

**Final Report of the Program Area Review Team (PART) for  
Yonge-Eglinton Review  
December 9, 2015**

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

**The Yonge-Eglinton Program Area Review Team recommends the following:**

- 1. Boundary Changes;**
  - a. Amend the shared area Eglinton Jr PS/Hodgson Sr PS – Northlea E & MS attendance area so that it becomes entirely the Northlea E & MS attendance area for JK-8 effective September 2016.**
  - b. Amend the Hodgson Sr PS intermediate attendance area to include the entirety of the Eglinton Jr PS junior attendance area to eliminate the occurrence of the Eglinton Jr PS attendance boundary being split between two intermediate attendance areas effective September 2016.**
  - c. Amend the Glenview Sr PS intermediate attendance area to include the entirety of the Allenby Jr PS (and redirected portions of the North Preparatory Jr PS) attendance areas to eliminate the occurrence of the Allenby Jr PS attendance boundaries being split between two intermediate attendance areas effective September 2016.**
  - d. Amend the portion of Oriole Park Jr PS junior attendance area that currently feeds to Forest Hill Jr & Sr PS for Grades 7-8 into a shared intermediate attendance area between Forest Hill Jr & Sr PS and Hodgson Sr PS effective September 2016.**
    - Grandparenting: All students who currently reside in the impacted attendance areas for all aforementioned schools (Items a through d) and attend these schools as of the end of the 2015-16 school year and their siblings be grandparented and be allowed to remain at the current schools until they graduate.**
  - e. Potential change to the Eglinton Jr PS – Maurice Cody Jr PS junior attendance areas effective September 2022, pending a review of accommodation pressures and space availability at the two schools.**
  
- 2. Grade Changes effective September 2017;**
  - a. The junior elementary schools – Davisville Jr PS (English stream only), Eglinton Jr PS (English and Extended French streams), Maurice Cody Jr PS, and Oriole Park Jr PS – become JK to Grade 5 schools.**
  - b. That Hodgson Sr PS becomes a Grade 6 to 8 middle school (English and Extended French streams).**
    - Because of the Grade change to become a Grade 6 to 8 school, the school name changes to Hodgson Middle School.**
  - c. A review of accommodation options for the Davisville Jr. PS Grade 6 English stream students pending completion of the new school facility (tentative date set for 2020).**

**3. Change to French Programming;**

- a. That the Extended French Program at Forest Hill Jr & Sr PS remain at the school through to Grade 8, with a 1 class Grade 4 entry cohort from September 2016 onward.**

**4. Implementation;**

- a. That each school have a transition team, involving teachers, parents, principal, and where appropriate, students, to identify and mitigate issues in student readiness, including such matters of student safety.**

**BACKGROUND**

The Program Area Review Team (PART) membership was informed that a Local Feasibility Team (LFT), comprising TDSB Principals, Trustees, central program and planning staff, was established to examine potential solutions to existing and projected accommodation pressures at a number of Yonge-Eglinton area schools: Davisville Jr PS/Spectrum Alternative Senior School, Eglinton Jr PS, Maurice Cody Jr PS, Oriole Park Jr PS, Forest Hill Jr & Sr PS, Hodgson Sr PS, and Northlea E & MS. The objective of the LFT was to come up with a feasible solution to address accommodation pressures at these schools in light of increasing enrolment and space constraints.

The PART membership was also told that the LFT created and reviewed a number of concepts to address overcapacity at area schools over the long-term. These concepts included various boundary changes, grade changes, options for French program delivery, relocation of Spectrum Alternative Senior School, relocation of child care centres at existing schools, and capital improvements. Over the course of five LFT meetings held between February and June 2015, a preferred scenario was identified as the most feasible for the next 8 years within the context of the Long Term Program and Accommodation Strategy's (LTPAS) Program and Accommodation Drivers.

The transition of the LFT to a PART was approved by the Central Accommodation Team on September 17, 2015. The objective of the PART was to continue the work of the LFT in evaluating the feasibility of the preferred scenario, by seeking advice and feedback from impacted parent representatives through the course of 4 working meetings. The PART also presented the preferred scenario to the general public to seek input from the broader community. The first two public meetings – held on October 20<sup>th</sup> and October 27<sup>th</sup> – had the same presentation and posters describing the process, current and projected accommodation issues and the preferred scenario. A third public meeting was held on November 17, 2015 to share with the community the final PART recommendation based on the feedback received at the public meetings and via emails to the Superintendent and Trustee from community members throughout the PART process. Slide decks from all working committee meetings and public meetings were posted on the TDSB webpage, along with additional school data, Frequently Asked Questions, and maps.

