



## **Hodgson Middle School Questions and Answers – Updated April 4, 2019**

### **Background**

The 2015/16 Yonge-Eglinton Program Area Review Team (PART) explored a number of options to address accommodation pressures in the Yonge-Eglinton area. In addition to boundary changes, the grade configuration changes that the Board voted on as part of the 2015 PART were necessary to accommodate the growth in K-5.

At the time of that review, all of the junior schools (Eglinton Jr PS, Davisville Jr PS, Maurice Cody Jr PS, and Oriole Park Jr PS) were already at or over capacity. Enrolment growth was projected to take place at all of the schools, and small and/or constrained school sites limited the number of portables (if any) that could be placed on those sites. The only option available to accommodate the projected student growth was Hodgson MS as the site could accommodate portables, as well as an addition.

Reconfiguring the grade ranges of all of the junior schools from K-6 to K-5 (as opposed to keeping some schools K-6) was also felt to be the most beneficial option from a pedagogical and social/emotional perspective as it enabled all students to transition into Hodgson MS together (this began in September 2017).

In 2016, to accommodate the projected increase in student enrolment, the TDSB submitted a business case to the Ministry of Education for a 12-classroom addition at Hodgson MS. In November 2016, the Ministry of Education approved a \$5.8 million capital funding project to build the addition.

Since the conclusion of the Yonge-Eglinton PART in 2016, however, approximately 8,800 units have been proposed within the boundaries of Hodgson MS, increasing the number of students projected at local schools. The City of Toronto's Midtown in Focus study, which will result in a new secondary plan for the Yonge-Eglinton community, has identified even further growth over the longer-term. Updated enrolment projections suggest that the Ministry-approved 12 classroom addition may be insufficient to manage longer-term enrolment growth. More information on the Midtown in Focus study can be found at <https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/planning-studies-initiatives/midtown-in-focus/>.

Given the need to build substantial additional capacity at Hodgson MS, in November 2018, TDSB Planning staff submitted a new business case to the Ministry for an additional seven classrooms (a 19-classroom addition) at Hodgson MS. No response has been

received to-date. TDSB staff will continue to advocate for a project that meets the long-term accommodation needs for the area.

## 1. **What are the options being considered?**

Following initial discussions with the Ministry of Education in February 2018 with respect to the need for additional capacity at Hodgson MS, TDSB staff was instructed to further study the condition of the existing school and prepare alternative design options as well as a design for a potential replacement school. Three options were presented to the Hodgson MS community at the public consultation meeting on June 11, 2018:

### Option 1: Three-Storey Addition/Renovation of Portions of the Existing School

This option is not recommended due to high exposure to risk of unforeseen building conditions. It is also limited in its ability to provide opportunities for future expansion and would not address other space issues within the school.

### Option 2: A New Replacement School

While this option would provide the greatest flexibility in addressing future needs for growth and development, it would require the demolition of the existing building and the relocation of students and staff during the construction period.

### Option 3: A Hybrid Option - Demolition of the 1960s Wing, Construction of a Major Addition, and Renovation of the 1914-1927 Wing of the Existing School

This design provides flexibility to accommodate growth while retaining and improving a major component of the existing school. This option would constrain the use of the site due to a phased project implementation process, so the entire school (or portions of the school) would be unavailable during construction. Students would need to be relocated to other parts of the school site or off-site during the construction period. If approved, this project may not start until 2021 with completion in 2023.

A link to the slide deck presented at the June 11, 2018 public meeting can be found at: [http://www.tdsb.on.ca/portals/default/ARC\\_helpful\\_info\\_docs/P20180429-HodgsonCommunityMeeting-V3.pdf](http://www.tdsb.on.ca/portals/default/ARC_helpful_info_docs/P20180429-HodgsonCommunityMeeting-V3.pdf).

## 2. **When would construction start/end?**

Construction timelines will depend on the option that is selected. Options two and three will take approximately 24 months to complete, with construction anticipated to start in September 2021.

