



George Harvey CI and York Memorial CI – Pupil Accommodation Review

George Harvey CI Staff Meeting

Tuesday, April 20, 2021

2:45 pm - 4:00 pm

Virtual Meeting Via Zoom Meetings

Presenters	Audrey Amo, Former Superintendent of York (Facilitator) Chris Tonks, Trustee of Ward 6 Kwame Lennon, Superintendent of Learning Network 03 Andrew Gowdy, System Planning Officer, TDSB Planning Department Safiyyah Omar-Saleh, Educational Planning Officer, TDSB Planning Department Vicky Branco, Former Superintendent of Learning Network 03 (Q&A)
Other Staff in Attendance	Employee Services: Lynda Brewer, Staffing Officer; Gurdip Dhesi, Staffing Officer; Bob Ryan, Staffing Officer, Unit D; Danielle Kennedy, Staffing Administrator; Sylvie Burns, Staffing Administrator CUPE: Ondina Veiga, Unit C Vice President; Anna Hutchison, Unit C Vice President; Cherill Hiebert, Unit C Steward Co-Ordinator; Erin Pallett, Unit C Steward; John Mcdougall, Unit D Steward Coordinator (regrets) OSSTF: Danica Izzard, OSSTF Executive Officer Trustee Services: Wilmar Kortleever, Shared Services Liaison (Notes)

<i>Item / Presenter</i>	<i>Discussion</i>	<i>Attachments / Actions / Results</i>
Objective of Meeting:	Receive feedback from George Harvey CI Staff on the George Harvey CI and York Memorial CI – Pupil Accommodation Review	
Presentation:	Meeting facilitator Audrey Amo opened the meeting with the Land Acknowledgement, Agenda, Attendees, Meeting Norms, and Participation options. Welcoming and opening remarks from Trustee Christ Tonks and Superintendent Kwame Lennon. Andrew Gowdy and Safiyyah Omar-Saleh from the TDSB Planning Department presented the slide presentation that was pre-shared.	
Comments/Questions:		
Speaker 1	1. I noticed a phrase on a slide stating "staff efficiencies" - what exactly is meant by this?	
Andrew Gowdy	Consolidation of several small schools into one bigger school can lead to staffing efficiencies, e.g. fewer classrooms needed to support certain courses, fewer positions like caretaking staff. Overall, there are efficiencies in running a larger school compared to running multiple smaller schools.	

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Speaker 2	2. Post pandemic perhaps we need to review what is an optimal sized school?	
Andrew Gowdy	The pandemic has not caused a rethink of the optimal enrolment size. The rationale behind that is really about ensuring we have the breadth of programming to support the students.	
Speaker 3	3. This indicates a strong possibility of surplus staff - how will the staffing, in particular ACLs/leadership teams, be decided as this is being called a consolidation, not a closure?	
Lynda Brewer	There is a Closing Schools process in place, but not one for Consolidation. Employee Services has been in contact with OSSTF, and it was determined that there likely will not be a process until the Board and the Union meet for Blue Binder Negotiations next Fall.	
Chris Tonks	<p>While a lot needs to be worked out, I am confident that between the Board and our Union partners there will be a fair and equitable process put in place. If anybody is looking for an example or history in terms of two schools coming together, you can look at the former Silverthorn Junior Public School and the former Kane Middle School, which became Silverthorne Community School. That was a closure, but it still went through a process where we kept staff together in the best interest of students. All Teachers who wanted to, were able to come over from Silverthorn into the receiving site of Kane. It is unique and individualized process, and I have faith that our staff side and union side can come together on this.</p> <p>My objective is that whenever schools come together, that there will be teachers that are familiar to both populations, and who want to continue wherever that new school is.</p>	
Audrey Amo	As former Superintendent involved with school closures: it was an Interesting process, which in the end had no grievance associated with it, even as there were a lot of Secondary Schools and programs that were closed. So if the past is any guidance, I am quite sure that Employee Services and the Unions can work out a fair and equitable process that will work in the best interest both of the employees and the students.	
Danica Izzard	OSSTF is committed to ensuring there is a fair process available to our members. We have been in talks with Employee Services, and this is something we intend to work on in the Fall during Blue Binder discussions. What is important to us is that no teachers are disadvantaged with a lateral move. It will come down to what we can negotiate with the Board.	
Speaker 4	<p>4. What systems are baked into this process to ensure that all voices are heard?</p> <p>Ex: One school may have a more organized alumni with potentially greater privilege and ability to come together.</p>	

