



Huron Village Elementary Schools Boundary Study
Minutes of Public Meeting #1
October 30, 2012
Country Hills Public School 7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

The first Public Meeting of the Huron Village Elementary Schools Boundary Study was held at Country Hills Public School on Tuesday, October 30, 2012.

Approximately 50 members of the community were in attendance including City of Kitchener, Ward 6 Councillor, Paul Singh.

1. Welcome/Introductions

Lauren Manske, Senior Planner for the Waterloo Region District School Board welcomed those in attendance and gave the following introductions:

Board Planning Staff:

Dennis Cuomo, Manager of Planning
Andrea Kean, Recording Secretary

Principals and Vice Principals:

Sandy Dawson, Principal Laurentian PS
Sherri Davidson, Vice Principal Country Hills PS
Evelyn Giannopoulos, Principal Country Hills PS
Brian Burnley, future Principal of Jean Steckle PS (sends his regrets)
Pam Kaur, Principal Alpine PS (sends her regrets)

Superintendents of Education:

Laura Hodgins
Gregg Bereznick

Ms. Manske led the audience through tonight's [presentation](http://www.wrdsb.ca/planning/boundary-studies/huron-village-boundary-study/) available online at:
<http://www.wrdsb.ca/planning/boundary-studies/huron-village-boundary-study/>

Background:

In May 2012, Board Trustees authorized staff to do a boundary study in this part of Kitchener because of the opening of a new elementary school in the Huron Village area. The capital request to build a new elementary facility at 130 Woodbine Ave, Kitchener, was approved by the Ministry of Education on July 7, 2011 and subsequently approved by the Board in September 2011 to open for September 2013. Construction for this new school, now known as Jean Steckle P.S., is currently underway and requires an attendance boundary.

Purpose of Meeting:

The purpose of tonight's meeting is to share with the community boundary scenarios that have been developed and to get [feedback](#) and suggestions on those scenarios; as well as to request any other solutions.

Key Items:

- Boundary changes will be implemented for this coming September 2013; no changes will take place before September 2013.
- This Study will not consider any school closures.
- This Study will not consider any changes to secondary school boundaries

2. Explanation of the Boundary Study Process

What is a Boundary Study?

A boundary study is a public process. It ensures that a decision made by the board regarding attendance boundaries has the involvement of an informed local community.

Reasons for a Boundary Study:

There are several different reasons to conduct a boundary study:

- Opening of new school and establishing the new boundary and adjusting the boundaries of the existing schools in the area;
- Changing the grade structure of an elementary school – *this could include changing an elementary school from a Junior Kindergarten (JK) to Grade 6 format to a composite school with JK to Grade 8 format;*
- Balancing enrolment and facilities – *one school may have too many students for its capacity and another may have too few*

The main reason for the Huron Village Boundary Study is to establish an attendance boundary for Jean Steckle P.S.

Study Area:

The Huron Village Boundary Study area includes 4 schools:

1. Alpine Public School
2. Country Hills Public School
3. Laurentian Public School
4. Jean Steckle Public School (opening Sept. 2013)

Both Alpine PS and Country Hills PS are currently acting as what the Board calls “holding schools” for the Huron Village community.

Laurentian PS is the senior elementary facility for the area. Its current feeder schools are Alpine, Country Hills, Glencairn, Forest Hill and Trillium P.S.

Jean Steckle PS is the new school being built at 130 Woodbine Avenue.

School Size (Enrolment and Capacity):

Referring to the table on slide 6 of the online presentation, Ms. Manske noted that Country Hills P.S. currently requires 12 portables to accommodate students well beyond what the building was intended to hold. Alpine PS has 2 portables and Laurentian PS has 3 portables. Ms. Manske noted that it is the hope that Jean Steckle PS can help reduce or eliminate the need for these portables.

The opening of Jean Steckle PS has come at an opportune time because of the implications that the Full-Day Kindergarten program will have on the Alpine and Country Hills PS facilities. This is the third year of implementation of The Ministry of Education's new Full-Day Kindergarten (FDK) program and neither Alpine PS nor Country Hills PS offer FDK yet. This program effectively doubles our Kindergarten population at the school on a daily basis. The Board received some funding from the Ministry to construct or renovate classrooms for this program. Both Alpine PS and Country Hills PS have been approved for 1 additional classroom to be constructed for this program and both schools are scheduled to offer the FDK program in September of 2014.

Historic Enrolment (2002-2012):

Referring to slide 7 of the online presentation, Ms. Manske noted that overall the Board has experienced a small increase in enrolment over the past decade, with most of that growth concentrated in the areas of new residential development including the Huron Village area.

The older, more established neighbourhoods have been in decline – these are the neighbourhoods around Alpine PS and Trillium PS.