**3. Would students be relocated during construction?**

A final decision has yet to be made with respect to whether students would stay on-site or be relocated to another location during construction. This will depend on the option selected. As part of the Davisville Jr PS replacement school project, both TDSB and the parent community discussed the pros and cons of maintaining a school presence on-site during construction. Analysis there led to support for the relocation - based on student safety, experience, and quality of education. TDSB staff recommends relocating; however, once the scope of this project has been finalized, staff will present options to the community for their input before a final decision is made.

**4. If a decision is made to relocate, where will the students move to?**

The TDSB has the former Vaughan Road Academy building as a holding site. Davisville Jr PS/Spectrum Alternative School was relocated there in September 2018 while the school is rebuilt. The same model could potentially be used for Hodgson MS. In this scenario, all students would be bussed to and from the Vaughan Road Academy building.

**5. How does Hodgson MS plan to accommodate rising enrolment until the new addition is completed?**

There are currently six portables on-site, which were placed to accommodate the influx of Grade 6 students until the 12-classroom addition was built as per the Yonge-Eglinton PART: <http://www.tdsb.on.ca/About-Us/Strategy-Planning/Search-All-Reviews?id=95>.

Recent changes in enrolment, development, and pupil yields, however, are currently manifesting themselves at the junior schools, meaning that their impact will reach Hodgson MS a few years from now. Updated projections for Hodgson MS indicate that six portables won't be sufficient to accommodate the number of students projected after 2019.

If the school remains on-site during construction, the number of portables required will increase to seven in 2020, eight in 2021 and 11 in 2022. The situation is more challenging if the school remains on-site and the 1960s wing is demolished because two classrooms within the school would be lost. This means that two additional portables would be required as an offset, increasing the maximum number of portables to 13 by 2022.

TDSB staff will continue to develop and review options for additional portables at Hodgson MS beginning in 2020, which will include consideration of the existing rink. No additional portables are required for September 2019.

**6. Does the location of the current portables make it difficult for students to access the main building?**

The six portables currently on-site are located within close proximity to the 1960s wing with two easy points of access. Each portable has a swipe card to get access to door #5 by the music room, and it is a short walk down the hall to the washroom. Students can also buzz and be let into the school through the front door, and it is a short walk down the hall to the washrooms. Both door #5 and the front entrance are about the same distance to the washroom. Portables 1, 2, and 3 are closer to door #5, while portables 4, 5, and 6 are closer to the front entrance. Hodgson MS is on a rotary-based schedule, so students enjoy the ability to move from class to class and are not in a portable the whole day.

**7. Will the skating rink be impacted if/when additional portables are required?**

The TDSB currently has a ten-year lease with the City of Toronto for the rink. At the public consultation meeting held on June 11, 2018, community members expressed support for portables to be located in the rink area as a way to avoid moving off-site during construction. Since that time, Councillor Jaye Robinson and the City's Parks and Recreation Department have indicated that using the rink during construction is feasible and something that the TDSB could potentially explore. The rink will be considered as part of the portable strategy that will be developed over the coming months. Information will be provided to the community as these discussions proceed.

**8. Why can't students from the four feeder schools attend other middle schools to alleviate the accommodation pressures at Hodgson MS?**

Hodgson MS is the feeder school for Davisville Jr PS, Eglinton Jr PS, Maurice Cody Jr PS, and Oriole Park Jr PS. There are currently no plans to split up the feeders to Hodgson MS given that adjacent schools in the area are all at capacity with local students.

**9. What are the next steps?**

Given the need to build additional capacity at the school beyond a 12-classroom addition, TDSB Planning and Facilities staff have been working with the Ministry since early 2018 to advocate for a larger addition at Hodgson MS. The TDSB submitted a business case in November 2018. No response has been received to-date. TDSB staff will continue advocating for a project that meets the long-term accommodation needs for the area and will update the community once a decision has been received from the Ministry.

Following a decision from the Ministry, a New School Review Team (NSRT) will be created to discuss design and construction options. This team will include the Principal, Superintendent of Education, Trustee, Facilities/Planning staff, the architects, and school committee members. A public meeting to update the school community on the project status will be held over the course of construction.

