth. and Pioneer Park Public School.
- French Immersion program offered at Brigadoon P.S. (1-6), J.W. Gerth P.S. (1-6 by 2016), the New South Kitchener (Groh Drive) school (1-4 in 2016, 1-6 by 2018) and Doon Public School (7-8 by 2014).
- Development Areas established – future school to be determined.
- For 2016 and 2017 school years and implementation, refer to Interim Options F and J.

Scenario 16 - JK-6 boundaries (slide 5 of the online presentation)

- Overall there is minimal change to the JK-6 boundaries except to carve out the new school boundary and development areas from J.W. Gerth and Brigadoon Public Schools.
- Minor boundary modifications suggested for Pioneer Park Public School.

Gr. 7-8 boundaries (slide 6 of the online presentation)

- The Grade 7-8 boundary for the new school is the same as its JK-6 boundary, so this means that the school's grade 6s become the senior students in the school.
- Doon PS's boundary is reduced, carving out the new school boundary for Grade 7-8.

Enrolment Projections (slide 7 of the online presentation)

Enrolment projections for Scenario 16 indicate that further student accommodation will be required in the Doon South area. It is proposed that a request for funding include:

- A 5 classroom addition (115 pupil places, estimated benchmark cost of \$2.2M) at Doon Public School;
- An additional 6 classrooms (138 pupil places, estimated benchmark cost of \$2.5M) at the new South Kitchener (Groh Drive) school;
- A 2 classroom (46 pupil place) addition at Brigadoon Schools (estimated benchmark cost of \$880K); and
- A 2 classroom (46 pupil place) addition at Pioneer Park Public School (estimated benchmark cost of \$950K);
- An additional elementary school in the future.

Ms. Manske advised that any capital construction requirements will be considered as part of the capital needs priority setting for funding opportunities from the Ministry of Education.

Draft Recommendations to Implement Scenario 16 (slide 8 of the online presentation)

Ms. Manske advised that there are 6 main recommendations to implement Scenario 16:

1) Establish a boundary for new South Kitchener (Groh Drive) school (slide 9)

Involves:

- Approval of the boundary for the new South Kitchener school for Junior Kindergarten to Grade 8 students, effective the year the new school opens; and
- Grandfathering of Grade 8 students in the new school boundary at Doon Public School the year the new school opens (with transportation for those who qualify); and
- French Immersion classes at the new school with the possibility of offering Grades 1-6 by the 2018/19 academic year, to be evaluated by staff to determine viability; and
 - Grandfathering for FI students who must attend a school out of boundary because that grade level is not offered, these students and their siblings have the option to stay at their existing site to be enrolled in the French Immersion program; however, they may not be eligible for transportation; and
- An additional 6 classrooms to be considered as part of the construction of the new school, increasing the built capacity of the new school to approximately 738 pupil places. Subject to the Board's capital needs priority setting for funding opportunities from the Ministry of Education

2) Realign Brigadoon Public School's Boundary (slides 10-11)

Involves:

- Approval of the boundary change between Pioneer Park and Brigadoon Public Schools, effective the year the new South Kitchener (Groh Drive) school opens (tentatively September 2016); and
- Grandfathering of Grade 6 students (not including younger siblings) in the affected area moving from Pioneer Park Public School to Brigadoon Public School, to have the option to remain at Pioneer Park Public School the year of the change 9 (with Transportation if they qualify); and
- An additional 2 classrooms (46 pupil places, estimated benchmark cost of \$880K) to be constructed at Brigadoon Public School, increasing the built capacity to approximately 467 pupil places. Subject to the Board's capital needs priority setting for funding opportunities from the Ministry of Education

3) Realign J.W. Gerth Public School's Boundary (slides 12 – 13)

Involves:

- Approval of the boundary change between Pioneer Park and J.W. Gerth Public Schools, effective the year the new South Kitchener (Groh Drive) school opens (tentatively September 2016); and
- Grandfathering of Grade 6 students (not including younger siblings) in the affected area moving from Pioneer Park Public School to J.W. Gerth Public School, to have the option to remain at Pioneer Park Public School the year of the change (including transportation for those who qualify).

4) Realign Doon Public School's Boundary (slide 14)

Involves:

- Approval of the new boundary for Doon Public School, effective the year the new South Kitchener (Groh Drive) school opens (tentatively September 2016); and
- A 5 classroom (115 pupil places, estimated benchmark cost of \$2.2M) addition to be constructed at Doon Public School, increasing the built capacity to approximately 446 pupil places. Subject to the Board's capital needs priority setting for funding opportunities from the Ministry of Education.

