

York Memorial Student Survey
Results Summary
PAR (Pupil Accommodation Review)
February 10, 2020

Prepared for: TDSB Staff

Prepared by: The students of York Memorial C.I.

February 24, 2020

Background

In early February 2020, York Memorial students became aware of the TDSB's move towards a modified PAR (Pupil Accommodation Review). Information was sent home to student households and the three scenarios for the future of York Memorial C.I. and George Harvey C.I. created by TDSB staff were revealed. It was also made known that the TDSB staff had put forth a recommendation on one of their three scenarios to school trustees before consulting with the school community.

We the students of York Memorial decided that we needed to be better informed about this process and find out what the student body as a whole was thinking and feeling about the future of our school which has a direct impact on our lives. The best way that we felt that we could gather critical perspectives from our peers was to create a short survey that would be completed by the vast majority of York Memorial students in all grades; 9 through 12. Several student leaders gathered to create a one page, six question survey that would eventually be distributed to all YMCI students.

The purpose of our survey was to gauge how York Memorial students were feeling about the proposed plans so that we could plan our next course of action. We believe that our voice, the student voice, is the most important one in this entire process and needs to be heard clearly. We hope that this initial survey and the results that it provides is the start of our voice being heard in this decision making process.

Methodology

On Monday February 10, 2020 a group of approximately 30 student leaders in grades 9 through 12 gathered in the morning in preparation for distributing student

surveys in period 2 classes. Students were partnered up and sent out to distribute and collect student surveys on the spot in all classrooms.

Students in all grades and subjects areas were surveyed with the exception of students in our DD program and grade 12 students who were on spare. We had 650 surveys completed which is 81% of the student population of York Memorial. All students who were in attendance were offered the opportunity to participate in this survey and inclusion of their name and grade on the paper survey was optional.

Survey results were tabulated by thirty 'Memo Ambassadors', a pre-existing group of student leaders who were already scheduled to meet that week for a different purpose.

Results

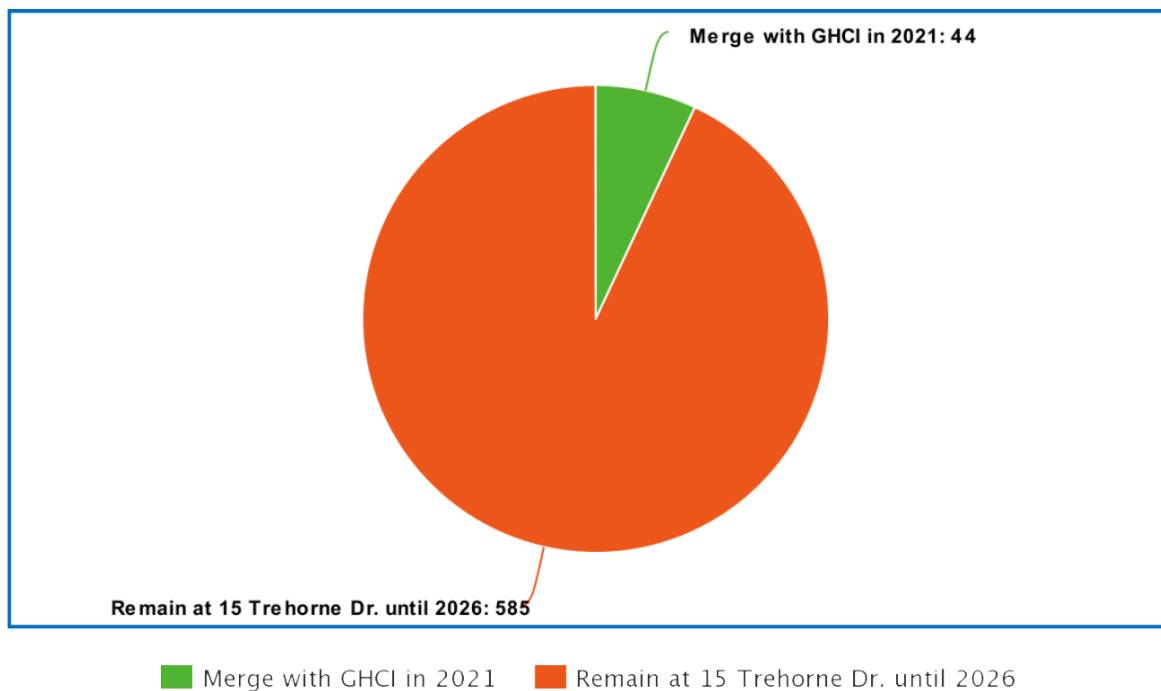
A copy of the survey is included at the end of this summary report for your reference.