There has been a lot of fluctuation in enrolments over the past 10 years in this area. Most of these fluctuations are due to the opening of new schools and boundary changes as a result. Alpine, Country Hills and Laurentian Public Schools have all acted as holding schools for the Laurentian West neighbourhood providing accommodation until W.T. Townshend and Williamsburg Public Schools were opened. The most recent growth at these schools has been related to additional development in the Laurentian West area, (Eby Estates) which is being directed to Alpine PS, and the Huron Village area that is split between Alpine and Country Hills Public Schools. All of these areas are attending Laurentian PS for Grades 7 and 8.

The Boundary Study Process:

How does the process work?

Referring to slide 8 of the online presentation, which outlines the Boundary Study Process, Ms. Manske noted that once the Board has identified a boundary study area, the Board's Planning Department asks the Principals at each of the schools involved to seek out up to 2 parent/guardian representatives to sit with them and us on a Study Working Group.

3. Working Group

The Working Group represents the larger community and:

- Confirms the actual issues identified in the area
- Develops objectives for the study (*these are important because we go back to them to determine the "fit" of each scenario*)
- Assists with developing scenarios (*i.e., possible solutions*)

Ms. Manske noted the importance of public feedback and collective input on scenarios; and requested that the community [let the Working Group know:](#)

- what you like,
- what you don't like,
- your ideas for improving scenarios

Once a preferred scenario is chosen the working group will develop an implementation or transition plan on how to best implement changes while being mindful of transitions, for students, staff and parents.

The feedback gathered from comments received from the community will be shared with the Working Group and used to help evaluate the scenarios.

The Working Group will:

- Develop a recommended option/scenario
- Share/seek feedback on the recommended scenario with community at Public Meeting #2
- May revise recommendation based on feedback
- Staff on the Working Group will take a recommendation to the Board of Trustees,
- The Board of Trustees will make the final decision.

Timeline:

Slide 9 of the online presentation outlines the timeline for the boundary study. Ms. Manske noted the need to have a recommendation to the Board by December 2012 or January 2013, for changes to take place for this coming September (2013); however, advised that the implementation of some of the changes may be phased-in.

The next public meeting (public meeting #2) will be on November 28th, 2012 at Country Hills Public School.

4. Study Objectives

Draft Study Objectives:

The Working Group has discussed the issues within the study area and developed a set of draft objectives for things we hope to achieve through this study in order to address the issues.

Ms. Manske noted that the following draft objectives are not weighted in any way; therefore, the order of the objectives is unimportant.

Draft Objectives:

- To reduce the potential for combined grade classes at schools by moving towards the following criteria (from [Board Policy 3002 - Elementary School Size and Configuration](#))
 - JK-6 facilities between 350 and 400 students (approx. 2 classes per grade)
 - JK-8 facilities between 500 and 650 students (approx. 2 classes per grade)
- To establish boundaries that are long-term (approx. 10 years) and consider:
 - Walking distances (community/neighbourhood-level schools)
 - Efficiency of transportation
 - Capacity of schools
 - Current and future population density and demographics
 - Impact on feeder and surrounding schools
- To minimize the impact on students and schools where changes are proposed (consideration for grandparenting, phasing, transitions, etc.)

Ms. Manske asked for feedback on the objectives. Advising that should there be something we have missed, or that does not make sense, please let us know by leaving a comment or sending us an [email](#).

5. Scenarios

SCENARIO 3

Referring the map of the study area on slide 11 of the online presentation, Ms. Manske noted that Scenario 3 would send the entire west side of the study area to Jean Steckle P.S.

Two options for implementation:

Scenario 3 – Option B (slide 12 of the online presentation)

- Open Jean Steckle PS as a JK-7 school. (*Grade 8 students in the area would remain at Laurentian PS to finish their final year of elementary*)
- Jean Steckle PS would add Grade 8 the following year (Sept. 2014) (*the 2013/14 Grade 7s become the Grade 8s*)

Enrolment numbers have been projected out 10 years; The Jean Steckle PS enrolment becomes out of hand beyond the next 5 years. It is expected that the Board will open at least 1 additional new school in the area to handle this enrolment increase.