5) Realign Pioneer Park Public School's Boundary (slide 15)

Involves:

- Approval of the new boundary for Pioneer Park Public School, effective the year the new South Kitchener (Groh Drive) school opens (tentatively September 2016); and
- A 2 classrooms addition (46 pupil places, estimated benchmark cost of \$950K) addition to be constructed at Pioneer Park Public School, increasing the built capacity to approximately 354 pupil places. Subject to the Board's capital needs priority setting for funding opportunities from the Ministry of Education.

6) Establish Development Areas (slide 16)

Involves:

- Approval of the interim Development Areas for the Doon South community, effective the year the new South Kitchener (Groh Drive) school opens (tentatively September 2016).

4. Interim Option Summary (slide 17)

Ms. Manske noted that we are in somewhat of an unusual position while waiting for the new school and implementation of the proposed Scenario 16. There are several constraints that have been identified with existing school sites and buildings, which limit their potential to handle any further growth. Typically, the Board will continue to add portables to sites to accommodate growth until the permanent solution is in place and while not always ideal for our sites and facilities, it tends to cause the least amount of disruption to the community.

Unfortunately, Brigadoon and J.W. Gerth Public School have sites that are either small or have topographical constraints that limit the Board's ability to accommodate enrolment increases. As a result, one of the objectives of this study was to develop an interim (temporary) accommodation strategy, to be in place for September 2014, to assist schools with increasing enrolment until the new South Kitchener (Groh Drive) opens.

Ms. Manske advised that the Working Group has explored over ten (10) interim accommodation options for the Doon South study area. The chart on slide 17 summarizes the options considered and are shown in more detail on our website within the Working Group minutes and presentations.

Ms. Manske noted that at the second public meeting, only one option, (Interim Option F) was presented for feedback; because the Working Group did not believe that any other options that had been explored to that date (Options A-E) were viable alternatives and Option F was likely the only option that would eliminate the need for any additional student transitions from school to school.

Due to several concerns raised in the feedback around Option F, the Working Group sought to find another option that would satisfy these concerns and Interim Options G, H, I, and J were discussed at our Working Group meeting #6 and it was decided that Interim Option J was a feasible alternative that would address some of the concerns surrounding Option F and as a result, the Working Group felt it was important to hold a third public meeting (tonight) to present Interim Option J and to respond to some of the concerns voiced over Option F.

Interim Option F (slide 18)

Option F was the only option presented at Public Meeting # 2 and would see all of J.W. Gerth Public Schools' Grade 4 and 5 students (approximately 130 students in 2014/15) redirected to Doon Public School and would establish Development Areas that would be directed to Pioneer Park Public School until such time as the new South Kitchener (Groh Drive) school opens.

Based on a September 2016 opening date for the new School and a JK-8 organization for the new South Kitchener (Groh Drive) school, Interim Option F would be implemented in the following way:

2014/15 School Year (slides 19 - 20)

- J.W. Gerth Public School offers JK-4 only
- All Grade 5 and 6 students in J.W. Gerth Public School 2013/14 boundary assigned to Doon Public School
- Interim Development Areas established and JK-6 students assigned to Pioneer Park Public School

2015/16 School Year

- J.W. Gerth Public School offers JK-4 only
- All Grade 5 and 6 students in J.W. Gerth Public School 2013/14 boundary assigned to Doon Public School
- Interim Development Areas established and JK-6 students assigned to Pioneer Park Public School

2016/17 School Year

- New South Kitchener (Groh Drive) school opens
- All boundaries modified to implement changes
- All Grade 6 students in new J.W. Gerth Public School boundary attend Doon Public School (J.W. Gerth Public School JK-5 only in 2016/17)
- Development Areas established - new students assigned to a school that has space to accommodate the projected enrolment until a permanent solution can be established.
- Offer French Immersion at new South Kitchener (Groh Drive) school (starting with Gr. 1-4 French Immersion in 2016/17 and working up to Gr. 6 by 2018/19)
- Grade 5-8 French Immersion out of area students and siblings grandfathered at 2015/16 school

2017/18 School Year

- J.W. Gerth Public School adds Grade 6
- New South Kitchener school offers Gr. 1-5 French Immersion
- Grade 6 French Immersion out of area students and siblings grandfathered at 2015/16 school, Grades 7-8 French Immersion students attend Doon Public School

Option F Enrolment Projections (slide 21)

Option F would result in a reduction in enrolment at J.W. Gerth Public School from the Status Quo projection of 825 students to 640 students. Removing the development areas from Brigadoon Public School's boundary, enrolment growth at that site would be limited, eliminating the need to reassign existing students.

Option F Pros/Cons (slide 22)

The chart below outlines the pros and cons of Option F. Ms. Manske noted that the cons are those that have been brought up that we do not believe can be addressed through transition plans or otherwise.