At the first PART committee working meeting, an explanation of why the review was needed was provided to the group. In addition, the PART was informed of its role as an

advisory committee. Staff provided background information to PART members regarding the TDSB's Long-Term Program & Pupil Accommodation Strategy (LTPAS) and explained the application of accommodation drivers to identify schools across the Board that may be facing program and space pressures over the short to medium term. Also, Staff provided a description of the program and accommodation challenges facing this group of schools, a description of the current situation, as well as an overview of concepts discussed throughout the course of the LFT meetings to address the accommodation challenges. School-by-school slides showing status quo actual and projected enrolment growth from 2010 to 2024, utilization, and additional classrooms required were presented to the PART. Ward 11 demographics and an overview of active residential developments in the area were also presented to the group to provide context into the current and projected enrolment pressures facing area schools. The LFT's preferred scenario was then presented to the group for discussion.

The main concern expressed by the majority of PART members at the first meeting was the timing of the proposed grade change (original implementation date of September 2016 for Davisville Jr PS, Eglinton Jr PS, and Oriole Park Jr PS and a September 2017 implementation date for Maurice Cody Jr PS). Specifically, staff heard from many PART members that delaying the grade change would allow for better transition given that the staff report would not be going to the Board of Trustees for approval until February 2016. Working committee members were asked to take the information and data presented home to digest and come back to the third PART meeting with any questions and/or comments. Staff were also asked by PART committee members to test the feasibility of implementing grade changes at all schools in 2017 and to bring back the information for further discussion at the third working meeting.

Another concern expressed by PART members at this meeting (and echoed by community members at all public meetings) was the likelihood of continued growth beyond what is currently known and projected for due to the extent of residential development in the area. Having incorporated known development applications to-date within the study area, elementary pupil enrolment projections suggest that schools included within the scope of the Yonge-Eglinton study will be in a deficit of 23 instructional classrooms, or almost 700 elementary pupil places, by 2024; this is the equivalent of a new JK-8 elementary school. Staff informed PART and community members that, due to capital funding constraints, a new school cannot be built despite there being enrolment pressures in this area. The proposed model endeavours to maximize the use of existing school space through boundary changes, program adjustments and grade changes to accommodate students in order to minimize the degree of permanent capital investment that is required to serve the needs of the community. To address long-term growth in the Yonge-Eglinton area, 'creative' options continue to be explored by staff, including:

- Working with the City of Toronto and the development community on the potential of a "vertical school", and
- Incorporating satellite spaces for TDSB classrooms or child care space in new residential developments.

Staff advised PART and community members that a draft study is currently underway to explore satellite spaces within developments for classroom use, with an update to

Board planned for February 2016 and a full report to be presented to Board in June 2016.

The second PART working meeting was held to discuss the proposed Glenview Sr PS/Hodgson Sr PS intermediate attendance area re-alignments. As some schools impacted by this – Glenview Sr PS, Allenby Jr PS, and North Preparatory Jr PS – are not main members of the PART, it was felt that a separate meeting to address their specific impacts would be more appropriate. At this meeting, an overview of the TDSB's LTPAS was provided, along with a description of the Yonge-Eglinton PART process. Status quo enrolment projections for affected schools in this meeting were presented, followed by a discussion of the proposed boundary re-alignments. No objections were received regarding the proposed intermediate boundary re-alignments at this meeting.

The purpose of the third working meeting was to come to a decision on the recommended model that would be presented at the two public meetings on October 20<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>. A broad overview of modeled concepts from the LFT process was also presented again to the group. The original LFT proposed scenario was presented to the group, followed by a variation of the model showing 2017 implementation of grade changes for all schools. Staff advised committee members that although there would be further programming constraints at schools (i.e., sharing music and HSP in a classroom and portables), the junior schools would be able to accommodate Grade 6 students for an additional year. Furthermore, having all students from the feeder schools moving at the same time would ensure integration of the cohort and a more robust program. A vote was held at the end of the meeting, and the majority of PART members voted in favour of presenting the model with 2017 implementation of grade changes at all schools at the two subsequent public meetings.

The PART recommendation was presented at the October 20<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> public meetings for community feedback. In addition, the Principal of Hodgson Sr PS spoke to the transition process for students and staff should the grade change be approved. A summary of the feedback obtained at the PART public meetings, as well as copies of the presentation, are available on the Board's website.

At the fourth PART working meeting, a lengthy discussion took place about the feedback received at the public meetings. Staff summarized feedback received based on each concept in the PART recommendation. Staff also presented revisions to the PART recommended model based on the feedback received at the public meetings as well as via School Council reps and emails from community members. Changes to the PART recommendation were:

- Changing the portion of Oriole Park Jr PS' junior attendance area that feeds to Forest Hill Jr & Sr PS into a shared attendance area, so that students in Grades 6-8 residing within the "triangle" would have the option to attend Hodgson Sr PS or Forest Hill Jr & Sr PS. This change was made to reflect concerns expressed by parents regarding the distance that students would have to travel to Hodgson Sr PS, as well as boundary anomalies at the secondary level between North Toronto SS and Forest Hill Cl.