Scenario 3 – Option C (slide 13 of the online presentation)

- Open Jean Steckle PS as a JK-6 school. (*area Grade 7 & 8 students remain at Laurentian PS*)
- Grades 7 & 8 phased-in to Jean Steckle PS (*add Grade 7s in September 2016 and adding the Grade 8 the following year (Sept. 2017).*)

SCENARIO 5

Referring to the maps on slide 14 of the online presentation, Ms. Manske noted that Scenario 5 would have the Laurentian West area remain at Alpine PS (area students will not attend Jean Steckle PS)

Two options for implementation:

Scenario 5 – Option B (slide 15 of the online presentation)

- Open Jean Steckle PS as a JK-7 school. (*Grade 8 students in the area would remain at Laurentian PS to finish their final year of elementary*)
- Jean Steckle PS would add Grade 8 the following year (Sept. 2014) (*the 2013/14 Grade 7s become the Grade 8s*)

Scenario 5 – Option C (slide 16 of the online presentation)

- Open Jean Steckle PS as a JK-6 school (*area Grade 7 & 8 students remain at Laurentian PS*)
- Grades 7 and 8 phased-in to Jean Steckle PS (*starting in September 2016 with the Grade 7s and then adding Grade 8 the following year (Sept. 2017).*)

Possible Alternate Transition for Option C of both Scenarios 3 and 5:

Ms. Manske noted that another consideration (not shown) may be to allow the Grade 6 students to finish out at Country Hills PS or Alpine PS during the 2013/14 school year before going on to Laurentian PS the following year.

6. Next Steps:

- Working Group reviews public meeting comments
- Working Group refines scenarios based on public feedback
- A minimum of 1 additional Public Meeting
- Working Group to develop recommendations
- Staff bring recommendations to Trustees
- Trustees vote on recommendations

7. Questions/Other

Ms. Manske opened the floor to questions/comments:

Q: Jean Steckle PS is being built as a JK-8 school; why will it not be offering Grade 8 when it opens in September 2013?

R: The Board does not offer Grade 8 in the first year of a new school in order to reduce the number of transitions for students. Grade 8 students will be required to transition again for Grade 9 in the next year, so we try to avoid them having to transition twice in a two-year period.

C: Having children in different schools is disruptive to family schedules; it would be preferable to keep families together in the same school.

Q: Has the start time been set for Jean Steckle PS?

R: No. Typically Student Transportation Services of Waterloo Region (STSWR) will analyze bus routes and this will lead to the determination of a start time. It is likely not to be determined until the Spring of 2013.

Q: Will Jean Steckle PS be offering the balanced school day?

R: Gregg Bereznick, Superintendent of Education, responded that, “that is something that will be worked out at a later date”.

Q: Considering what happened with W.T. Townshend (has switched from a JK-8 to a JK-6 because enrolment was too high); will Jean Steckle PS be operating as a JK-8 school?

R: This has not been determined yet. That is why the working group is looking at options to open Jean Steckle PS as a JK-6 which will allow space to accommodate the other Huron Village development areas until the Board is able to open another new school in the area. We can then offer Grades 7 and 8 at Jean Steckle PS once another new school is operational, keeping in mind that may not be achievable in the next 3-4 years.

Q: Will Jean Steckle PS have a daycare centre on site?

R: Yes. The YWCA will be the third-party childcare operator. You can [contact the YWCA](#) directly with questions about the daycare at (519-576-8856).

Q: What affect will the new Jean Steckle PS have on the students of Williamsburg PS and W.T. Townshend PS?

R: None. Jean Steckle PS will not affect Williamsburg or W.T. Townshend PSs. There will not be enough space at Laurentian PS to accommodate the grades 7 and 8 population that is being bussed to Queensmount PS. Ms. Manske noted that the working group has

discussed the possibility of recommending that the Board undertake in the future, a Boundary Study of its Senior Elementary Schools in order to address the situation.

- Q: Does it make financial sense for the Board to be bussing students to Queensmount PS, when they would be able to walk to Laurentian PS?
- R: Yes it does make sense for the Board given there isn't any space available closer to accommodate that population. The Board pays a flat rate for bussing as opposed to being charged on distance.
- Q: I've noticed excessive speeds being driven along Seabrook Drive; are there plans to have the speed limits on Seabrook Drive and other streets near Jean Steckle PS lowered or to have the inclusion of speed bumps?
- R: Audience member, City of Kitchener, Ward 6 Councillor Paul Singh responded that the speed limit throughout the city, unless posted otherwise, is 50km/hr. The City has considered 40km/hr near schools in some exceptions and this process is currently under review. If a resident has concerns with excessive speeding on a street, they can contact the City's Transportation Services Department; staff will review the complaint to assess any mitigating measures. As for any street calming, the current budget allows only four a year. Upon residents' request, a traffic review study can be considered and prioritized.
- R: Ms. Manske advised that the Board is proactive and works with the City's Traffic Department and Supervisor of Crossing Guards to determine the need for Adult Crossing Guards as well as their appropriate locations.
- Q: Of the scenarios presented this evening, is there one which is most-favoured?
- R: Ms. Manske responded that the determination of a most-favoured scenario is part of the reason for this evening's meeting. She asked those in attendance to indicate on the comments sheets provided, the scenario they prefer and why. Ms. Manske noted that there are pros and cons to each of the scenarios, depending on personal perspectives:

SCENARIO 3	
Pros	Cons
Avoids using Alpine PS and Country Hills PS as holding schools for students who may not identify with those communities.	Jean Steckle PS unable to offer grades 7 and 8 in order to allow space to accommodate growth until another new school can be built.

