

Updated Questions and Answers

December 22, 2022

Student Accommodation Planning: Elementary Family of Schools/Clarke High School

Once an option is selected, what are the next steps and will changes be implemented by September?

We are committed to supporting a positive transition for students, staff and families. Once planning is finalized, students and staff will have the opportunity to provide feedback about the supports and resources needed to ensure a smooth transition. Parents/families will also be engaged in the transition planning process. Information will continue to be shared regarding timing and any identified adjustments needed as information becomes available.

How will bell times and bussing be affected, by potential changes, e.g. former walkers, and how will bussing be stabilized?

Once a plan is identified, bell and bus times will be discussed with Student Transportation Services of Central Ontario (STSCO)

are met and that play spaces are available. Sufficient learning materials will also be ordered and made available for students.

When will the Pupil Accommodation Review pause be lifted?

Since June 2017, the Ministry of Education has put a 'pause' on the Pupil Accommodation Review process, which means that school closure and/or consolidations cannot be considered as options to address enrolment, programming or facility challenges. We have not received any indication about when the pause will be lifted.

Why was the new school build request denied by the Ministry of Education?

The Ministry of Education funds a limited number of projects each year, based on budget and priorities. Capital funding to support new schools, replacement schools, additions and deep retrofits to existing schools is allocated by the provincial government through the Capital Priorities program, an annual process where school boards identify their most urgent pupil accommodation needs.

The Ministry has a fixed capital budget that they allocate to school boards based on their assessment of where the greatest priorities lie across the province. In their review process, the Ministry assigns a higher priority to projects where utilization rates are equal to or greater than 100% at all nearby schools, as well as to those where the need for additional pupil places is demonstrable within the near term as opposed to long term accommodation pressures. At this time, the Board has available pupil places at Clarke High School.

Is there a building cap to be considered?

Each school has on-ground capacities that identify the number of students they were built to support. Newcastle PS is well over capacity and We want to create longer-term stability for students as much as possible, while also offering high quality educational programs and opportunities that support success.

Can we move the child care and after care program?

The child care program (YMCA Toronto) at Newcastle PS uses two purpose-built rooms for toddlers and preschoolers, most of whom attend Kindergarten at the school when they are eligible. Having these two rooms available would not create enough space to address the enrolment pressures.

And

that their kids will go to Waverley?

Students anticipated to come from the new development in the north village area are not included in Newcastle's enrolment projections because they will be directed to Waverley PS. As part of the subdivision approval and are required

inform the prospective homeowners that children in the development area will be attending

How many more portables can be placed at Newcastle?

The school may be able to house one more portable subject to a number of considerations, such as electrical loads, available schoolyard space, washroom capacity, available parking spaces and availability of portables within the system.

What about using Kirby PS?

The former Kirby PS is currently being used as an Education Centre for KPR staff. As the Board has available space in Clarke HS, utilizing the former elementary school is not a viable option.

Can the French Immersion program go to The Pines?

Board staff have considered utilizing The Pines as a single-track FI school; however, the building does not have available classroom space for a single-track K-6 school. Further, the Board does not feel that it is in the best interest of primary students to attend school at this campus.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS - OPTION A

Is there an option of building an addition at Newcastle PS?

School Board staff will explore all options including opportunities for a building addition. However, building additions are funded through the province and we do not know if the province would approve this location as a successful business case for an addition.

How many rooms are empty at each school?

All the rooms at Newcastle PS and The Pines PS are currently being utilized. Clarke HS has several empty rooms, mostly on the 2nd floor.

Why not use Bowmanville HS for Clarke HS secondary students, Clarke as an intermediate school and The Pines as an elementary school?

Bowmanville HS is nearing its capacity and would be unable to accommodate all of Clarke's secondary students.

The Board did consider the option of Clarke HS becoming an elementary school; however, there are concerns that the space is not suitable for elementary students.

How will the Board handle the overcapacity if nothing changes?

The Board utilizes several approaches to managing accommodation pressures, including use of temporary accommodations (i.e., portables), directing students in new developments 'holdingschools'

Will there be more programs/sports with option A?

Extracurricular options offered at all schools depend on student interest and staff volunteers to coordinate them. All schools have a variety of student opportunities.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS – OPTION B

Why is there enrolment decline at Clarke HS and can it be improved?

Enrolment has been declining at Clarke HS for several years despite efforts to support and promote the school. A combination of factors have affected the decline. There were fewer students in previous years due to declining enrolment, which affected course selection and programming options. Fewer program options may have led to some students attending other nearby secondary schools.

Can the building support all the students in the proposed options?

Yes. The Clarke HS physical building can accommodate the Board proposed options at its location.

Will there be more space at Bowmanville HS in the future?

Bowmanville HS is nearing its capacity. We do not anticipate space being available for the next few years.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS – OPTION C

What will the proposed model look like within a secondary school?

Several of the Board's high schools have an intermediate school located in the physical building of a high school and it has been a successful model. The intermediate students have separate schedules, including defined access to space. They operate as a separate school in most ways.

If this option is selected, can there be rotary subjects for Grade 4-6?

In the junior grades, there is one homeroom teacher who teaches the core subjects. Students in Grades 4-6 also receive 200 minutes of French instruction per five day cycle and an additional 40 minutes of coverage by another teacher. This totals 240 minutes in each cycle where students are not taught by their homeroom teacher.

Will the Board stop allowing students to go to BHS so we have enough students at Clarke HS to offer a greater variety of programs/courses?

Bussing to BHS is being considered