- Revisiting the decision to have Grade 6 students remain at Davisville Jr PS once the new building is complete pending enrolment pressures and space availability at Davisville Jr PS and Hodgson Sr PS at that time.

When the discussion ended, the PART membership reached consensus on the following items:

- Revising the shared attendance area so it is directed entirely to Northlea E & MS for September 2016;
- Re-aligning the intermediate attendance areas for Glenview Sr PS and Hodgson Sr PS for September 2016;
- Changing the intermediate boundary for the Oriole Park Jr PS-Forest Hill Jr & Sr PS “triangle” area to a shared attendance area between Forest Hill Jr. & Sr. PS and Hodgson Sr PS effective September 2016;
- Retaining the Extended French program at Forest Hill Jr & Sr PS through to Grade 8 and reducing the entry to 1 class effective September 2016;
- Reviewing the accommodation options for Davisville Jr PS Grade 6 students upon the opening of Davisville Jr PS/Spectrum Alternative Senior School’s new facility in 2020 (tentative), and
- Changing the junior attendance area boundaries for Maurice Cody Jr PS/Eglinton Jr PS boundary change in 2022 pending accommodation pressures and space availability at both schools at that time.

Consensus was not reached on the grade changes amongst PART members as one school community preferred 2016 implementation, most preferred 2017, and one school community preferred no change, so a vote was conducted. A majority of PART members voted in favour implementing the grade change for all impacted schools in 2017, alongside a school name change for Hodgson Sr PS to Hodgson Middle School effective September 2017. PART members were informed of the option to put forward a “minority report” to express dissenting views as well as alternative recommendations. Any “minority reports” would be attached to this PART report, as well as the final staff report that will be brought forward to the Board of Trustees in February 2016. Please refer to Appendix B for a minority report from the Oriole Park Jr PS school community.

#### STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

<b>Program Area Review Team</b>		
<b>School/Organization</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Role</b>
Davisville Jr PS	Shona Farrelly	Principal
	Steph Rickard Chadda	School Council
Eglinton Jr PS	Stevan Ivancevic	Principal
	Donna Hall	School Council
Forest Hill Jr & Sr PS	Paula Dodick	Principal
	Stacey Silverstein	School Council
Hodgson Sr PS	Ian Wilson	Principal
	Koo Chan	School Council

Maurice Cody Jr PS	Andrew Howard	Principal
	Laura Witkowski	School Council
Oriole Park Jr PS	Natalie Vine	Principal
	Katie Bardyn	School Council
	Andy Anderson	School Council
Northlea E & MS	David Erlich	Principal
	Wilmar Kortleever	School Council
Spectrum Alternative Senior School	Shona Farrelly	Principal
	Sherry Giles	School Council
TDSB Central Staff	Sandra Tondat	Superintendent, WR08 (Chair)
TDSB Central Staff	Kathleen Garner	Superintendent, ER16
TDSB Trustee	Shelley Laskin	Trustee, Ward 11
TDSB Trustee	Gerri Gershon	Trustee, Ward 13

<b>Staff Resources</b>		
<b>Organization</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Role</b>
TDSB Central Staff	Joyce Kwong	Educational Planning Officer
TDSB Central Staff	Dan Castaldo	Manager, Planning
TDSB Central Staff	John Tancredi	Central Coordinating Principal – Teaching and Learning (with FSL portfolio)
TDSB Central Staff	Wendy Roberts	Vice-Principal (Secondary), Special Education Department
TDSB Central Staff	Jeff Latto	Senior Manager, Capital Projects & Building Partnerships
French as a Second Language Advisory Committee (FSLAC)	Betheney Maheu	Vice Co-Chair, Wards 11 & 13
French as a Second Language Advisory Committee (FSLAC)	Wilmar Kortleever	Parent Representative, Wards 11 & 13

<b>Meeting Details</b>		
<b>Meeting Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>
Committee	October 6, 2015	5:00 to 7:00 p.m.
Committee	October 8, 2015	5:00 to 7:00 p.m.
Committee	October 13, 2015	5:00 to 7:00 p.m.
Public Meeting	October 20, 2015	7:00 to 9:00 p.m.
Public Meeting	October 27, 2015	7:00 to 9:00 p.m.
Committee	November 5, 2015	5:00 to 7:00 p.m.