Our main question on the front page of our survey was whether students would prefer to stay at 15 Trehorne Drive until the new school site was rebuilt in 2026 or merge with George Harvey in September 2021.

Our results were as follows;

44 students would like to merge with GHCI in September 2021 (7%)
585 students would like to remain at 15 Trehorne Dr. until the new site is rebuilt in 2026 (93%)

Front Page Question

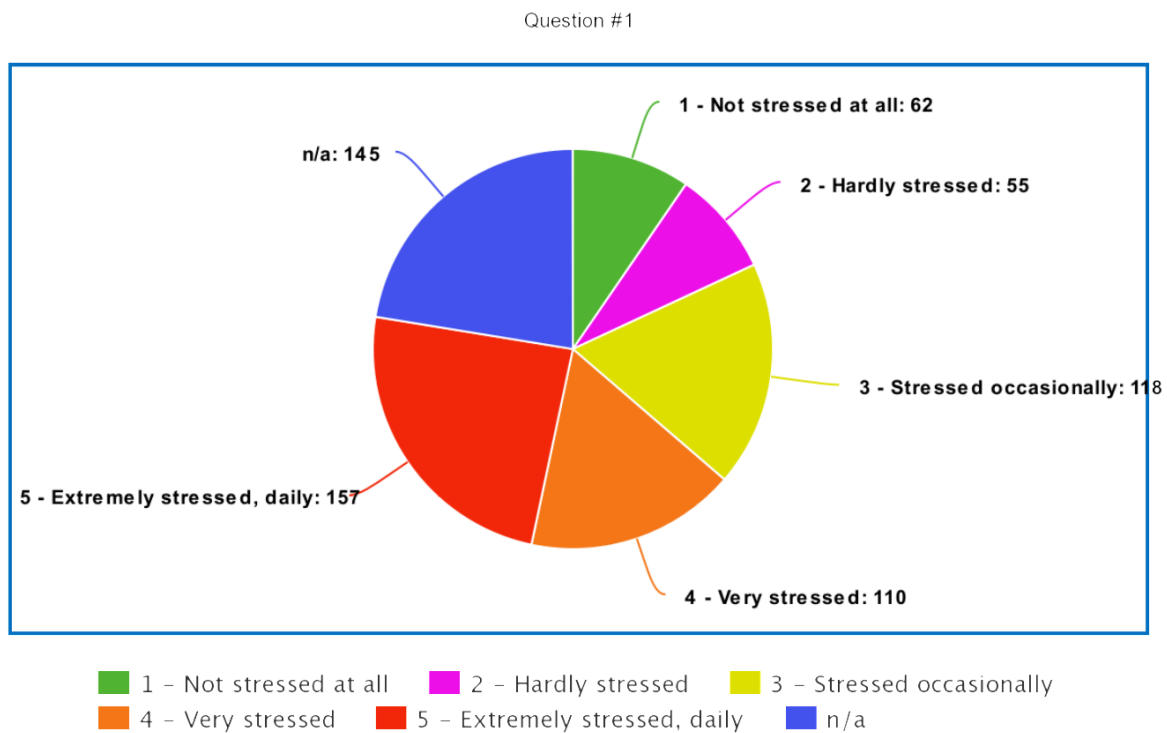


Question #1 on the backside of the survey asked students to rate their stress level AFTER the move to GHCI in May 2019 on a scale of 1-5. Students were also able to respond n/a if they were not a YMCI student at this time.

Our results were as follows;

62 students rated 1 (not stressed at all)
55 students rated 2 (hardly stressed)
118 students rated 3 (stressed occasionally)
110 students rated 4 (very stressed)
157 students rated 5 (extremely stressed, daily)
145 students chose n/a

53% of students who were affected by the move in May told us that they were either 'Very stressed' or 'Extremely stressed, daily'



Question #2 asked students to rate their anticipated stress level if we were to merge with GHCI in September 2021 on a scale of 1-5. Students were also able to respond n/a if they chose to.

