

Pupil Accommodation Review – Questions and Answers

- 1. Before the pandemic, students complained that George Harvey CI did not have sufficient space to accommodate York Memorial CI students. Hallways were crowded and common spaces and classrooms were crammed. How will the two schools be consolidated during a pandemic? How will we manage a 1200+ student population in one building?**

Answer: The TDSB will be following and applying Toronto Public Health Guidelines to ensure the safety of students and staff, and applying the same safety practices currently taking place at other secondary schools with large student populations.

- 2. Why not move George Harvey CI staff and students with York Memorial CI and close George Harvey CI?**

Answer: The intent of the consolidation process is to have the two schools come together as one school in a way that values and respects both schools. The programs of both schools will be combined resulting in a composite school that offers a broad range of courses supporting student pathways to university, college, apprenticeships, the workplace, and independent living.

- 3. Why is the option of consolidating Oakwood CI and George Harvey CI not being considered?**

Answer: This study considers George Harvey CI and York Memorial CI because of their close proximity to one another. Oakwood CI is further away from both schools.

- 4. If a consolidation is approved, how will the two schools operate on one timetable, considering each school follows a different timetable? How will the traditions and history of each school be honoured and respected in the process of consolidation? What will be the future for each school's sports team?**

Answer: A Transition Committee will be formed to implement the details of consolidation such as:

- Determine the timetable for the consolidated school (semestered, non-semestered, or hybrid);
- Identify courses; determine uniform or dress code;
- How to best honour the traditions of both schools and to create new traditions for the future;
- Review the need for extra support staff to manage transition for both students and staff

If scenario 2 is approved, the George Harvey building will be retrofitted to accommodate all students and staff.

In regards to programming, all programming offered at each school will be available at the newly consolidated school, subject, as always to enrolment.

5. What will happen to the staff if the two schools become one consolidated school?

Answer: If the Board decides to consolidate the two schools, Employee Services will work with the staff unions (OSSTF, CUPE, and PSSP) and TSAA on school staffing processes.

Historically, when school closures were mandated by the government just after amalgamation, and the TDSB decided to close its first school, the Employer discussed the process and next steps with staff unions.

6. Is the aim of this review to sell the George Harvey site and build condos?

Answer: The future of the George Harvey site has not been determined at this time. If the Board decides to consolidate the two schools, a review of the George Harvey property will occur closer to the time that the students and staff are relocated to the new York Memorial building. The review will consider three possibilities:

- (a) Keep the George Harvey property for an immediate TDSB need, such as an adult learning centre or multi-purpose centre; or
- (b) Keep the George Harvey property for a future TDSB need, but lease it out to a tenant to generate revenue until needed for a TDSB purpose; or
- (c) Sell the George Harvey property because it is not required for a current or future TDSB need as there is an adequate distribution of other TDSB sites in the area to provide the TDSB with options. If approved for sale, the property must by law be offered to other public agencies. If no public agency is interested in buying it, the property would then be put on the open market.

7. Why would money be invested to update George Harvey CI when there will be a new school in 2026?

Answer: If the Board approves scenario 2, some money will need to be invested at the George Harvey building to accommodate York Memorial staff and students. While this is a disadvantage of scenario 2, it needs to be contrasted against the advantages of the scenario. Having an early consolidation will allow:

- York Memorial to return its local attendance area sooner, making it easier access for local students;
- Transportation costs to be reduced; and
- An optimal sized secondary school of 1000+ students to be achieved sooner with greater course offerings available to the students.

8. Why does it take 6 years to build a school?

Answer: It typically takes the TDSB approximately 4 years to construct a new school – 2 years to design and receive approvals from the City of Toronto and the Ministry of Education; and 2 years to construct. Building a new school on the York Memorial site will take more time because we need to deal with the existing infrastructure and the heritage designation. It is estimated that it could take 3 years to design and receive approvals, and 3 years to construct.

9. These transitions and overall consolidation has had and will have a negative impact on the mental health of students and cause stress and anxiety. How will the TDSB address the mental health concerns that this review has and will cause?

Answer: If the Board makes the decision to consolidate the two schools, a Transition Committee will be formed to implement the details of the consolidation. This includes reviewing the need for supports to help manage the transition for both students and staff.

Staff from our Professional Support Services (PSS) department will be available to students on an individual, family and collective level to support their well-being and wellness during the transition.

A team, consisting of leadership and support staff, will work with staff and students early on in the process, before the transition takes place, to ensure concerns and anxieties around the move are addressed as soon as possible.

PSS staff will work with the Student Support Teams (SST) for each school to determine the best ways to address the mental health needs of students before, during, and after the transition.