## ANALYSIS OF PREFERRED SCENARIO

Appendix A provides a comparison of enrolment and utilization at affected schools under the status quo and PART recommended scenarios.

With grade shifts, attendance boundary changes, changes to French programming, and proposed capital improvements to schools, the resulting impact to the junior schools indicates general improvement to over-enrolment and utilization rates. If the proposed capital improvements are undertaken, the need for portables will be minimized at all impacted junior schools. This is especially important on highly constrained sites like Eglinton Jr PS, where portables cannot be accommodated due to the size of the site, and at Maurice Cody Jr PS, where a shared use agreement with the City for the AstroTurf field prevents portables from being placed on-site until 2024. At Oriole Park Jr PS, the grade change results in the need for one portable over the long-term, without further compromises on programming due to the need to share classroom space. Davisville Jr PS is already delivering core classes in 16 resource-sized classrooms; moving the Grade 6 English stream students out of the building frees up classroom space for the remaining students. The phasing-in of the Extended French program at Forest Hill Jr & Sr PS and the decision to keep the program at the school through to Grade 8 results in a projected need for an additional five classrooms. Retrofits to existing spaces within the school to create five new classrooms have been identified to accommodate this growth without the need for portables.

Moving the Grade 6s out of the junior schools and into Hodgson Sr PS would result in the need for portables until a permanent 12-room addition can be built. Hodgson Sr PS is projected to require 4 portables in 2017, when the grade change is expected to take place. A business case to the Ministry has been submitted for the 12-room addition to Hodgson Sr PS; assuming approval of the project in the near future, it is hoped that the addition can be built by 2018/2019.

Although a majority of PART members were in favour of delaying the implementation of grade changes to September 2017 for all schools, some members suggested alternative approaches (i.e., a phased-in grade change that would see students from Davisville Jr PS beginning at Hodgson Sr PS for Grade 6 in September 2016 with students from the other three feeder schools moving in September 2017, or having Oriole Park Jr PS remain a JK-6 school and having its students feed to Hodgson Sr PS in Grade 7). Generally speaking, it was felt amongst the group that singling out any one specific cohort would be disadvantageous to students from program delivery and social perspectives.

### **Proposed capital improvements**

As discussed above, relieving accommodation pressures at some schools in the Yonge-Eglinton review will require a combination of boundary changes, grade changes, and/or changes to French programming alongside capital improvements. Required capital improvements are as follows:

- **Davisville Jr PS** will require a 728-pupil place replacement building. The Province

approved \$14.7 million in funding for this project in October 2015, with occupancy of the new building projected for September 2020.

- **Eglinton Jr PS** will require retrofits to the existing atrium in order to create 2 regular-sized classrooms. These classrooms are currently projected to be required by September 2018.
- **Forest Hill Jr and Sr PS** will require five additional classrooms, all of which will be added through retrofits to existing spaces within the school between 2017 and 2020.
- **Hodgson Sr PS** will require a 12-room addition to accommodate the growth of students. A business case to the Ministry has been submitted, and assuming approval of the project in the near future, it is hoped that the addition can be built by 2018 or 2019.

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

There is generally strong support amongst the PART members to proceed with the recommended scenario. Parents generally recognize the space realities and the necessity of the JK-Grade 5 configuration, and the potential benefits of a Grade 6 to 8 model. Lengthy discussions regarding transitioning for both students and staff took place in both working committee meetings and the public meetings.

Throughout the course of our discussions, parents at the PART working and public meetings provided feedback and raised several questions about the program and accommodation plan for this community. These are summarized under these general themes. It is noted at the PART working meetings, conversation about these themes was lengthy, robust and full of thoughtful questions and responses that allowed multiple sides of the issue to be discussed. The membership is commended for their wholesome participation.

1. Timing of Changes
  - Is there enough time to plan?
  - Could the changes be phased in?
2. Readiness of Students
  - Grade 6 students are too young to move schools
  - There is anxiety around the change
  - Safety concerns around getting to school (walking, TTC) and the distances involved
  - Maturity level of students
3. Childcare—Before and After Care
  - Some parents want Childcare to be provided at Middle School for the Grade 6 students
4. Quality of Program
  - How would programming improve at Hodgson Sr PS than at the junior schools?
5. Uncertainty over long-term impact of residential development in the area
  - What other contingencies/long-term plans are there to address the



continued growth that will occur in this area?

In conclusion, there is a good sense amongst the parent community that with careful planning and the commitment of school staff, administration, parents, and the Superintendent and Trustee, we can achieve the goal to improve program delivery and remedy accommodation pressures for all schools involved in this review for the next few years.