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none">No additional transitions for majority of students	<ul style="list-style-type: none">No Gr. 5-6 students at J.W. Gerth PS to provide leadership – Gr. 3-4s will have to “fill the void” temporarily (also means no student bus or safety patrol)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Two additional years at Doon PS = learning benefit	<ul style="list-style-type: none">YDP not guaranteed – some families may lose current child care arrangements
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Development area assigned to Pioneer Park PS timing is unknown, therefore growth could be slow – school not certain to fill up	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Development areas are scattered, therefore bus runs will not be efficient
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Bus runs to Doon PS (where required) are short; therefore buses could be used multiple times = minimal additional cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Doon PS will require some minor retrofits (e.g., coat hooks/lockers) to accommodate increased number of students
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Doon PS site can accommodate division of play spaces for different age groups (upper and lower fields)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Increases Doon PS to 154-175% occupancy and Pioneer Park PS to 124-150% occupancy
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Reduces enrolment at J.W. Gerth PS enough to last until new school opens (120% occupancy)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Splits families (e.g. Gr. 4 and Gr. 5 at different schools)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Maintains min. 2 classes/grade for Gr. 5-6 at Doon PS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Grade distribution at Doon PS favours the senior elementary (Gr. 7 and 8) students
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Doesn't split up cohort (all Gr. 5-6s move together)	

Interim Option J (slide 23)

Option J would see all Grades 1-6 regular track (non-French Immersion) J.W. Gerth Public School students living in the new South Kitchener (Groh Drive) school boundary (as established by Scenario 16), (approximately 170 students in 2014/15) redirected to Pioneer Park Public School, and would establish Development Areas that would be directed to a school outside of the Doon South Study Area until such time as the new South Kitchener (Groh Drive) school opens.

Based on a September 2016 opening date and a JK-8 organization for the new South Kitchener (Groh Drive) school, Interim Option J would be implemented in the following way:

2014/15 School Year (slides 24-25)

- All regular track Grade 1-6 students in the new South Kitchener school boundary (portion in J.W. Gerth Public School 2013/14 boundary only) attend Pioneer Park Public School

2014/15 School Year (continued)

- All French Immersion Grade 2-4 students and siblings in the new South Kitchener school boundary (portion in J.W. Gerth Public School 2013/14 boundary only) remain at J.W. Gerth Public School. *Ms. Manske advised that J.W. Gerth PS will be restricting French Immersion registrations for the 2014-15 school year to siblings of current FI students and home school boundary students - the purple area on slide 25 would now be considered out-of-boundary (and part of Pioneer Park PS's boundary) unless they have a sibling currently enrolled in the program.*
- Interim Development Areas established and JK-8 students assigned to a school outside of the Doon South study area

2015/16 School Year

- All regular track Grade 1-6 students in the new South Kitchener school boundary (portion in J.W. Gerth Public School 2013/14 boundary only) attend Pioneer Park Public School
- All French Immersion Grade 3-5 students and siblings in the new South Kitchener school boundary (portion in J.W. Gerth Public School 2013/14 boundary only) remain at J.W. Gerth Public School
- Interim Development Areas established and JK-8 students assigned to a school outside of the Doon South study area

2016/17 School Year

- New South Kitchener school opens JK-7 (Grade 8 students stay at Doon Public School)
- All boundaries modified to implement changes
- All Grade 6 students in affected areas moving from Pioneer Park Public School to Brigadoon Public School or J.W. Gerth Public School grandfathered at Pioneer Park Public School
- Development Areas established - new students assigned to a school that has space to accommodate the projected enrolment until a permanent solution can be established.
- Offer French Immersion at New South Kitchener school (starting with Gr. 1-4 French Immersion in 2016/17 and working up to Gr. 6 by 2018/19)
- Grade 5-8 French Immersion out of area students and siblings grandfathered at 2015/16 school

2017/18 School Year

- New South Kitchener (Groh Drive) school adds Grade 8
- New South Kitchener (Groh Drive) school offers Gr. 1-5 French Immersion
- Grade 6 French Immersion out of area students and siblings grandfathered at 2015/16 school, Grades 7-8 French Immersion students attend Doon Public School

Option J Enrolment Projections (slide 26)

Option J would result in a reduction in enrolment at J.W. Gerth Public School from the Status Quo projection of 825 students to 600 students in 2014/15. As in Option F, by removing the development areas from Brigadoon Public School's boundary, enrolment growth at that site would be limited, eliminating the need to reassign existing students.

Option J Pros/Cons (slide 27)

The chart below outlines several pros and cons to Option J. Again, the cons are those that have been brought up that we do not believe can be addressed through transition plans or otherwise.