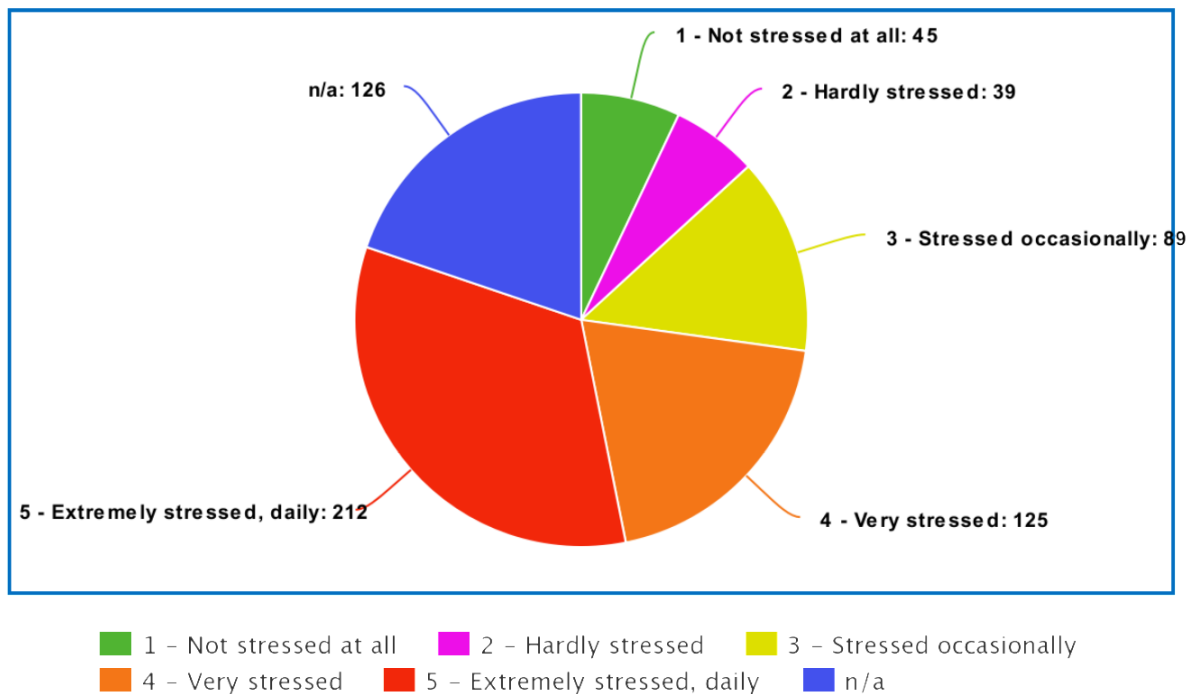
Our results were as follows;

45 students rated 1 (not stressed at all)
39 students rated 2 (hardly stressed)

89 students rated 3 (stressed occasionally)
125 students rated 4 (very stressed)
212 students rated 5 (extremely stressed, daily)
126 students chose n/a

66% of students anticipate being 'Very stressed' or 'Extremely stressed, daily' if we were told that we were moving to GHCI in September 2021.