Site Details	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
	Davisville Jr PS/Spectrum Alternative Senior School	Eglinton Jr PS	Maurice Cody Jr PS	Oriole Park Jr PS	Forest Hill Jr & Sr PS	Hodgson Sr PS	Northlea E & MS	Glenview Sr PS	

**Status Quo Data**

Grades Served	JK-6 7-8	JK-6	JK-6	JK-6	JK-8	7-8	JK-8	7-8	
Site Size Acres	3.81	1.61	2.89	3.14	6.18	4.18	4.6	8.1	34.51
Facility Size Sq Ft	81,085	61,754	59,545	34,396	112,704	64,796	92,182	94,926	601,388
Capacity*	538	507	709	242	774	367	796	619	4,552
Existing Permanent Classroom Spaces	17 <sup>+</sup>	22	27	14	20	20	31	20	154
Portables on Site 2014/15	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	4
Headcount Enrolment Oct 2014	518	511	667	295	748	330	741	727	4,537
Utilization Oct 2014	96%	101%	94%	122%	97%	90%	93%	117%	100%
Projected Headcount Enrolment 2019	709	629	740	297	904	399	673	776	5,127
Projected Utilization - 2019	132%	124%	104%	123%	117%	109%	85%	125%	113%
Projected Headcount Enrolment 2024	728	692	747	274	934	477	666	782	5,300
Projected Utilization - 2024	135%	136%	105%	113%	121%	130%	84%	126%	116%
Programs (Special Education, French, Other)	French Immersion (11), ESL (0.5)	Extended French (3), ESL (0.5)			Extended French (2), Gifted (10), ESL (0.5)	Extended French (1)	French Immersion (16), DD (2)	French Immersion (10), Extended French (6)	-

\*Total Current School Student Capacity based on TDSB Room Use (does not account for proposed future retrofits/additions)

\*\*Does not include 16 resource-sized classrooms that are being used for core classes

**PART Recommended Scenario - Grade Changes, Program Shifts, Boundary Changes**

Grades Served	JK-5 (English) SK-6 (French Immersion) 7-8 (Spectrum)	JK-5 (English) Gr. 4-5 (Extended French)	JK-5	JK - 5	JK-8 (English) Gr. 4-8 (Extended French)	Gr. 6-8 (English and Extended French)	JK-8	Gr. 7-8	
Projected Headcount Enrolment 2019	672	530	672	270	895	616	693	776	5,124
2019 Capacity**	538	553	709	242	889	666	796	619	5,012
Projected Utilization - 2019	125%	96%	95%	112%	101%	92%	87%	125%	102%
Projected Headcount Enrolment 2024	682	551	692	243	917	736	715	782	5,318
2024 Capacity**	728	553	709	242	889	666	796	619	5,202
Projected Utilization - 2024	94%	100%	98%	100%	103%	111%	90%	126%	102%

\*\*Capacities for schools have been updated to reflect new building, proposed additions, and/or proposed room retrofits

## **MINORITY REPORT**

*Submitted by Andy Anderson and Katie Bardyn,  
Parent Council Representatives of Oriole Park Junior Public School*

This is the minority report submitted by Andy Anderson and Katie Bardyn, who are the parent council representatives of Oriole Park Junior Public School ("Oriole Park").

We are dissenting with respect to the recommendation that the grades at Oriole Park be realigned such that grade 6 be moved to Hodgson Senior Public School ("Hodgson"), effective September 2017.

The reasons for our dissent are set out below.

### **Executive Summary**

We believe that the PART recommendation that grade 6 be moved from Oriole Park to Hodgson, effective September 2017 is fundamentally flawed. It was the outcome of a flawed process, that did not take into account reasonable alternatives to the proposed realignment of grade 6 at Oriole Park. Indeed, express requests by members of the PART to consider such reasonable alternatives were refused by the presiding Superintendent. As a result, the decision-making process was not fully informed. In addition, the recommendation is inconsistent with the Board's stated goals of community engagement, transparency, and ensuring that Board projects meet the needs of the affected students.

More specifically, we believe that the PART's recommendation, suffers from both procedural flaws and substantive flaws as follows:

1. The Superintendent failed to follow the process mandated by TDSB Operational Procedure PR662, which requires the Superintendent to convene a Child Care Occupancy Review Committee ("CCORC"), if it appears that there will be a shortage of space to accommodate school programs. Despite the fact that there is a shortage of space to accommodate school programs at Oriole Park, no such CCORC has been convened. The failure to convene a CCORC and to follow the procedures required by Operational Procedure PR662 effectively deprived Oriole Park of the right to determine whether the overcrowding at the school should be addressed through measures related to the on-site child care.
2. The PART process was conducted in a manner contrary to TDSB Policy P068, in that the PART was not given the opportunity "to explore and develop reasonable alternatives" to the recommendation to implement a grade realignment at Oriole Park. Specifically, the Superintendent refused

to allow the PART to consider whether the space pressures at Oriole Park could better be addressed by measures related to the on-site child care.

