

**Final Report of the Program Area Review Team for
Armour Heights PS, St. Andrew's MS, and Ledbury Park EMS
March 24, 2021**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Program Area Review Team recommends:

- 1. That the grades at Armour Heights PS be expanded from JK-6 to JK-8 starting in September 2021. Armour Heights PS becomes a JK-7 school in 2021 and JK-8 school in 2022.**
- 2. That the junior to intermediate pathway from Armour Heights PS to St. Andrew's MS be grandparented for the 2021/22 school year.**
- 3. That the shared junior boundary between Ledbury Park EMS and Armour Heights PS, be directed entirely to Ledbury Park EMS.**

BACKGROUND

A Grade Range study for Armour Heights PS has been listed in the Long-Term Planning and Accommodation Strategy (LTPAS) since the Junior High School studies were completed in 2016. During the York Mills Cluster of Schools Junior High Review, members of the Armour Heights PS community had expressed an interest in expanding the grade range to become a JK-8 school from a JK-6. At the time the school was over capacity and the addition of two grades to the school would not have helped student accommodation issues. As a result of community consultation during that review, Armour Heights PS remained a JK-6 school despite all other feeder schools to St. Andrew's MS becoming JK-5 schools. Over the past few years, Armour Heights has become less utilized which allowed the opportunity to reconsider the grade range expansion.

A Local Feasibility Team (LFT) comprised of the area Trustees, Superintendents, TDSB Principals and planning staff, was established in January 2021. The objective of the LFT was to investigate whether a Grade Range expansion at Armour Heights to a JK-8 school was possible. The shared Junior boundary between Armour Heights and Ledbury Park EMS would also be examined.

The LFT created a JK-8 model for the school showing it was possible to accommodate two additional grades at the school without the need for capital improvements. Data was also presented showing that there are currently no JK-6 students in the shared boundary that attend Armour Heights PS.

The transition of the LFT to a Program Area Review Team (PART) was approved by Central Accommodation Team (CAT) on February 18, 2021. The objective of

the PART is to continue the work of the LFT in evaluating the feasibility of the Grade Range and Boundary Change by seeking advice and feedback from parent representatives from the impacted schools throughout the course of two working meetings.

At the first PART meeting, an explanation of the role of the PART as an advisory committee was given. The group was shown the scenario the LFT created. The data included actual 2020 student enrolments and projected 2025 and 2030 enrolments (see Appendix A) based on the grade range change and boundary change being considered (see Appendix B).

The comments and questions posed at the PART meeting informed the content of the presentation at the public meeting. A copy of the presentation can be found online at the Armour Heights Program Area Review website.

The PART held a second working meeting to discuss the feedback received at the public meeting and to recommend a proposed solution. A consensus was reached that Armour Heights should become a JK-8 school with grandparenting for the 2021-22 for grade 6 students who wish to attend St. Andrew's MS. A consensus was also reached that the shared junior boundary between Armour Heights PS and Ledbury Park EMS be assigned solely to Ledbury Park EMS.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Program Area Review Team		
School/Organization	Name	Role
Armour Heights Public School	Belinda Longe	Principal
Armour Heights Public School	Laura Berry	Parent Representative
Ledbury Park Elementary and Middle School	Kari Hudson	Principal
Ledbury Park Elementary and Middle School	Jason Rosen	Parent Representative
St Andrew's Middle School	Jessica Feldberg	Principal
St Andrew's Middle School	Zakia Nabbus	Parent Representative
St Andrew's Middle School	Nataliya Brylynska	Vice-Principal
TDSB Trustee	Shelley Laskin	Trustee, Ward 8
TDSB Trustee	Rachel Chernos Lin	Trustee, Ward 11
TDSB Superintendent	Denise Humphreys	Superintendent
TDSB Superintendent	Ron Felsen	Superintendent

Staff Resources		
Organization	Name	Role
TDSB	Sarah Libera	Planning Department
TDSB	William Wallace	Planning Department
TDSB	Dan Castaldo	Planning Department