SCENARIO 5	
Pros	Cons
Keeps the Alpine PS's enrolment numbers at a better level.	Leaves the Eby Estates students at Alpine PS

- Q: Scenario 5 isolates the Eby Estates population; why are they being sent to Alpine PS when the Board has closer schools?
- R: Ideally these students would go to Williamsburg PS or W.T. Townshend PS but those schools cannot accommodate this population. Alpine PS was chosen because it is able to accommodate those numbers.
- Q: How many students are in Eby Estates?

- R: There are approximately 40 JK-6 students and 10 grades 7-8 students.
- Q: Are you taking into account the 4 new apartment buildings that will be built in Country Hills PS boundary?
- R: Yes. Experience with other apartment developments suggest that we do not receive many students from apartment buildings but our enrolment projections allow for some increase from these new apartments.
- Q: Are out of boundary French Immersion student numbers included in the enrolment projections?
- R: Yes, we typically factor in “outs” and “ins” into the overall projections for a school.
- Q: Will the new Jean Steckle PS offer the French Immersion program?
- R: The [French Immersion \(FI\) program](#) is determined by parent interest. If /when the FI program is offered at Jean Steckle PS it will start at the Grade 1 level only and then proceed to be offered to other grades as that initial class progresses through the grade structure.
- Q: When would the Board initiate the next boundary study for the next expected new school for the Huron Village area?
- R: That will depend on when the Board receives funding for another school. Some areas will develop soon, but for most areas on the west side of Fischer-Hallman Road, we would likely be looking beyond 2020.
- Q: What high school will the Jean Steckle PS students attend?
- R: This boundary study will in no way affect the [Board’s secondary school \(high school\) boundaries](#). The boundaries for each high school have already been set by the Board; and are determined by where you live as opposed to which elementary school you attend. Therefore it is not a given that students that attend the same elementary school will attend the same high school. You can access the [Board’s School Finder tool](#) to determine what high school your children will attend. It may be either Huron Heights Secondary School or Cameron Heights Collegiate Institute.
- Q: Do we have to send our children to the secondary school of the boundary we reside in?
- R: Students can attend other secondary schools for special magnet programs provided they are accepted into those programs, and knowing that transportation will not be provided by the Board.
- Q: Jean Steckle PS is being built on a smaller site; will there be room for portables to be added?
- R: Yes. The Jean Steckle PS site is large enough (6 acres) to accommodate the needs of a 643 pupil place 2-storey school. The Board’s architect must allocate the room for at minimum 6 portables when designing the site. At this time, the Board does not build elementary schools larger than 650 pupil places.
- Q: Why was that site chosen?
- R: The Board chooses school sites based on various site selection criteria including available space in a location which is central to the community to which it will serve.

Q: What is the Board's bussing distances?

R: The Board's will bus students based on the following distances:

- JK-SK – 0.8km (half mile)
- Grades 1-8 – 1.6 km (one mile)

The Board will work with the City of Kitchener to address any safety concerns. There are also circumstances for which special hazard bussing is permitted due to safety concerns which will be determined by a transportation consortium which looks at area safety issues and make the determination on behalf of the Board

Q: Does the Board plan on building a new school in the Eby Estates community?

R: No.

Q: Will the Full-day Kindergarten (FDK) program still be offered in September 2014 at Alpine and Country Hills Public Schools?

R: Yes. And Jean Steckle PS will offer the FDK program in September 2013.

Ms. Manske thanked everyone for coming out, and asked those in attendance to fill provide their feedback on the comment sheets provided. The contact numbers and Board website information were shared. The formal presentation concluded and Ms. Manske invited those in attendance to take a look at the display boards outlining the scenarios ([available here](#)). Mr. Cuomo, Ms. Manske, Superintendents Bereznick and Hodgins and Principals Dawson and Giannopoulos and Vice Principal Davidson made themselves available to answer any questions one-on-one until approximately 8:15 p.m.

Website:

Ms. Manske invited the community to visit the [Board's website](#) and advised that there is additional information posted on the website for viewing.

Contact Information:

Website: <http://www.wrdsb.ca/planning/boundary-studies/huron-village-boundary-study/>

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

Phone:

519-570-0003 ext. 4419

Fax:

519-570-2172

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