10. Considering the overcrowding issues that happened the first time York Memorial CI moved into George Harvey CI, how will the TDSB ensure that this issue won't happen again, if the decision is to consolidate the two schools?

Answer: Back in May 2019, York Memorial CI students and staff were temporarily accommodated at George Harvey CI due to the fire. The two schools were accommodated in the George Harvey building as separate schools with their own distinct timetables: York Memorial CI is non-semestered and George Harvey CI is semestered. Organizing the space in the building to accommodate the separate timetables was challenging.

If the Board makes the decision to consolidate the two schools, the students of both schools will be merged into a single school with a single timetable, making organization of the space in the building simpler. The George Harvey building has a capacity of 1,452 pupil places which is sufficient to accommodate the students of both schools merged together.

11. If consolidation were to occur, what will happen to Special Education and Specialized programs such as Developmental Disability, Tech program, RUSH program, Advanced Placement, etc.?

Answer: The intent is to keep all programming together and have space for it at the new site, subject as always to enrolment.

12. How will the TDSB address a possible increase in the student population later?

Answer: There are a number of solutions that the TDSB can implement to deal with changing demographics. If enrolment increases significantly in this area, students from outside of the school's boundaries will be restricted from attending by stopping optional attendance. Currently, less than 50% of the students attending George Harvey CI and York Memorial CI live in the area. If enrolment pressures continue after reducing optional attendance, the schools' boundaries could be adjusted.

13. If a consolidation is decided on, students have made a statement that they will not attend the newly consolidated school and will attend other schools such as Downsview SS, Runnymede CI, Humberside CI, etc. Won't this impact the enrolment of the new school? What will the TDSB do if this happens?

Answer: Enrolments across the TDSB are often in flux. Staffing and programming are adjusted annually based on total school enrolments and option sheet course selections. We are anticipating that the consolidated school will be a desirable school to attend because of its broad range of course offerings and its accessible location within the Keele and Eglinton community.

14. Will the daycare remain at George Harvey if there is a consolidation?

Answer: If the Board makes the decision to consolidate the two schools, the Daycare Centre will remain at the George Harvey building.

15. In the case of a consolidation, will the insurance money be spent on retrofitting George Harvey to accommodate York Memorial?

Answer: We are planning to use a TDSB budget called School Condition Improvement to complete the renovations to the George Harvey building.

16. York Memorial C.I. is a war memorial dedicated to those in the City of York who perished in several wars, so its name is crucial to its heritage. Will the TDSB commit to keeping the name 'York Memorial C.I.' for the future school building re-built at the old site, regardless of whether George Harvey CI is consolidated with it?

Answer: TDSB staff will be recommending in the Final Staff Report that the name of the consolidated school be "York Memorial Collegiate Institute".

17. If the name of the MERGED NEW school must remain York Memorial, what name will be on the front of 1700 Keele street if Memo moves in 2022? And if the George Harvey name is removed and the York Memo name is put up- how is this a merger at this point in time, in 2022 when Harvey students will literally have their name stripped away?

Answer: We are considering adding a sign that says “temporary home of York Memorial CI”. In addition, as part of the transition process, we will be working with students to consider ways to honour the George Harvey name and history. Such measures might include naming a significant place in the school (e.g. the cafeteria, a gym) and/or specific SHSM program after George Harvey.

18. Please describe TDSB’s plans for how it will be incorporating YMCI’s history into each of the options for consolidation currently being considered - both as a war memorial monument and the recent history of the fire and records commemorating the original building.

Answer: TDSB’s design team has been working closely with the Toronto Heritage Preservation Services in order to ensure all the memorial and historical design features of the former York Memorial building are included in the new rebuild. In addition, a Transition Committee will be formed to implement the details of consolidation including determining how to best honour the traditions, history, and identity of both schools. Students of the consolidated school will also work together to create new traditions for the future.

19. If the TDSB is truly concerned about the happiness and well-being of students as well as providing an optimal learning environment, why would you propose sending the YMCI students back to GHCI in 2022, when you know that this proved to be such an unpleasant situation for students and staff of both schools in 2019? Besides saving money, what are the benefits to STUDENTS of moving sites in 2022 instead of waiting until the new school is built? Why not wait to 2026?

Answer: The reasons for an earlier consolidation (i.e. in September 2022) include the following:

- We would be achieving the optimal sized school of 1000+ students sooner. A school of this size will be able to offer a wider range of course offerings to students at the earliest opportunity.
- School returns back to the local attendance area sooner, making it easier for students to access.
- Transportation costs would be reduced by approximately \$280,000. That money will be used for the retrofits to the George Harvey building, improving the school experience for all students attending.
- The declining enrolment at both schools will be addressed sooner with an earlier consolidation.