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Gr. 1-6 Students who live closest to J.W. Gerth PS stay there	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Additional transitions for majority of students (J.W. Gerth PS to Pioneer PS to NSK)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Brigadoon PS, J.W. Gerth PS and Pioneer Park PS all remain JK-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Inequity between Regular Track and FI students/families (Reg. track have to leave J.W. Gerth PS and FI can stay)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Enrolment at Brigadoon PS, J.W. Gerth PS and Pioneer Park PS all at similar levels (over 500 students); thereby 'spreading the load' to all schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none">2014 Gr. 1 students in NSK boundary would not be able to register for FI at a Doon South study area school for FI – potentially affecting future FI classes at the NSK school
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Reduces enrolment at J.W. Gerth PS enough to last until new school opens (115% occupancy)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Increases Pioneer Park PS to 175% occupancy = more pressure on smallest building in study area
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Enrolment increase at Pioneer Park PS is definite and immediate – may make staffing and resource allocation process easier	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Bus runs to Pioneer Park PS are long; therefore buses may not be able to be used multiple times = additional cost
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Splits families with young children (e.g. SK and Gr. 1 at different schools)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Development areas are scattered, and will be bused out of the Doon South study area therefore bus runs will not be efficient
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">School for development areas undetermined and therefore students may be split between multiple 'holding' schools

Conclusion

Ms. Manske noted that there are obviously several concerns that have been raised with respect to either one of these options and advised that many of these concerns can be addressed by setting up a transition committee. She noted that although we can't say today exactly how things would work, we know there are several ways other schools in the board are or have addressed similar situations to come up with an option that works best for students.

Ms. Manske opened the floor to questions/comments from 7:30 – 8:45 pm:

4. Questions/Comments

Q: Under Transition Option J - How is it fair that any French Immersion (FI) students in the affected area and their siblings will be allowed to remain at J.W. Gerth PS but regular track (non-FI) students will have to attend Pioneer Park PS? Why were parents not notified of this option for FI last year so we could have chosen to enroll our children in the FI program?

R: Ms. Manske responded that these options were not developed until recently (December 2013) and were developed by the boundary study working group.

Q: Why is the Board only now looking at the over enrolment situation in Doon South when new development has been going on here for years?

- R: Ms. Manske responded that the Board had planned to have the new South Kitchener school ready earlier and did not want to make any unnecessary disruptions to the community. She advised that because of requirements outside the Board's control, the timing for the new school is not going to be ready when required. She acknowledged that this is not a desired situation.
- C: Why would the Working Group consider Option J which would be moving and separating younger children from the siblings (Kindergarten students would remain at J.W. Gerth PS) while Grades 1-6 student (in new school boundary under Scenario 16) would have to attend Pioneer Park PS; some of these students would have change schools multiple times – J.W. Gerth PS to Pioneer Park PS to the New School. It would be better to move the Grade 5 and 6s to Doon PS which they would have to attend anyway.
- R: Ms. Manske responded that from those comments, it sounded like that individual is in favour of Option F.
- Q: A member of the community noted her displeasure with both Options F and J and asked what exactly are the reasons "beyond the School Board's control" that the school cannot be built sooner; and how can they be solved?
- R: Ms. Manske responded that the reasons for the delay are not that fault of any one organization. She noted that the new school site is dependent of the timing of the development which has conditions that have to be met as set out by the Ontario Municipal Board before the subdivision can be registered and the Board can purchase the site. Ms. Manske asked the subdivision developer representative to elaborate on those conditions.
- R: Mr. Larry Maseo Vice President of Activa Group responded that construction in Doon South is based is 2 phases:
- i. Phase 1 - Doon South Creek Subwatershed Plan**
Where most of the community currently resides, which is nearing development completion. He advised that this phase of development has different nature sensitivity requirements and was not as restricted in regard to conservation of the natural environment, stormwater management ponds and sanitary servicing.
 - ii. Phase 2 - Blair Creek Subwatershed Plan**
The New South Kitchener school site is located in this development area which has higher environmental sensitivity requirements which requires more detailed planning ([subwatershed planning](#)) to address such items as stormwater and floodplain management, conservation of wetlands and woodlands and sanitary servicing, conservation and restoration of natural ecological features. He advised that these requirements have been planned but still require time to develop (i.e., storm water management ponds have to be built with natural vegetation and given one year to get established before the site can be development) he advised that there are many other such conditions that have to be addressed before the subdivision can register and the Board can purchase the school site. Activa is actively working with the City of Kitchener to meet all of the conditions in order to proceed with the development.

Q: The Board does not own the school site?

R: Mr. Maseo responded that the school site is included in the plan of subdivision and advised that the Board cannot purchase the school site until the Subdivision is registered.