Question #2



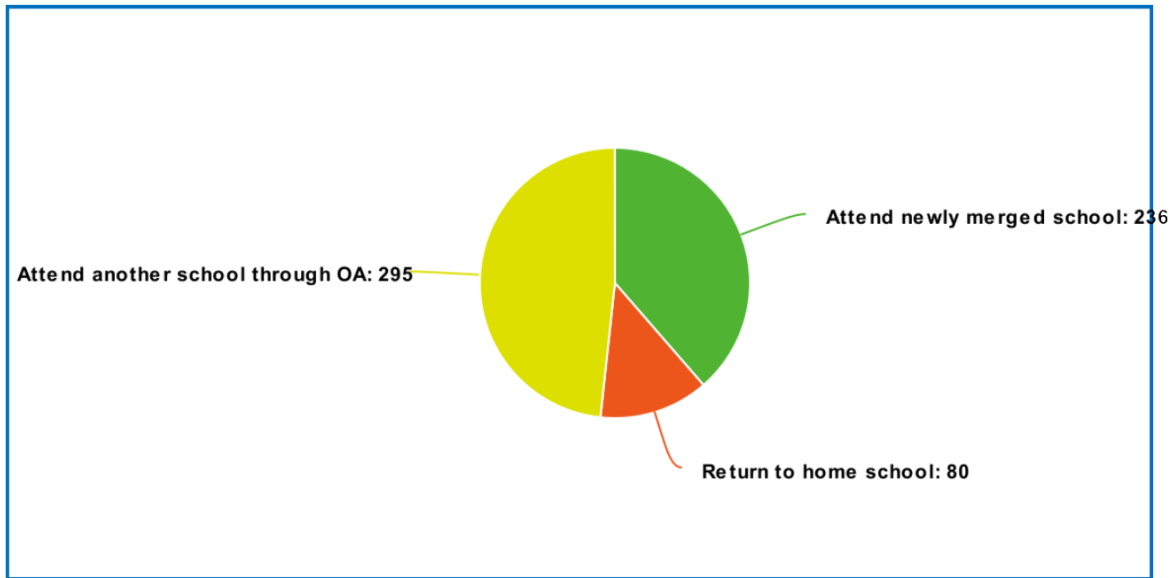
Question #3 asked students what their chosen course of action would be today if York Memorial and George Harvey were merged.

Our results were as follows;

236 students would attend the newly merged school
80 students would return to their home school
295 students would attend another school based on optional attendance

61% of students told us that they would not attend a newly merged York Memorial and George Harvey situation.

Question #3



- Attend newly merged school
- Attend another school through OA
- Return to home school

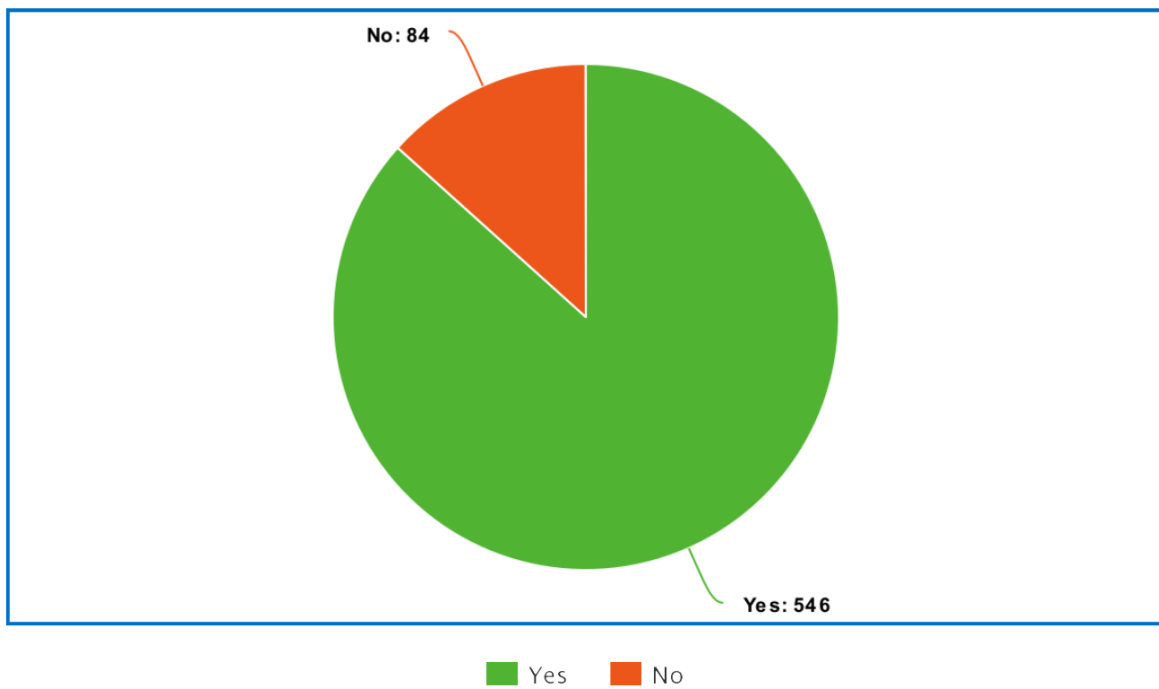
Question #4 asked students whether or not they were happy with York Memorial's location at 15 Trehorne Dr.