The 2019 relocation that York Memorial students and staff experienced was an emergency/ temporary relocation and there wasn’t sufficient time or resources to ensure a more smooth relocation. The main priority of the 2019 relocation was the safety of students and staff, and that students have a space to complete their 2018-19 school year. If an earlier consolidation is

approved by the Board in June 2021, we will have a full year to prepare for the transition, the move, and the retrofits.

- 20. When viewing the slide deck on the TDSB website I was pleased to see the timetable issue addressed (slide #30). In addition to the timetables now used by the two schools a hybrid model was mentioned. Are there any high schools in the TDSB currently using this model and could you explain what it would look like? How it would work?**

Answer: Currently, all schools are operating on a quadmester model to limit students to two cohorts, as per Toronto Public Health and Ministry of Education School reopening guidelines. The Hybrid model is currently used in very few schools in TDSB. It operates with both full-year courses and semestered courses. An of a school that uses a hybrid model is RH King Academy, where Grade 9 Math and Grade 9 Learning strategies are full year courses, and all other courses are semestered.

- 21. The staff, parents & students of both schools have very strongly, clearly and repeatedly stated that they do not wish for this merger to happen until the new site is built. Will the board decision really be based on the input of students, staff, community and alumni, or will it be purely financial? And will all the survey results be posted? How much does this information weigh in the final decision of the future of these two schools and the thousands of people it will negatively impact?**

Answer: The Board decision will be based on the input provided by the community through the public meetings, survey, and the questions google form. It will also be based on the TDSB's guiding principles with the major focus on the benefits to students. The legislation that sets up the program review process requires the staff to identify the option that they think is best at that point and include other options. The "best" option takes into account many factors – availability of programs, supports for students, use and placement of facilities, funding impacts etc.

The survey results and all input received at the meetings will be posted on the TDSB public website.

- 22. The presenters have said that there is space at George Harvey CI for the two schools to combine, and that both principals were consulted regarding said space. However, at the YMCI staff meeting, Principal Drummond made it clear that she firmly believes there is insufficient space at GHCI for the consolidation. Assuming Principal Drummond is correct, how does the board propose to deal with this problem.**

Answer: Based on the current capacity of the George Harvey building of 1452 pupil places and the total enrolment of both schools combined of approximately 1290 students, the building has the sufficient space to accommodate both schools.

Principal Drummond's point in that meeting was not that there was insufficient space but rather that more retrofits were needed. In order to ensure that the issues faced back in the 2019 relocation are not repeated in September 2022, the George Harvey building will undergo retrofits through the 2021-22 school year, to ensure that all student and staff needs are accommodated. With that being said, ongoing additional adjustments may occur as programming needs are identified. Principals from both schools will continue to be consulted through-out the retrofitting process.

- 23. What Heritage Law is in place protecting the status of the York Memorial Monument?**

Answer: By-law 667-85 is the Heritage by-law that protects the status of the York memorial Collegiate Institute building.

- 24. Have you asked the teachers at each school in a survey which model they think would work best? They are the front line workers and probably have more knowledge about what is best than anyone else.**

Answers: The staffs of both George Harvey and York Memorial have been consulted with in two separate meetings. Their feedback and questions have been noted and will be reflected in the Final Staff Report.

In addition, the survey allows the participant to indicate whether they are a student, staff, parent or member of the public (without revealing their name). This will allow TDSB staff to understand the points of view of every community group.

- 25. Programs such as technology and skilled trades require specific equipment and classroom settings, how does YMCI and GHCI compare in terms of facilities to teach trades? What factors are TDSB staff considering in determining what their final recommendations will be? Is there a list of factors or measurements to assess each location?**

Answer: George Harvey CI was built with an auto shop and other facilities for students to pursue courses in technological education. York Memorial CI was not built with any "shops" and therefore does not offer a wide range of courses in technological education. In 2019-2020, York Memorial only offered the following: Design Technology, Robotics, and Computer Engineering.

Whereas George Harvey was able to offer the following: Construction Technology, Computer Engineering, Robotics, Hospitality/Foods, Animation, Communications Technology,

Transportation Technology/Automotive, and Hairstyling/Aesthetics. Course offerings are determined by student choice.

The intention for the York Memorial rebuild on 2690 Eglinton Ave W is to increase the capacity of the building to 1300, and to provide spaces for the technical programs/ courses.

26. Has the TDSB assessed the impact on the surrounding community of losing such an historical landmark if YMCI isn't rebuilt as YMCI?

Answer: The TDSB has committed to rebuilding the York Memorial CI building, with or without a consolidation. The estimated timeline for the completion of the rebuild will be 2026. All war memorial historical and heritage features will be preserved and built in the new rebuild.