TDSB	Effie Stathopoulos	Special Education
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Meeting Details		
Meeting Type	Date	Time
Committee	March 4, 2021	6:30-8:00 pm
Public Meeting	March 18, 2021	6:30-8:00 pm
Committee	March 23, 2021	6:30-8:00 pm

ANALYSIS OF PROPOSED CHANGES

Grade Range Change

The proposed grade range change will:

- Eliminate a school transition for Armour Heights PS students
- Not significantly impact enrolment at St. Andrew's MS
- Be accommodated within existing classroom space at Armour Heights without any retrofits requiring capital

Junior Attendance Boundary Change

The proposed boundary change will:

- Eliminate a shared junior boundary between Armour Heights PS and Ledbury Park EMS and align with the intermediate boundary
- Will not impact any current Armour Heights PS or Ledbury Park EMS students

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

There was a consensus to proceed with the Grade Range and Boundary Changes as presented.

The PART supports expanding the grade range at Armour Heights from JK-6 to JK-8 while grandparenting an opportunity for graduating students to continue to St. Andrew's MS for the 2021-22 school year. The PART also supports assigning the shared attendance boundary between Armour Heights PS and Ledbury Park EMS, to Ledbury Park EMS exclusively.

Throughout the course of our discussions, parents at the PART working meetings and public meeting made comments and asked questions regarding the proposed grade range and boundary changes. These are summarized under the following themes.

Grade Range change:

Parents believed the K-8 experience will provide a more nurturing and supportive environment while reducing the number of transitions for students. It will also help increase the size of the school and avoid longer commutes and/or TTC rides for Grade 7 and 8 students.

Concerns were raised about the potential of small Grade 7 and 8 cohorts, the experience of older students with no capital investment in specialized classrooms and their transition to secondary school from a K-8 model.

Junior Attendance Boundary change:

Parents were supportive since students are already attending Ledbury Park EMS. It would also eliminate the need for students within this boundary to cross two busy main streets, namely Avenue Road and Wilson Avenue.

There were some who prefer having the choice of two schools and do not agree with the Board policy of one school per address. The point was also raised that Armour Heights PS would benefit from the additional students from this boundary.

Other Feedback:

At both the public meeting and through the survey, questions were raised about the potential to change the secondary boundaries. Staff responded describing that changes to the secondary boundaries would require a larger review involving multiple secondary schools.

Throughout the course of our discussions, parents at the PART working meetings and public meeting provided feedback and raised several questions about the program and accommodation plan for these communities. The PART carefully considered the options presented and critically reflected with thoughtful feedback and questions.

The PART recommends pursuing the recommendations contained within this report.

Planning and Enrolment Data

Table 1: Status Quo

Facility	Capacity	October 31, 2020 Actual			October 31, 2025 Projection			October 31, 2030 Projection		
		Enrolment	Utilization	Portables	Enrolment	Utilization	Portables	Enrolment	Utilization	Portables
Armour Heights PS	289	211	73%	0	207	72%	0	218	75%	0
St. Andrews MS	527	458	87%	0	446	85%	0	496	94%	0
Ledbury Park EMS	554	458	83%	0	512	92%	0	530	96%	0
Total	1,370	1,127	82%	0	1,165	85%	0	1,244	91%	0

Table 2: Grade Range and Boundary Change Scenario

Grade range change to JK-8 at Armour Heights PS, shared boundary assigned to Ledbury Park EMS

Facility	Capacity	October 31, 2020 Actual			October 31, 2025 Projection			October 31, 2030 Projection		
		Enrolment	Utilization	Portables	Enrolment	Utilization	Portables	Enrolment	Utilization	Portables
Armour Heights PS	289	211	73%	0	240	83%	0	257	89%	0
St. Andrews MS	527	458	87%	0	419	80%	0	463	88%	0
Ledbury Park EMS	554	458	83%	0	512	92%	0	530	96%	0
Total	1,370	1,127	82%	0	1,171	85%	0	1,250	91%	0

Map 1. Shared Junior Boundary