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Andrew Gowdy	<p>The requirements of the Modified Pupil Accommodation Review Process are to have one single public meeting. We are aware of the importance of voice and to have safe spaces for people to express themselves, so we have designed this consultation process to have 10 different opportunities of engagement. We have identified separate groups and have provided them with meetings to speak with us: for separate students bodies (early 2020), for separate parent bodies, for separate staff, for separate alumni groups. We also met with the School Council Chairs of the elementary schools in the catchment areas. There will be one general public meeting.</p> <p>In addition, there is a Survey that is open for everybody, which asks for feedback on the four scenarios, including open-ended questions.</p> <p>When we produce the final Staff report, there will be a substantial appendix that reports on the feedback that we receive through each engagement. The idea is to put before the Trustees essentially a summary of everything we have heard. They are not just hearing the outcome of a single public meeting, but the outcome of each of the engagement. Trustees will be able to review the material, assess, and make a decision.</p>	
Speaker 5	<p>5. The new school must be York Memorial in name, but if the two consolidate in 2022 what will happen to the George Harvey name? How do we reflect and respect the heritage of George Harvey CI in a consolidated school with the name York Memorial C.I. ?</p>	
Andrew Gowdy	<p>We are proposing that if the Trustees approve a Consolidation in 2022, that next year will be used for implementation. There will be a transition process with committees established to ensure that the consolidation happens effectively. One of the subjects in the transition should be addressing how to respect the identity and traditions of both schools. The transition might want to consider retaining the George Harvey name and using it for a special purpose area in the new building, such as a gym. This model has been used in other schools in the system, and it is an important way to respect multiple important traditions and people to the student and staff body.</p>	
Speaker 6:	<p>6. What if enrolment increases between now and when a new school is built? Will the capacity of 1300 be increased? or will this be the cap?</p>	
Andrew Gowdy	<p>1300 is the capacity we are planning for at this moment. It is based on a simple Ministry of Education formula where each classroom gets loaded with 20 students. We know that high schools have the capacity to accommodate more students than the formal capacity of a structure, through timetabling and because various class sizes. It is not unusual to have high schools operate at 110%.</p> <p>This is a 50-year plan, and we know communities go through peaks an valleys. Our best estimate is to have a</p>	

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Speaker 7	<p>facility of 1300 pupil places, but we know there are going to be some moments where it will be below or above. The 1300 pupil places is based on a study of students living in the catchment areas. Right now, there are actually not many students from the Keele & Eglinton area that go to the two schools – some might choose to come to a newly built school, so the enrolment may change over time, but we think York Memorial, the new consolidated school, will be able to control admission by regulating how many people are accepted outside the attendance area. Right now, there is a large amount of space to accommodate local kids.</p> <p>7. Will the new proposed school be built to offer programs such as Transportation Technology, Construction, and Electrical? GHCI offers a lot of specialized programs, will these still be offered in this consolidated school? Harvey building has some unique features such as a swimming pool and a full Auto Shop. If the Harvey building is made to close, would the new Memorial site be able to offer those same things?</p>	
Andrew Gowdy	<p>York Memorial has a Pool on site. Spaces required to support the programs mentioned is definitely part of the vision of the type of high school that we want to establish across the TDSB: a composite school able to support all described destinations, to support academic courses as well as the technologies. If this consolidation is approved, a part of the new building will include shop spaces. When we estimated 1300 pupil places and gross area, we included the shops that are part of George Harvey now.</p>	
Speaker 8	<p>8. In the decision making process are there factors that have more weight than others? For example financial is more important that staff and student impact...</p>	
Andrew Gowdy	<p>There is number of factors considered by staff in their final report, and then the Trustees are the ultimate decision makers who will consider a number of factors too. What is behind the Guiding Principles is two-fold: first and foremost strong programming to serve the needs of students. Also reflected is efficiency, building a system that works within the funds that we receive from the government. Those are the two driving factors.</p>	
Chris Tonks	<p>What weighs heavily in the decision is a very good question. I think the greatest opportunity here is a new building for, in particular, the learners that live in our community. Obviously, it is born out of a tragedy, but the opportunity of a new building is something really can improve the well-being of students. I believe this is an opportunity we need to seize. There will be growing pains, integration is not easy, but it will be entrusted to the teachers and the staffs, and I have confidence that it can work.</p> <p>I appreciate that the way everything came together previously was not easy, but I think with foresight and planning, with a vision, a couple of years from now, 3 years, 5 years, it can work.</p>	