Q: Based on the timing required for meeting the environmental conditions, can the school be ready for September 2016?

R: Mr. Maseo responded that September 2016 is the earliest the school could be ready and Activa, the City of Kitchener and the Board are working together to that end.

Q: Why is Activa continuing to build homes in the area when there is not enough room in area schools to accommodate children that will be coming out of these new homes?

R: Mr. Maseo responded that the developer was working within the phases that are registered and noted that at the time it was assumed that students would attend schools that are already in place in the area.

C: The City should not be handing out building permits if the required infrastructure is not in place for families.

R: Mr. Maseo responded that it is his understanding from 1980s planning that the existing school facilities were sufficient to accommodate phase 1 development (Doon South Creek Subwatershed).

R: Ms. Manske responded that she has researched the enrolment projections that were used for the area at the time that J.W. Gerth PS was constructed and the boundary was set and advised that the student yield used for the enrolment projections was based on the average yield the Board had been receiving from similar new developments Board-wide. This area; however, has yielded much higher than the average. Ms. Manske advised that the Board does not want to overbuild and therefore tries not to over project. We are using a higher average student yield in our enrolment projections for this area going forward. She also advised that since J.W. Gerth PS was built there have been some provincial initiatives that have effectively reduced the number of students our schools can accommodate:

- Primary Class Size reduced the number of students in a classroom for grades 1-3 to 20 students;
- Full Day Kindergarten (FDK) doubles the number of Kindergarten students in the building as these students are now attending full time instead of half time.

Q: For Interim Options F and J how will the Pros and Cons be weighted; how will you base your decision?

R: Ms. Manske responded that Working Group Meeting #7 had to be cancelled due to the closing of all Board facilities on January 7th and advised that the Working Group has yet to have the opportunity to fully discuss the pros and cons or come up with a recommendation. She advised that the Working Group will be meeting again on January 14th.

Q: What are the criteria for the Interim Option?

R: Ms. Manske responded that the Interim Option needs to take enough enrolment out of J.W. Gerth PS and to limit any additional enrolment at Brigadoon PS for September 2014. She advised that J.W. Gerth PS site cannot accommodate any additional portables above the current (9). She also noted that the enrolment pressure needs to be reduced enough to ensure that we do not have to go through this process again before the new school opens; the goal is to remove a significant number of students yet affecting them the least number of times.

C: A member of the audience commented that neither Option F nor J are the perfect solution for anyone in this room; and advised that these interim options are creating a split within this school community.

This comment was followed by applause from the audience.

Q: There are some additional pros and cons that are not included in your presentation – how can we submit our lists of pros and cons to be considered by the Working Group?

R: Ms. Manske advised that comments can be provided on the comment sheets provided or submitted through the boundaryfeedback@wrdsb.on.ca email address.

Q: It was noted earlier that a decision is expected by the end of January; who decides between the Options and how will this decision be evaluated and when will parents learn the outcome?

R: Ms. Manske responded that the elected Board of Trustees makes the decision. She advised the Boundary Study Working Group will meet again on January 14, 2014 and advised that any comments should be received prior to this meeting to be given consideration by the Working Group before finalizing its recommendations. The Report and Recommendation will be presented by staff to the Board of Trustees at the January 20, 2014 Committee of the Whole Meeting.

Q: J.W. Gerth PS is not being used to its full potential:

- It has a dedicated music room while other schools have a music teacher that visits each classroom
- Portable being used for Special Education only
- Children are taxied in from out-of-boundary to attend Special Education, which is housed in a classroom

Why will 130 in-boundary students have to move to Pioneer Park PS (Option J) with lower income families to a lower ranked school?

R: Ms. Manske asked the speaker to stop and advised that the Waterloo Region District School Board is a Public Education System providing quality education to all students regardless of income. She also advised that classroom usage is not taken lightly and that the Planning Department reviews classroom usage to determine appropriate usage as part of its yearly portable allocation review. Principals must prove that their schools (and portables) are being fully utilized and according to Ministry guidelines

before any additional portables will be placed, or to justify retention of current portables. Schools of this size often require more space than the standard classrooms available.