3. In addition, a further violation of Policy P068 occurred at the final PART meeting, when the Superintendent refused, without justification, to permit the PART to consider whether Oriole Park should be exempted from the proposed grade 6 realignment. Instead, the superintendent insisted, without justification, that the grade realignment which was proposed for four area schools (namely, Oriole Park, Eglinton Junior Public School, Davisville Junior Public School and Maurice Cody Junior Public School) be considered and voted upon as a single omnibus recommendation.
4. With respect to substantive flaws, we do not believe that the grade 6 realignment as proposed by the PART report is in the best interests of the students at Oriole Park for a number of reasons, including:
  - a. The proposal would move the grade 6 students in September 2017, which is at least 12 months before the proposed addition to Hodgson will be completed, which will require the students to be accommodated in nine portables at Hodgson;
  - b. The space pressures at Oriole Park have not had a serious impact on educational programming at the school, as evidenced by the fact that 78% of Oriole Park parents who responded to a survey said that they opposed the proposed grade 6 realignment. Furthermore, Appendix A of the PART report shows that the utilization rate for Oriole Park has peaked and will decline to 113% over the coming years;
  - c. The PART report does not provide for the contingency that the provincial government may not approve the expenditure of funds needed to build the proposed addition at Hodgson – in which case, of course, Hodgson will not have sufficient space to accommodate the grade 6 realignment; and
  - d. Academic research shows that the social and educational needs of grade 6 students are better served at K-6 schools than at 6-8 schools.
5. Accordingly, we believe that the space pressures that exist at Oriole Park would be better addressed by alternative measures, including:
  - a. The addition of one more portable on the school grounds; and
  - b. The convening of a CCORC to consider measures related to the on-site child care, including modifications to the child care centre's lease, such as would permit one of the two classrooms currently used by the child care centre to be reclaimed for educational use.

All of this is discussed more fully below.

### **Detailed Discussion**

#### *(1) Failure to Follow the Provisions of Operational Procedure PR662*

At the first PART working meeting, Katie Bardyn asked whether Oriole Park's shortage of space could be addressed through measures relating to the on-site child care, including measures such as lease adjustments or converting exclusive space to shared space. She was told that a decision had already been made that no measures relating to the child care at Oriole Park would be considered. At the final Part meeting, when Andy Anderson asked whether a CCORC had been convened in accordance with Board Policy PR662, he was told that the Central Accommodation Team ("CAT") had decided not to proceed with a CCORC.

However, the decision to dispense with a CCORC was not a decision that the Central Accommodation Team was entitled to make. Rather, PR662 requires a CCORC to be convened in all cases where there is a projected shortage of space at a school with a child care centre. Section 4.2(b) of PR662 states:

If it appears that there will be a shortage of space to accommodate school programs in the upcoming two years, . . . the Superintendent of Education will convene a Child Care Occupancy Review Committee (CCORC) to examine options for the affected child care program(s).  
[emphasis added]

Thus, PR662 is mandatory. It does not confer any discretion on the Superintendent or on the CAT to dispense with a CCORC. Rather, it requires that, in all cases, where it appears that there will be a shortage of space in any school that houses a child care centre, a CCORC must be convened.

There is, of course, good reason to require a CCORC in such circumstances. First and foremost, the CCORC focuses on the needs of the particular school and the needs of the particular child care centre in question. It also ensures that the decision as to whether the school's space needs should be accommodated through measures related to the on-site child care will be made by those most directly affected by that decision, namely, the parents of students at the affected school, the child care operator, and the school's principal, with in-put from the local trustee, Board staff and Toronto Children's Services staff.

By unilaterally deciding to dispense with a CCORC, the Central Accommodation Team acted contrary to PR662 and denied the affected constituents the right to be heard on the issue of whether space pressures at Oriole Park could be alleviated by measures related to the on-site child care.

Such a denial of the right to be heard is wholly inconsistent with the Board's commitment to openness and transparency.