The second phase of the Yonge-Eglinton Program Area Review is currently underway. This review will explore a series of accommodation options to mitigate continued local

growth, particularly at Eglinton Jr PS. This study will involve many schools in the area, including Hodgson MS, and include an analysis of the Bannockburn property, a former elementary school located at Avenue Road, north of Lawrence Avenue. This facility, which is currently leased to a private school, could accommodate approximately 300 students.

#### **10. What else is the TDSB doing to address enrolment pressures in the area?**

The TDSB has expressed the stress new developments put on critical public infrastructure and the TDSB's ability to provide accommodation for future students in local schools.

The TDSB has advised the City and local developers of its concerns throughout the development approval process and has indicated that the TDSB opposes the approval of development in the Yonge-Eglinton area until the accommodation of the projected students can be appropriately addressed. The TDSB will continue to make representations at the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal (LPAT) in this regard.

The Yonge-Eglinton Secondary Plan, approved by Toronto City Council in July 2018, identifies public elementary school capacity as an infrastructure priority in the area. To this end, TDSB, Toronto Lands Corporation and City Planning staff are working collaboratively on future school site opportunities in the area to address long-term accommodation challenges associated with ongoing growth.

On June 20, 2018, the Board of Trustees approved its City Growth and Intensification Strategy aims to strengthen the role of the TDSB in the land-use planning process to ensure the TDSB is able to provide adequate long-term accommodation for students. More information on the strategy can be found at: <http://www.tdsb.on.ca/About-Us/Strategy-Planning/City-Growth-and-Intensification-Strategy>.

In addition, the TDSB keeps advocating for the Ontario Government to amend the Education Development Charges regulation (Ontario Reg. 20/98) under the Education Act to allow the TDSB to collect EDCs to help support urgent school infrastructure needs and reduce overcrowding in high-growth areas of the City. More information about Education Development Charges can be found at: <http://www.tdsb.on.ca/About-Us/Accountability/Renewal-Needs-Backlog-and-Facility-Condition-Index/Education-Development-Charges>

#### **11. In the intervening years until the addition is built, will the quality of the educational experience be compromised?**

Hodgson MS is a school that prides itself on high academic achievement. We create a learning environment that supports the individual growth of students.

Teachers work in teams to design activities that reflect the curriculum and that are engaging and relevant for all students.

Hodgson MS offers many extracurricular activities that engage the interest of our diverse group of learners. Our activities include music groups, sports teams, student government, social justice groups, arts and crafts groups, and many more. We encourage all students to participate in extracurricular activities.

Hodgson MS offers a Homeroom and Rotary program for students. Grade 6 homeroom includes Language, Social Studies, Health, and the Arts. Rotary subjects for Grade 6 are French, Math, Music, Science and Technology, Physical Education and Fitness. Grade 7 and 8 Homeroom includes Language, Drama, History and Geography. Rotary subjects for Grade 7 and Grade 8 include Math, Science & Technology, French, Music, Visual Art, Dance, Health, Physical Education and Fitness.

Hodgson MS has an Extended French Program for students in Grade 6, 7 and Grade 8. Students come from the Extended French program at Eglinton Public School. French Language, History, Geography, Visual Arts, Dance & Drama are all instructed in French.

Throughout the year our school wide inquiry focus has explored the Health curriculum. Each of our grade teams, in grade 6, 7 and 8, have developed questions that provide an opportunity for learning to be truly cross-curricular in nature. Under the principles and expectations of each area of the Health curriculum, the staff and students at Hodgson MS are developing inquiry questions using a cross-curricular strategy. This allows for student voice and interest to drive some of the learning in the school, making it more meaningful for our students. The culmination of our work this year will happen during Children's Mental Health week on May 9, 2019 with our Family Wellness Night. Our school goals will remain similar for the 2019-2020 school year as we look to further engage our students in other aspects of the Health curriculum so we can continue to build on the Mental Health and Well-Being of students at Hodgson Middle School.

Programming or resources or the achievement or educational experiences of students at Hodgson MS will not be compromised - we are prepared. In fact, it is about to be even stronger next year and onward as we continue to establish Hodgson Middle School as a place that values students, families, the community and academic excellence.