- C: The previous speaker continued and asked that the Working Group consider a new Option that would better utilize J.W. Gerth PS's classrooms and portables, sending the taxed-in Special Education students to another school and to limit all new registrations to only those with siblings currently attending J.W. Gerth PS until the new school opens to reduce the cost of transporting students to Pioneer Park PS and keep families happy.
- Q: Will the recommendations going to the Board on January 20, 2014 include both transition options F and J for consideration or will only one option be recommended?
- R: Ms. Manske responded that it is possible that both will be put forward for consideration but advised that based on discussions at past Working Group meetings only one transition option may be recommended; the Working Group felt that it was important to provide an alternative transition option to the community and to gather your feedback at this third public meeting before making a recommendation to the Board.
- Q: Concern was expressed with comments in the minutes regarding Option J and the number of portables required at Pioneer Park PS and the number of washrooms; that may require the scheduling of washroom breaks.
- R: Ms. Manske responded that the number of washroom at Pioneer Park PS is within the Ontario Building Code requirements for the required number of portables needed under Option J (11 total). Ms. Manske advised that the comment around scheduling of washroom breaks was made in regard to scheduling of hand washing breaks.
- C: The boys' washroom at Pioneer Park PS only has 3 toilets in total.
- R: Ms. Manske advised that the washroom situation at Pioneer Park PS is included under the Cons for transition Option J (see slide 27 of the online presentation - *Increases Pioneer Park PS to 175% occupancy = more pressure on smallest building in the study area*).
- Q: Option J is too disruptive; we chose our home and neighbourhood based on the school: what will happen if the new school is not ready for September 2016? What is the long-term plan if the school does not get built?
- R: Ms. Manske responded that continuation of the transition option chosen (J or F) until the new school is opened is the current plan. This may need to be re-evaluated (especially for Brigadoon PS) if there is a major delay.
- Q: The [registering of children for French Immersion](#) for next year has begun; with the uncertainty around which transition option will be chosen, how can I register my child for the program. Under Option J my child would be considered out-of-boundary and unable to register for the French Immersion Program at J.W. Gerth PS, students that have to attend Pioneer Park PS will not access to the program.

- R: Ms. Manske responded that the French Immersion Process is not a first-come-first-served registration and that parents can wait until the end of January to register after a decision has been made on the transition option before registering their choice of school for the program.
- Q: Given that Doon PS operated as a 6-8 school until J.W. Gerth PS opened in 2008; is there an Option that would move only the Grades 6s to Doon PS? How many Grade 6s are there at J.W. Gerth PS?
- R: Ms. Manske responded that Option H looked at moving only the Grade 6s and while for 2014-15 may be okay will not be enough to accommodate for growth in 2015-16 and will require more portables than J.W. Gerth PS can handle.
- Q: Option J would have the Grade 5s transition to 3 schools in 3 years – could consideration be given to grandfather them to stay at J.W. Gerth PS to reduce the number of transitions for these students?
- R: Ms. Manske responded that the Working Group could look at grandfathering the Option J Grade 5s but this would be dependent on the impact on J.W. Gerth PS.
- C: The [Boundary Study's Objective](#) to minimize the impact on students and families where changes are proposed is clearly not met under Option J as families with JKs and/or SKs will stay at J.W. Gerth PS while their siblings in Grades 1-6 have to attend Pioneer Park PS, combined with some Grades having to transition to 3 different schools within 3 years.

This comment was followed by applause from some members of the audience.

- Q: What is the projected student yield being used for the new school? Are you taking into consideration the new development areas in the area?
- R: Ms. Manske responded that the Board has started a new process where it carves new areas of development out of the attendance boundary of schools and assigns them to holding schools (which could mean that these students would be bussed outside the area to a school that can accommodate that student population), in hopes of avoiding over enrolment situations in the future.
- Q: Can we implement both options and give parents the choice of which Option (F or J) they would like for their child?
- R: Ms. Manske responded that would not be something we would consider because it would uncertainties around allocating resources and program viability. The two options cannot co-exist.
- C: Will the petitions being circulated have any impact on which Option is chosen?
- R: Ms. Manske responded that the elected Board of Trustees, some of which are in the audience this evening, will make the decision on which transition Option will be in place for September 2014. They may choose to consider the petitions.

- C: Families will have 2 different bus routes with 2 different bell times.
- R: Ms. Manske responded that this could be the case under Option F or J or Status Quo.
- C: These changes would be easier on the older students (Option F) as they will be going to Doon PS in future anyway.
- Q: With the possibility that there might be enough room at J.W. Gerth PS for the Grade 5s to remain there for September 2014 (only the 6s moving to Doon PS under Option F), if the Special Education class is also moved out, would that allow enough room for the 2015-16 Grade 5s?
- R: Ms. Manske responded that she is unable to answer that question and would have to look into it further.
- Q: Are there other 5-8 schools in the Board?
- R: Chairperson Martin responded that there was in the past but none currently.
- Q: What will be done to get Doon PS ready to accommodate the Grade 5-6s?
- R: Superintendent Hodgins responded that as she advised at Public Meeting #2, once a transition option is chosen, a transition committee will be established to work through any concerns to provide a positive learning environment for students.
- Q: The Board's [Policy 3002](#) outlines the different school models but 5-8 isn't one of them – I am concerned with the possibility of drugs at Doon PS.
- R: Superintendent Hodgins responded that the Board also operates JK-8 schools which would include these grades together at one facility. She noted that JK-8 schools have age appropriate play areas and activities for each of the age groups and advised that a transition committee would be appointed to address concerns appropriately.
- Q: My main concern is that JK-8 schools are not the same as middle schools; I am not comfortable with my 9 year old being in a school which is heavily populated by 7-8s and having to be isolated from them.
- C: Another audience member commented that these 7-8 students at Doon PS were once the 5-6s from area schools and are good kids and are not all into drugs as has been suggested.

