



Meeting Notes

1. Welcome

Nathan Hercanuck detailed the agenda items and welcomed everyone to the meeting. Seven observers were present.

2. Public Meeting Review/Recap

- **Proposed construction at Grand View**

A new piece of information was presented at the Public Meeting that the Working Group had not seen yet, the proposed construction at Grand View and the cost of this work.

The Architectural Technologist at the Board suggest an addition be constructed on the west end of Grand View's building containing a learning resource centre (2,300 sq ft), and a new office (1,800 sq ft) on the 1st floor. A new entrance way so people enter right at the office. There would be an elevator accessing all floors on the external face of the existing building. An addition would require the parking lot to be relocated.

In Scenario 1, construction costs are \$1,344,000.

Scenario 3a would require 2 classrooms to be built (atop the Learning Resource Centre/office addition) and the elevator would cost less because it would mean using shared walls with the other pieces of construction. The cost of construction would be \$1,560,000.

Note: All sizes and costs are preliminary

Question: How long does it take to construct an addition of this magnitude?

Response: Approximately 1 year. We can build a new school in 1.5 years, and this is less construction. Construction will likely occur while school is in, so we'll have to address where students will be in the school and safety on the site while construction is going on.

There were a few questions at the Public Meeting about whether the Board has money for such expenditures. The answer is, yes, but the decision to do any construction would be a Board decision.

Question: Would/could the Board move kids without doing any of the renovations at Grand View?

Response: Yes, but the Board would have to have a good explanation of what this would accomplish (e.g. Moving students out of portables at one school into portables at another). A recommendation of either scenario will include an addition at Grand View. Overall, if students are moved out of Preston Public, there will be a portable reduction because Grand View has two empty class rooms for next year.

- **Feedback summary**

Mr. Hercanuck asked if everyone received the feedback summary emailed out to working group members. The feedback summary represented comments submitted on the comment sheets as well as emails received that were comments related to the information presented at the Public Meeting. The comment summary will be posted on the web.

Working Group members who attended the Public Meeting were asked if they had heard any comments at the meeting that hadn't already been captured. The Working Group felt that everything had been sufficiently captured.

- **Scenario 6b**

There was an additional scenario presented at the Public Meeting, Scenario 6b, which was developed by members of the public. This scenario is a variation on Scenario 6a that the Working Group looked at, but has Areas A2 and B directed to Grand View.

The enrolment projections presented at the Public Meeting for this scenario showed the FTE numbers and not totals (for 2014 and 2018). The enrolment chart in tonight's presentation has corrected that.

- **Safety Issue**

In April, there was an incident on Dover St. where a Preston High School students were approached by a man in a pick up truck. Police were notified, and all the schools in the area sent home letters to parents so they were aware of the incident. There have been no further incidents.

In the feedback from the Public Meeting, some parents felt that if students have to walk a greater distance, there is a greater potential for students to be approached by undesirable individuals.

3. Scenario Discussion/Evaluation

The Working Group proceeded to go through Scenarios 1, 3a and 6b with respect to the Study Objectives and any changes made to the information shared at previous meetings.

Scenarios

Scenario 1

No changes.

Scenario 3a

In Scenario 3a, the capacity at Grand View is increased to 259 because of the recommended 2 classroom addition. This may still mean a portable at Preston because the Ministry counts the computer lab in the loading of classrooms, or the capacity of the school but students are not scheduled in the computer lab the whole day.

The Grand View facility information in the objectives “meets/doesn’t meet” chart was moved to “meets” because of the proposed addition (this is a change from before). Financially feasible “meets/doesn’t meet” was moved to doesn’t meet to reflect that Scenario 3a is the costlier option.

In terms of transportation, there may have to be bell time changes to accommodate bus drop off at two schools (Preston and Grand View) for areas A and B.

Scenario 6b

Grand View gets Areas A2 and B from Preston.

Nathan presented a map showing the Pioneer Tower area and the GRCA’s flood plain regulation limits. There was some concern that staff had not accounted for all the development in the Pioneer Tower area. This map shows that there really isn’t any more land left that has not been included in the projections. Much of the remaining vacant land is in the flood plain or is taken up by golf courses (not developable) below the flood plain.

This scenario results in more equitable program at the facilities (compared to current situation), but less so when compared to Scenario 3a when looking at balancing out student populations at the three schools (Preston, Parkway and Grand View).