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Speaker 9	9. Last time we joined we were not ready - no books, no chairs, no space, resentment. Why are we aiming for 2022? Why not 2023 etc	
Vicky Branco	As part of the transition out of George Harvey into Scarlett Heights: 2022 allows us a whole year to transition, or two, or more, with committees set up to talk about the transition. Last year was an emergency, where we had to move in a day or 2, a week. We have a past practice with people from both schools, students, community to support the transition so that we are ready.	
Andrew Gowdy	One year to implement a closure or consolidation is standard past practice, it has been successfully implemented over the past 10-20 years.	
Vicky Branco	Even Scarlett Heights took long with resources and spaces to set up. That was developed between June and August, in which we had to order supplies for an entire school which nobody was ready for. Now we have everything, two schools with supplies, and we are going to take the best of everything and make one school. We will not be waiting for 100 pieces of music equipment or textbooks. It is all there, desks, everything. It will also be one school, not two: one timetable, once we work it out.	
Speaker 10	10. Outside of the public meeting on May 6, will there be another opportunity for student voice?	
Andrew Gowdy	We have not planned any additional student meetings, but the survey is live and we encourage all students and parents to visit the website and fill out the survey.	
Speaker 11	11. What will happen to the building and land that GHCI currently occupies?	
Andrew Gowdy	We have not determined that yet. If the Consolidation is approved, it will have a date associated which we don't know. We are not going to study the future of the George Harvey building until we have the consolidation completely implemented. We do not want to make a decision prematurely, and it is not an automatic decision that once a building closes, that it gets sold. Part of our strategy is actually to keep ownership of some sites to provide flexibility, a buffer. It was fortunate that we still owned Scarlett Heights when the fire occurred at York Memorial, because we were able to move York Memorial into that building. So it is part of our strategy to have strategically located flex sites across the system. Vaughan Rd Academy is another example of that, currently used as a holding school for construction projects.	
Speaker 12	12. Scenario 4 or 3 gives time to adjust and work out challenges.	
Audrey Amo	Thank you for sharing that comment.	