Our results were as follows;

546 students responded 'yes' (87%)

84 students responded 'no' (13%)

Question #4



Questions #5 was an opportunity for York Memorial students to make any additional comments about the possible merger with George Harvey in September 2021.

Below are a sample of comments copied directly from the surveys;

“Merging with George Harvey will significantly impact all of the student’s mental health. We all thought TDSB prioritized our mental health, but the fact that I am

doing this survey is clear evidence that this is not the case. Mental health > money. Why do you think we advocated so much for our beloved school.” - Anonymous

“It’s obvious the TDSB is only really doing this for the sake of their own bottom line and it’s disgusting. They’ve shown again and again that they don’t care at all about how we feel. They’re treating us like pawns on a chessboard and I just want a bit of stability.” - Aden Grade 10

“The fire has affected my mental health greatly and moving to GHCI has increased my emotional tolerance in terms of keeping up with my studies. Another move has happened and at first I was stressed but I have settled into this new place and almost everything is back to how it used to be in Memo. If I move one more time, especially if it’s going to be in my senior year, I would be extremely stressed to the point of getting anxiety. Please consider our mental health carefully.” - Joy Grade 10

“I’ve spent too long fighting for any freedom I could get. To be stuck in a school that wouldn’t let me express myself nor the pride I have for the school that let me be free would be a spit in the face to all that we’ve done and fought for. I’ve stayed in this school because it’s the only school whose teachers I’ve had respect me and care for my well-being. Whose counsellors have fought for my mental well being. If I lose that I lose everything. And I’m tired of losing. I am so tired.” - Jaune Grade 10

“When we first merged with George Harvey, it took a long time to adjust, then when we moved to Scarlett Heights it took me a long time to adjust, but asking me to move again is impossible.” - Anonymous Grade 10

“We are happy in our current location. We fought to come here so we would like to stay with our decision.” - Anonymous Grade 12

*“Please take the students opinions seriously when making the final decision”
- Anonymous*

*“If I knew that York would be moving to George Harvey I wouldn’t have come here.”
- Kydar Grade 9*

“It wasn’t our fault our school burned down” -Anonymous

“Grade 9 was a hard year after the fire and the new location and by the TDSB moving us to a new school when we are NOT underpopulated is obviously taking advantage of the fact that we were involved in a tragic accident and that is very morally wrong!!!” - A. Yasin Grade 9

“While this may be the inevitable option, merging the two schools as early as Sept 2021 would very likely be stressful, not just for York Memorial, but also for George Harvey to suddenly just combine the two schools. It was a tragedy for us and we barely managed for our relocation. I just hope that the accommodation for both schools would be as accommodating as possible, but I don’t think moving as soon as Sept 2021 would give time for the best accommodation for both schools”

- Andrei Grade 12

“What would happen to the DD students? Last year when Memo had to relocate the DD students were sent to another school. Though the move was stressful for “mainstream” kids it would have been 10 times harder for the DD students as their whole daily regimen was changed” - Tenzin Grade 11

“Moving to George Harvey will make students marks drop due to excessive stress”

- Jaidyn Grade 10

“We already went through one move, so what’s the point of moving so fast again when we are already at a stabilized school? Why should we have to move again just because GHCI doesn’t have enough students? It’s not healthy for kids to have to move schools over and over. Haven’t we suffered enough loss already?”

- Jessica Grade 11

“No one wants us at George Harvey. We want our own school and not make things more complicated. I’m already stressing about this” - Anonymous

“Merging schools will lead to more stress and anxiety. Having to adapt to a new school along with new classrooms is overwhelming” - Anonymous Grade 10

“I applied to York Memorial and intend to graduate from there. That was a decision I chose to make. I didn’t choose to be a student of a totally different school.”