Construction costs would be the same as Scenario 1. An elevator would be required at Grand View.

This scenario certainly fragments Area A

There would be no additional transportation costs – existing bus runs could continue with different drop offs.

A change to all day, alternate day kindergarten for areas G and J at Grand View.

Potential bell time changes for Preston and Grand View to accommodate bus runs.

Comment: If we're looking at fracturing areas, then we should have started by carving out the appropriate number of students from the boundaries. This scenario is really only meeting the objective in terms of the numbers, this is why we had "community" objectives.

Comment: I like this one. I would have thought it would be cheaper though. I like it for a couple of reasons. If all of Area A moves, there is the issue of the loss of volunteers at Preston. Area A1 also gets to stay at Preston, they have the most history there. It displaces fewer children. Area A is huge and I just don't see how they're all the same community.

Area A1 historically would have gone to Preston, at least since Pinegrove closed (before 1980s).

Question: Were there any comments from the public meeting about Scenario 6b?

Response: Yes, there were comments both for and against the scenario. These are included in the package that was sent out to the Working Group.

Comment: You can carve up the boundaries any way you want, but look at the history. The Blair area (Area B) has been at Preston for a very long time. If we're going to suggest splitting Area A, then make Area A2 larger and leave Area B at Preston. No matter what, there would be a difficult split between Areas A1 and A2.

Comment: Area A is a unique community; they are coming from the outside. Should we have less consideration for keeping them together? The school environment is what has brought Area A together as a community.

Comment: In any scenario, we shouldn't be looking at any losses, it is a gain of a new school community.

4. Roundtable

The question was posed to the Working Group, is there a front-runner? Does one scenario do better than another? Does one scenario do better than two other ones?

Comment: Based on the objectives (strictly), Scenario 3a is the front-runner.

Comment: I have been asked to resurrect Scenario 4 (Areas A and B to Parkway), and recommend an accommodation review.

Question: An accommodation review, would it also allow us to look at JK-8 schools?

Response: Yes. The study area would likely include William G. Davis and all its feeder schools.

The suggestion of an accommodation review could be presented to the Board as an alternative to a boundary change; it wasn't the process we were asked to look at.

Comment: At the beginning, the most logical thing to do seemed to be to have Area A go to Parkway. Maybe we should back track, especially since the addition at Grand View is so costly (we weren't expecting that). This is all getting to be pretty confusing. I'm not sure an accommodation review will address all the issues in the Preston core.

Question: Are all of these suggestions just band-aid solutions? Will we have to come back in 10 years from now and do an accommodation review anyway?

Comment: I would reject 6b. Maybe an accommodation review would help address more issues. Geographically, Parkway is a closer school to areas A and B.

Comment: In terms of this group's task, I can live with Scenarios 1 or 3a, but an accommodation review should be a strong consideration because there doesn't seem to be a low-cost fix.

Comment: The talk around Grand View is:

- We're very open
- Kids are down to earth and very accepting
- This is a win-win for Grand View, scenario 1 or 3a doesn't matter
- The school will be sustainable at least until 2018
- It is evident what the school needs are

Comment: This is a real estate issue, there is no land elsewhere in the Preston core to build a school – we would have to keep existing sites and rebuild. If we're looking to 2040, then yes, an accommodation review is perhaps a more appropriate process.

Comment: Scenario 3a is the best if we want to avoid emotional disruption. The scope of the study was to look at 2018, so Scenario 3a would accomplish that.

Transitions

The Working Group felt that it made sense to recommend the option of keeping grade 6 students at Preston for the transition year.

Concerns from Preston Public School

- The community is very divided based on where things are right now
- There have been situations where issues have become personal
- There has been language used such as harassment, verbal assaults, police contact, etc. included in emails and phone calls to PPS.
- There has been some pull back in volunteers and opportunities for the students are being affected.
- Don believes he needs to get a communication out to the parents suggesting that everyone needs to be focused on what is best for the kids and that personal issues need to be kept out of this.

The Working Group supported Don's decision to send out a communication to his school community, noting that with no decision, the school community has not changed.

5. Future Meeting Dates

Board Committee of the Whole Meeting:

Monday June 15, 2009 in the Board Room at the Education Centre (51 Ardelt Ave., Kitchener), 7:00 PM

Board Meeting:

Monday June 29, 2009 in the Board Room at the Education Centre (51 Ardelt Ave., Kitchener), 7:00 PM