(2) *Failure to Follow the Provisions of Policy P068 – Refusal to Permit Consideration of Reasonable Alternatives, Including Measures Related to On-Site Child Care*

Our second reason for dissenting from the PART report is that the PART was not permitted to explore and develop reasonable alternatives to the proposed grade 6 realignment, including reasonable alternatives related to the on-site child care. This constituted a violation of TDSB Policy P068. That policy grants the PART the broadest possible scope to consider, explore and develop reasonable alternatives to the recommendations or proposals made by the Local Feasibility Team. Thus, section 3E.2 of Policy P068 which provides as follows:

The PART shall have opportunity to explore and develop reasonable alternatives. [emphasis added]<sup>1</sup>

The wording of Policy P068 is mandatory. It states that the PART must have the opportunity to explore and develop reasonable alternatives. This broad scope of review granted to the PART is necessary in order to achieve the “purposes of engagement”, as set out in Policy P068, including ensuring that the “decisions of the Director of Education and the Board are fully informed and carefully considered”. (Section 3B.1)

However, in the present case, the PART's mandate did not include the opportunity to explore and develop reasonable alternatives. Rather, its mandate was strictly limited to a consideration of the proposed grade realignment. Moreover, even the scope of that consideration was limited, in that the PART was only entitled to “seek advice and feedback from impacted parent representatives”. The restricted scope of engagement that was permitted to the PART is described as follows in the PART report:

The objective of the PART was to continue the work of the LFT in evaluating the feasibility of the preferred scenario, by seeking advice and feedback from impacted parent representatives through the course of four working meetings.

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<sup>1</sup> Note that the applicability of Section 3E.2 to the PART is confirmed by TDSB slide deck, “Community Engagement in Local Review Processes”, March 5, 2015, slide 8, “Comparison of Review Process,” which provides under the Column “4. Grade Change Studies” that the Policy Parameters are set out in Board Policy P068, Part 3E. See <http://www.tdsb.on.ca/Portals/0/AdultLearners/docs/Community%20Engagement%20Process.pdf>. It should also be noted that the wording of Section 3D.2 is identical to that of Section 3E.2.

Indeed, even when an express request was made by Katie Bardyn at the PART's first working meeting for the PART to consider whether Oriole Park's space needs could better be met by alternative measures relating to its on-site child care, that request was refused by the Superintendent. Such alternative measures, including, for example, revising the terms of the child care centre's lease so as to reclaim one of the two classrooms currently used by the child care centre for educational purposes, clearly constitute "reasonable alternatives" to the proposed grade realignment. And yet, the Superintendent refused to allow the PART to consider such alternatives.

Such a refusal was a clear contravention of the provisions of Policy P068, including sections 3D.2 and 3E.2, and was contrary to the Board's commitment to openness and community engagement. Moreover, the refusal meant that the decision to be made by the Director of Education and the Board with respect to the realignment of grade 6 at Oriole Park will not be fully informed, because it will not reflect consideration of whether the space pressures at the school could be met by preferable alternative measures.

*(3) Failure to Follow the Provisions of Policy P068 – Refusal to Permit the PART to Vote on Grade 6 Realignment on School-by-School Basis*

At the final PART meeting, the Superintendent was asked by the principal of Oriole Park, if the PART could vote on the recommended grade 6 realignment, with a separate vote being conducted for each affected school. The Superintendent refused this request without explanation (and without justification).

Such a separate vote was needed in order for the PART properly to consider the reasonable alternatives before it. Specifically, one of the alternatives was to exempt Oriole Park from the recommended grade 6 realignment and, instead, to pursue other means of addressing the space pressures at the school, including:

- (a) the addition of one more portable at the school;
- (b) simply awaiting the passage of time (as Appendix A to the PART report projects that the utilization rate at Oriole Park has peaked and will decline over the coming years to 113% by 2024); or
- (c) measures related to the on-site child care.

With respect to the other schools that formed part of the proposed grade 6 realignment (namely, Eglinton Junior Public School, Davisville Junior Public school and Maurice Cody Junior Public School), such alternative measures may not have been available and/or reasonable. However, by denying the PART the option to vote on the grade 6 realignment on a school-by-school basis, the Superintendent denied the PART the opportunity to consider such reasonable alternative measures in connection with Oriole Park, thereby violating Policy P068.

Moreover, the Superintendent's refusal to permit the PART to vote on the grade 6 realignment on a school-by-school basis was directly contrary to representations made by the Superintendent at a meeting held with parents at Oriole Park, held on Monday, November 2, 2015. At that meeting, the Superintendent was asked whether it would be possible, if the PART deemed it advisable, to proceed with the grade 6 realignment for the other three affected schools (namely, Eglinton, Davisville, and Maurice Cody), but to exempt Oriole Park. In response to that question, the Superintendent said that such an exemption would be possible and would be something for the PART to consider.

Her refusal to permit the PART to vote on the grade 6 realignment on a school-by-school basis was wholly inconsistent with her clear representation made to parents on the evening of November 2 and, as such, is inconsistent with the Board's commitment to transparency, openness and community engagement.

*(4) The Grade 6 Realignment Is Not in the Best Interests of Oriole Park Students*

There are a number of reasons why we do not believe that the proposed grade 6 realignment is in the best interests of Oriole Park students.