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Speaker 13	<p>13. What has not been addressed is the antipathy between the schools. York Memo has always "looked down" on Harvey, and we certainly felt that when they were in the building. Many of our students felt bullied and put down. How do you propose to change that attitude and rivalry? Previously many at GHCI have expressed concerns regarding the feeling that Harvey is treated as inferior to YM by staff and students to each other. How will you specifically address this issue in a meaningful way as even this meeting feels very focussed on YM.</p>	
Vicky Branco	<p>We are aware that this sentiment has been there in the past, and that there have been challenges in May and June when the schools came together. We are going to work with students, with staff, and talk about this. We need to be open about it and seek support if we need to. There are experts who work on things like this, and we will bring staff and students together to work these pieces out, and to talk about the elephant on the table, because it is going to be very important for the two schools. This is going to be challenging, and we are prepared, with everybody's help, by being professional, to get support to work things out together. We want to come together to create the best situation for students, to provide access and opportunities for. Currently with a larger school and a small school, that is not the case, so it is important to work through this.</p>	
Chris Tonks	<p>I am cognizant of the differences between the two schools and the perception of one looking down upon the other. It is something that has existed for decades, it existed when I grew up in the area.</p> <p>It is important that we are talking about building a school to serve the students in the surrounding community. That is the direction the board is going, to provide full-service schools for students that live in the community. If we are getting back to that, and students come from the same feeder schools, we should be able to get over this hump.</p> <p>Work needs to be done, but this is a coming together. Neither is better than the other. The reason to preserve the name is different from the circumstances that exist on the ground. It is a legacy, recognized for certain reasons. I have a passion to preserve the recognition of York. But we will also find a way to recognize George Harvey, who was from my grandfathers' era. In a serious way. This will be a marriage of equals, we will have to get our best people to the table to make this work.</p>	
Uton Robinson	<p>14. Is the survey the only way that student voice will be captured?</p>	
Andrew Gowdy	<p>We are half-way through the Consultation process, which started with student and parent meetings.</p>	

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Speaker 15	15. Agree about student voice. Anecdotally, I have heard that YM students are happy at Scarlett for now, and Harvey students did not have a good experience during the emergency consolidation. Is there any clear / discernible benefit for students in Scenario 2? (Consolidating early before the a building site is completed in 2026)	
Andrew Gowdy	The 2020 scenario has been included because we feel it is in the best interest of students to have them as part of a 1000+ enrolment school as soon as possible to give them the opportunity to benefit from increased course offerings. It is also about returning the school to the neighbourhood that it is intended to serve: it is not intended to serve Etobicoke, it is intended to serve Eglinton & Keele. Right now the school is not there.	
Speaker 16	16. George Harvey has two alumni groups that have been and continue to be updated on the proposed amalgamation.	
Vicky Branco	Thank you for that comment. Please let us know which groups, as we are only aware of one Facebook group.	
Speaker 17	17. A lot of the perception of the schools came from the feeder schools.	
Audrey Amo	Thank you for that comment.	
Speaker 18	18. Although it may not be true- by keeping the York Memorial name- the perception will be that one is better than the other I wonder if a new name could be created that incorporates both the heritage site idea and something connected to George Harvey history	
Andrew Gowdy	As said earlier, the York Memorial name is part of the historical value of that site in that was built as a memorial to the use of the Township of York and that name York Memorial is inherent in historical value. There are other ways to recognize names, which can be considered in the transition process.	
Speaker 19	19. The perception will also be that they will come to us for a takeover.	
Speaker 20	20. By creating a new name, it will truly be an equal consolidation.	
Speaker 21	21. It does seem like there is a lost opportunity to help bridge the gap in keeping the York Memo name and not developing a new one. I imagine it will take a few cohorts of students to go through the “new” school in order to get over the feeling of a take-over.	
Audrey Amo	Thank you for those comments.	

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Next Steps:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on this review is available on the TDSB public website at www.tdsb.on.ca: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Click on Accommodation Reviews at the left side of the page - Scroll down to Pupil Accommodation Reviews - Select George Harvey CI and York Memorial CI • Please fill out the online feedback survey available on the webpage above. • Submit questions to the google form link on the webpage above. • You can also email your questions/comments to your Trustee at chris.tonks@tdsb.on.ca. 	
Next Meeting	<p>Meeting with other stakeholder groups will be held in the coming weeks.</p> <p>Subsequently:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May 6, 2021: Public Meeting • May 26, 2021 – Post Final Staff Report on TDSB public website • June 14, 2021 – Special Board of Trustees Committee of the Whole meeting (delegations are received at this meeting) • June 30, 2021 –Board of Trustees meeting for final decision making 	
Adjournment	Thanks everybody for participating!	