27. Will the Board assure us that it will guarantee the following safety requirements will be met BEFORE the merger:

- **The chemicals at G. Harvey are stored in accordance with Board regulations**
- **No toxic waste is on site at G. Harvey**
- **No chemicals older than 3 years or unlabelled as required by Board**
- **There is a working vented Flammable cabinet**
- **There is a working vented Acid/Base cabinet**

Answer: As mentioned during the public meetings, retrofits will be taking place at the George Harvey building to accommodate the programming needs of all students and staff. Ongoing additional adjustments may occur as programming needs are identified by staff. TDSB staff are working closely with the Design team to ensure all programming needs are met in a timely manner. Safety issues are paramount for any school.

28. About the 2022 idea- How will the board retrofit GHCI in 2021 when 500 students and 40 plus staff will be using the school especially considering the delays that Covid is having on all of the supply chain? How will the board ensure that the Harvey space is a conducive, calm learning environment for the students when so much change and construction needs to happen- like the creation of new science labs, a dance studio, etc that was promised to Memo teachers in their meetings?

Answer: The TDSB staff, the George Harvey principal and the design team will be coordinating to ensure that students are not scheduled in parts of the George Harvey building that are being constructed/retrofitted on. In addition, with the option of virtual school still available to students, there will most likely be fewer students in the building. The school has space for 1452 students and staff are confident that the retrofits can be made without significant impacts on staff and students using the building during the retrofits.

29. Why did you limit York Memorial enrolment and then claim declining enrolment was a "pro" for consolidation?

Answer: Since the fire and the temporary move of York Memorial students and staff into Scarlett Heights, York Memorial CI's enrolment came under projection for both 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years.

For the 2019-20 school year, York Memorial CI was projected with an overall enrolment of 892 students. The 2019-20 actual enrolment for York Memorial CI was 805 students, which was below projections by 87 students.

For the 2020-21 school year, York Memorial CI was projected with an overall enrolment of 784 students. The 2020-21 actual enrolment for York Memorial CI was 770 students, which was below projections by 14 students.

- 30. How can you ensure the AP program which serves the Keele and Eglinton community will be maintained? AP is not a staffing qualification, so will not be accounted for when creating the consolidation procedure (in terms of staffing). YMCI staff who have been trained in AP may be surplus out, which will negatively impact the program.**

Answer: There are several programs across the TDSB that have extra training requirements. There are currently staffing procedures in place for these programs. Because of those procedures, whether or not consolidation happens, YMCI staff who have been trained in AP are already subject to these procedures. It should also be noted that staffing procedures for consolidation will be worked out by Employee Services and the unions, as they did when school closures became a reality.

- 31. Are we getting more information about attending school year 2021 for new students in their first year in high school due to the Pandemic? Are they going online? If so, how do they know what classes they are in or how can they be prepared in entering high school.**

Answer: Grade 8 students applying for September 2021 will apply to either George Harvey or York Memorial and work with their current school staff to set up their program for Grade 9 for the 2021-2022 school year.

If a consolidation is approved for September 2022, the application/ attending process into the consolidated school will remain the same. Grade 8 students applying to attend the consolidated school at the George Harvey building will be working with their teachers and guidance councillors to determine what courses they will be taking in Grade 9 for the 2022-23 school year.

- 32. There is massive construction planned on Bicknell Ave for the sewers/water runoff for the city starting soon. Has the TDSB taken the travel disruption and increased traffic being forced to the front of the school of Harvey into consideration including where additional staff and community and parents will park? The surrounding community would be burdened by this increase.**

Answer: The work being done by the City will commence in later 2021. The parking spaces that will be temporarily used by the City during their work on Bicknell, will be replaced with parking spaces at the Fire Department located next to the George Harvey building. The Board and City will be coordinating to ensure that disruption is brought to a minimum.

33. If the merger happens in 2022 what will happen to the daycare and any other programs that run out of the George Harvey site (adult language classes, the other school that was upstairs at George Harvey)?

Answer: The George Harvey building currently host 3 user groups: George Harvey Child Care Centre, Skylark Youth Services, and Essential Skills Upgrading. If the consolidation is approved for September 2022, the child care centre and the Skylark Youth Services will continue to remain at the George Harvey Building. The Essential Skills Upgrading program will have to be relocated in order to accommodate all students and staff at the George Harvey building.

34. How much will it cost to move YMCI into GHCI and to make the school safe in terms of pandemic standards? Would it not be cheaper and safer for York Memo to stay at Scarlett Heights until 2026?

Answer: Caretaking costs are based on square footage utilized at each school. Hence the cost for cleaning would not change significantly upon consolidation. We would need to increase costs of caretaking at the George Harvey site upon consolidation, as more rooms would be used. Those increases are likely going to be equal or close to the caretaking costs reductions at Scarlett Heights.