More discussion followed between the two audience members regarding the vilification of the Doon PS students.

- C: I have 3 children attending 3 different schools (J.W. Gerth PS, Doon PS and Huron Heights Secondary School). Growing up in Europe, I attended a 5-12 school and do not see the big deal with Option F. The transition for the 5-6s will be smoother as would eventually have had to transition to Doon PS anyway.

This comment was followed by applause from some members of the audience.

- Q: Recent Harvard research was published on the adverse effect of middle schools; was this taken into consideration? Have you considered the high rate of drug use in middle schools and the affect this could have on the Grade 5 and 6 students?
- R: Ms. Manske advised that she has done a lot of research on middle schools and advised that most of the research is American-based and their school system is much different both in setup and curriculum, than the Canadian system, and with typical middle schools the size of our high schools.
- R: Superintendent Hodgins responded that while [Board Policy 3002](#) - Elementary School Size and Configuration, states that the Board prefers the JK-8 model where possible it also recognizes that in some areas the JK-8 model is not achievable. This policy also recognizes and continues to support the 7-8 model as well. She noted that we are in a difficult situation with limited funding and unfortunately have to consider other short-term solutions that may not be ideal and advised the community that their input and concerns are valued contributions to this process.
- C: A better solution would be to get the new school built.
- Q: Is there an option to allow the new school boundary JK/SKs to attend Pioneer Park PS under Option J in September 2014?
- R: Ms. Manske responded that currently there isn't an option that considers that, but that it could be looked at as well. The issue here may be with the number of Full Day Kindergarten rooms available at Pioneer Park PS.
- Q: Is the Board considering (or will it consider) the need for a dedicated French Immersion school under its long-term planning to provide equal opportunity for all students to participate in this program rather than at a select few locations?
- R: Ms. Manske responded that approximately 5 years ago (2008) the Board reviewed the process for the delivery of the French Immersion program and surveyed parents about a dedicated French Immersion facility and based on the feedback received at that time decided not to pursue it. Ms. Manske advised that it would be up to parents to indicate to the Board their interest in looking at this further.
- C: Remarking on an offensive comment made earlier regarding the utilization of J.W. Gerth PS and the differences in socioeconomics between J.W. Gerth PS and Pioneer Park PS communities and in particular the suggestion that the Special Education program should be moved out of J.W. Gerth PS; the commenter pointed out that changes are generally very difficult for students in special education classes and these classes are of great importance to families with Special Education needs and ventured that if this were an enrichment program that moving it would not be requested by a member of that school community.

This comment was followed by applause by some members of the audience.

- Q: Can French Immersion also be offered for Grades 5-7 at the new South Kitchener school in its opening year?

R: Ms. Manske responded that it is possible that Grades 5-7 French Immersion may not be offered; it will depend on the number of students in the program at the time that will be moving to the new school (from both J.W. Gerth PS and Brigadoon PS), which and may not be enough to run the full program there. These students would instead be allowed to remain at their current school and/or attend Doon PS for the 7-8 French Immersion program; sibling(s) would also be permitted to stay as well until the grandfathered student has finished; neither the French Immersion student nor their sibling(s) would be eligible for transportation as they would be attending as out-of-boundary.

Q: Based on the unexpectedly high number of students in this area; is the Board taking these numbers into consideration and how this will impact Huron Heights Secondary School in the future?

R: Ms. Manske responded that the planning for that has already begun for that, but advised that it will take time and money and at this point nothing is guaranteed.

Q: Given that Doon PS operated as a K-8 school in the past; why isn't Doon PS being considered to be converted to a JK-8 school given its larger site and the over enrolment in the area and it had had offered those grades in the past?

R: Ms. Manske responded that the Working Group did give consideration to converting Doon PS to JK-8 (two of these Scenarios were presented at Public Meeting #1). Today's standard Full Day Kindergarten rooms include a washroom and are larger than the classrooms that the school has currently. The Working Group did not pursue Doon PS as a JK-8 because:

1. A logical attendance boundary could not be established for Doon PS that would not require bussing of students that are within walking distance of their current schools.
2. The uncertainty around if or when funding could be secured from the Ministry.