First, we note that Hodgson, as presently constituted, is itself well over capacity. Accordingly, there is no capacity at Hodgson, as presently constituted, to accommodate any more students, let alone the number of new students that would arrive as part of the proposed grade 6 realignment.

We acknowledge the proposal to build a large addition to Hodgson, which we are advised would accommodate the additional grade 6 students. However, the capital expenditure needed to build that addition has not yet been approved by the province. Accordingly, if the requisite approvals are not granted, then the grade 6 students will be moved to a school that is wholly and utterly without the facilities to accommodate them. The PART report does not provide for this possible eventuality.

Second, even assuming that the requisite approvals are granted and the construction proceeds, staff is currently predicting that the construction will not be completed until September 2018, at the earliest. Notwithstanding this projected 2018 completion date, the PART report recommends moving Oriole Park's grade 6 students to Hodgson in September 2017, at least 12 months before Hodgson's addition will be ready for occupancy. During this 12 month period, Oriole Park's grade 6 students (along with other grade 6 students, and presumably grade 7 and 8 students) will be accommodated in nine portables at Hodgson. We do not believe that it is in the best interests of Oriole Park's students to spend at least 12 months trying to learn in the midst of a construction zone, using temporary portables, particularly when they could just as easily remain during that time period at Oriole Park, in a situation which at least 78% of Oriole Park's parents believe to be preferable to moving to Hodgson.



Third, as noted above, the space pressures at Oriole Park have not had a serious adverse impact on the students' educational experience. This is evidenced by the fact that 78% of the Oriole Park parents who responded to a survey said that they were opposed to the proposal to move Oriole Park's grade 6 students to Hodgson. As further evidence that the space pressures have not had a serious adverse effect on student's educational experience at Oriole Park, the school could accommodate one more portable (in addition to the two already on site), but a third portable has not been added. One can only presume that, if the space pressures were truly severe, the third portable (which is to be placed in an auxiliary parking lot) would have been added already.

Fourth, we are mindful of the body of academic research, which suggests that grade 6 students have better educational and socio-emotional outcomes when they are in a K-6 environment, as compared to a 6-8 environment. We refer to the following nine studies (all but one of which date from 2006 or later):

Johnson David R. (2012) "Are Middle Schools Good For Student Academic Achievement? Evidence From Ontario." CD Howe Institute

Duey Elizabeth (2012) "Middle School or Junior High? How grade level configurations affect academic achievement" University of Toronto Report

Franklin, B.J., and C.H. Glascock (1998) "The relationship between grade configuration and student performance in rural schools," Journal of Research in Rural Education

West, Martin R. (2012) "The middle school plunge" Achievement tumbles when young students change schools". Education Next

Engec, N. (2006) "The relationship between mobility and student performance and behavior," Journal of Educational Research 99(3), 167-78

Cook, P. J., R. MacCoun, C. Muschkin, and J. Vigdor (2008) "The negative impacts of starting middle school in 6th grade," Journal of Policy Analysis and Management 27(1), 104-21

Schwartz, A.E., L. Stiefal, R. Rubenstein, and J. Zabel (2011) "The path not taken: How does school organization affect eighth-grade achievement?" Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis 33(3), 293-317

Aaronson, D., L. Barrow, and W. Sander (2007) "Teachers and student achievement in the Chicago public high schools," Journal of Labor Economics 25(1), 95-135

Byrnes, V., and A. Ruby (2007) "Comparing achievement between K-8 and middle schools: A large-scale empirical study," *American Journal of Education* 114(1), 101-35

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

For all of these reasons, we dissent from the PART report. We believe that the space pressures that exist at Oriole Park would be better addressed by alternative measures, including:

- a. The addition of one more portable on the school grounds; and
- b. The convening of a CCORC to consider measures related to the on-site child care, including modifications to the child care centre's lease, such as would permit one of the two classrooms currently used by the child care centre to be reclaimed for educational use.

Our alternative would involve Oriole Park students moving to Hodgson in grade 7. We believe that this is a preferable alternative to the option recommended by the PART report. To the extent that there are any concerns about Oriole Park students facing difficulties with social integration, arising from the fact that most of the other students will already have formed peer groups (having transitioned to Hodgson a year earlier), we are confident that Board staff already have plans in place for such late-transitioning students. In that regard, we note the PART report recommends that, beginning in 2020 or upon completion of Davisville Junior Public School's new facility, the accommodation options for Grade 6 at Davisville will be reviewed. This suggests that grade 6 may be moved back to Davisville Junior Public School, and grade 6 students from Davisville will then transition to Hodgson in grade 7. We presume that plans are (or will be) in place to assist Davisville students with their planned late transition. Such plans could easily be adapted to accommodate Oriole Park students as well.