- Emily Grade 9

“As a York Memo student, we’ve already gone through two major changes being the fire in May 2019 and the temporary move to GHCI. Another move would affect the students since it keeps getting worse and worse with losing all our stuff, going to a school where the students didn’t like us and potentially losing our identity as YMCI students.” - Anonymous Grade 10

“The transition from middle school to high school had already massively impacted my mental health. Moving to yet another school during the grade that my marks matter most will make me feel so stressed and I will not feel comfortable in a new environment.” - Justin Grade 9

“This change would make me feel extremely stressed and anxious especially after so many changes during our high school year. The best solution for all our students,

taking into consideration, their mental health is to keep York Memorial C.I. at 15 Trehorne Dr. at least until the new school is built” - Anonymous Grade 10

“After the school burnt, my mental health became very poor, and then being at George Harvey it became a daily thing. Usually I am very motivated in my education but at Harvey going to school just felt draining. - Emily Grade 11

*“I find it very disrespectful to move us back there. We already lost our home and stuff, I don’t need anymore trouble. We already voiced our opinions. **WE DON’T WANT TO BE THERE.**” - Jada Grade 10*

*“I do not think it is fair for us aa York Memorial students as well as George Harvey students to merge our schools together. Memo students have grown accustomed to where we are now, we have learned to adapt to the changes of sleep schedules, bus routes etc. I will not be happy if we move in with George Harvey. You are stripping away all the memories of what our school was and what it stood for. Even though our school is gone, we still continue to keep Memo alive as much as possible.
- Anonymous Grade 10*

“As a 10th grader a third move would cause chaos and stress and the amount of people. 10th graders should not have to do another move.” - Anonymous

“I’d rather not attend 3 different schools before I graduate, so keeping us here would be nice.” - Yoonus Grade 10

*“Merging with George Harvey is a terrible idea in my opinion. It would be very inconvenient for us students, moving schools TWICE was already such a traumatic experience. So even suggesting that we move to Harvey is unnecessary and extremely unthoughtful.” - Anonymous Grade 10
“It’s a lot of pressure on the students which could affect their academics”
- Anonymous Grade 10*

“Shouldn’t be a rushed process, if merging does occur. Should wait until 2026 for students who have been moved multiple times.” - Anonymous

“Moving to Harvey in 2021 will be depressing. I am mourning the loss of YMCI and moving so quickly will make it worse.” - Anonymous

“I understand why the TDSB would want that but they need to listen to the students voice because most students don’t want that.” - Jonathan Grade 9

“The TDSB needs to understand the damage that will be done if we have to move again.” - Eric Grade 10

"I believe staying at 15 Trehorne Dr. until the new building is completed will be the best for my mental health. I am completely happy and satisfied with YMCI's location right now. Giving us a period of time to accept the move will make the transition smoother." - Laura Grade 10

"I personally feel like it's really unfair if we have to merge with GH after everything that we've been through" - Anonymous

"I personally don't believe that the move to George Harvey would be a good decision as many of the students, including myself were very stressed at George Harvey due to not feeling very comfortable. We've also had to move and adjust to so many new locations and situations whereas it's been a struggle throughout." - Nancy Grade 10

"Having to move again could destroy my mental health drastically and put me in constant stress" - Affernia Grade 10

"It's not fair that we are being thrown around because our school burned. Because our school burned doesn't mean we can't make our own choices." - Anonymous

"Now that we moved to Scarlett Heights I feel more comfortable and feel like I belong here. If we were to move to Harvey AGAIN it would be really disruptive to me and all the other grade 10s." - Anonymous Grade 10

"That would bring more stress especially after the fire" - Anonymous

"If we do merge, I feel as though I won't be able to function at my full potential" - Anonymous

"I think it is ridiculous for York Memo to move to George Harvey in 2021 when we just moved here. Our school has already been through way too much; there is no need to add more stress." -Anonymous

"This change will not directly impact me however, after the first move to Harvey I felt very unmotivated to do work and often fell asleep in class which is something I never do." - Tommy Grade 11

"Ruining kids high school memories by going back and forth is cruel. Why make YMCI students suffer when they have suffered enough." - Anonymous

"Moving to another school is very stressful. Going to highschool is already a big weight on itself, so now this happens?" -Sumaiya Grade 9

"Our home is now here" -Anonymous

“Merging in 2021 would be a big mistake. It would be incredibly rushed, not well thought out and have a very negative impact on students' education and mental health.” - Anonymous Grade 10

*“Keep Memo separate from Harvey, the students don't deserve this stress.”
- Christian Grade 12*

*“We're all starting to get used to the Trehorne location, why move back and complicate things even more? This would create more stress for the students.”
- Anonymous*