Ms. Manske advised that the possibility does exist to consider Doon PS for JK-8 in the future, outside this particular Boundary Study process.

C: A member of the audience commented that they would like to thank the Working Group committee members for taking their concerns into consideration and noted that unlike similar public processes that occur at the City level, the Boundary Study Working Group listened and made changes accordingly.

Q: If Transition Option F is approved – will J.W. Gerth PS Grade 5 and 6 teachers move to Doon PS with their classes?

R: Ms. Manske responded that teachers work under a collective agreement and staffing process and any staffing would be determined by those processes which can include seniority and choice so unfortunately, we would not be able to guarantee that teachers would transfer with their classes.

- Q: Under Option J the Grade 6s affected would have to change schools 3 times in 3 years; could they be allowed to remain at J.W. Gerth PS for the 2014-15 school year?
- R: Ms. Manske responded that could be a consideration if Option J is chosen as the interim option.
- Q: Option F would require 32 portables while Option J require 26 – will not make financial sense to recommend the option that is the more expensive of the two. How much do portable cost?
- R: Ms. Manske advised that it costs \$70K to purchase a portables and \$25K to hook up on site; accordingly the Board does not purchase or move portables without good reason.
- Q: Would the Board consider adjusting the bell times for the schools affected so that parents do not have to deal with 2 different bell times?
- R: Executive Superintendent Allen advised that bell times have been set for September 2014, and cannot be changed again in the 2014-15 school year because parents needed to be informed by December 15, 2013 as we had committed to do. She indicated that they may be adjusted in the future in order to address arising issues and changes can be considered to determine if it can work at that time, if workable. She also commented that it would need to be something that was supported by all involved if it were to be done earlier. She also said that, although no promises could be made, it would be reviewed.
- C: I hope the Board will not make a decision on Option F or J based on the difference in the number of portables needed for each.
- Q: Can the Board acquire the land for the new school from the developer and begin building the school?
- R: Ms. Manske responded that even if the Board could sever the lands from the developer the school site would likely be subject to the same requirements as the developer (and requiring electrical and sanitary servicing).
- Q: How does Principal Kitamura feel about Pioneer Park PS operating at 175 percent capacity next year?
- R: Principal Kitamura responded that Pioneer Park PS staff will do their best to ensure that students are provided with a quality education.
- C: Executive Superintendent Allen thanked the community for their patience and acknowledged that the current situation is not favourable and she recognizes that parents are unhappy. She advised that past decisions were made based on the best information available to us at that time and that the Board, the City and the developer are working together to make sure that the new South Kitchener school is built as soon as possible. She noted that planning for the area has been ongoing and that acquiring funding from the Ministry of Education for school construction is a lengthy and complicated process requiring solid business case submissions that the Ministry can approve or turn down based on the amount of surplus space available at other schools

within the Board. She advised that the Board and its staff work together to offer an excellent education for all students at all of its public schools.

- C: You have access to data to look at where students are coming from; we bought our homes close to J.W. Gerth PS to ensure our children would be able to walk to school, now they may have to go to Doon PS earlier than anticipated, without transportation to school, will the safety of our children be taken into consideration, not a safe walk for a 9 year old.
- R: Transportation will be provided based on the Board's [Policy](#) and [Procedure](#) regarding Student Transportation.

Executive Superintendent Allen thanked everyone for attending and the formal question and answer period concluded at 8:45 p.m.

Those in attendance were invited to provide their [feedback](#) on the comment sheets or to send an [email](#). The contact numbers and Board website information were shared. Attendees were invited to take a look at the display boards outlining Scenario 16 and Transition Options F and J and Planning staff were available to answer questions one-on-one.

Ms. Manske, Mr. Hercanuck, Executive Superintendent Allen, Superintendent Hodgins, Chairperson Martin, Trustees Johnston and Ramsay, Principals Schaffner, Kitamura, Oberle, Hagey-Nichols and Vice Principal Davidson were available to answer questions one-on-one until approximately 9:45 PM

Contact Information:

Website: <http://www.wrdsb.ca/planning/boundary-studies/boundary-studiesdoon-south-boundary-study/>

Email: boundaryfeedback@wrdsb.on.ca (please indicate Doon South Study in the subject line)

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[How to be a Delegation](#)

Individuals, organizations and groups are welcome to speak to the Board as a [delegation](#). In accordance with Board Bylaws, at regular [Board meetings](#), delegations speak only to matters relevant to items listed on the agenda. All other presentations will be scheduled at Committee of the Whole Meetings.

You may register as a delegation by calling Jayne Herring, Manager of Corporate Services, at 519-570-0003, ext. 4336 during regular business hours. You should register by noon on the Thursday prior to the meeting.