

# **Final Report of the Program Area Review Team for the Relocation of Etobicoke Secondary Alternative School (ESAS) Program Area Review**

May 2025

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

**The Program Area Review Team recommends that:**

- 1. Etobicoke Secondary Alternative School relocate to Rexdale Learning Centre, effective 1 September, 2026.**

## **BACKGROUND**

A study to explore the relocation of Etobicoke Secondary Alternative School (ESAS) from its current location at 160 Silverhill Drive into Burnhamthorpe Adult Learning Centre or another site in Etobicoke was identified in the 2024-2033 Long-Term Program and Accommodation Strategy (LTPAS). The purpose of this program area review was to ensure that adequate accommodation for long-term intensification along Dundas Street West, Cloverdale Mall and Etobicoke City Centre would be available.

A Local Feasibility Team (LFT) including Trustees, Superintendents, Principals, and TDSB Central Staff met on March 5, 2025 to look at the proposed relocation study identified in the LTPAS. The LFT looked at options to relocate ESAS to from its current location to Burnhamthorpe Adult Learning Centre (500 The East Mall), as well as Rexdale Learning Centre (30 Barrhead Crescent).

Staff conducted an in-depth analysis of Burnhamthorpe Adult Learning Centre, developing four detailed scenarios to determine how the site could accommodate ESAS. Despite this thorough exploration, Burnhamthorpe was ultimately not the preferred option due to the significant disruption it would cause, requiring the relocation of several existing programs. Additionally, the site would require extensive retrofits to accommodate ESAS, including the installation of a kitchen for the nutrition program, a gender-neutral washroom, and other classroom modifications. The estimated cost of these retrofits was approximately \$860,000.

The LFT developed a preferred feasible option to relocate ESAS to the Rexdale Learning Centre. Rexdale Learning Centre proposed as a second option due to the recent and unexpected loss of federal funding for the LINC programs being hosted at Rexdale Learning Centre.

The Rexdale Learning Centre emerged as the staff-preferred option due to its minimal impact on existing programs and significantly lower retrofit cost of approximately \$384,000. The facility is in excellent condition, offering large, bright, and well-maintained classrooms, along with a dedicated area that includes access to washrooms and office space. The Rexdale Learning Centre is well-suited to meet all the needs of ESAS, but kitchen upgrades will be required to support the nutrition program. Despite this, the overall benefits of this option led to the unanimous support from the Local Feasibility Team in recommending Rexdale as the preferred relocation site.

The formation of the Program Area Review Team (PART) was approved by the TDSB's Central Accommodation Team (CAT) on March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

#### First PART Working Meeting

The first meeting of the PART was held on March 28, 2025. The composition of the PART at this meeting included representatives from ESAS, including 1 parent representative, 1 student representative and Principal. Also in attendance were Central Staff from Planning and Facilities, the Central Assigned Principal and Vice Principal of Caring and Safe Schools, Trustees for Ward 1 and Ward 3, and the Superintendent for FOS 25.

The PART Membership was informed of their advisory role and that their objective was to continue the work of the LFT by evaluating the recommended scenario. This would be accomplished through several working meetings and a public meeting.

The PART members had the opportunity to thoroughly review both relocation options, Burnhamthorpe Adult Learning Centre and Rexdale Learning Centre, by examining detailed floor plans for each site (Appendix A for Burnhamthorpe, Appendix B for Rexdale). They were provided with information about the layout, required retrofits, costs, and the potential impact on existing programs.

In addition, they reviewed the specific needs of ESAS, which serves Grades 11-12 with approximately 28 students. The current ESAS school site is quite large with both floors being used by the program (Appendix C). The program is designed to support students who learn in unique ways, providing a small, supportive learning environment. ESAS is expected to maintain stable enrolment numbers over the next decade, with students traveling from various locations across Etobicoke (Appendix D).

Following the review, members were able to ask questions, seek clarification, and engage in meaningful discussions regarding the advantages and challenges of each

relocation option. This ensured that all perspectives were considered before forming a final recommendation.

### Discussion of Staff's Recommended Option

During the discussion of the staff's recommended option, the Rexdale Learning Centre was widely supported as the most practical and advantageous site for the relocation of ESAS (Appendix E). Staff emphasized that this option closely aligned with the priorities and relocation requirements identified by ESAS staff. The site presents minimal disruption to existing programs and features large, bright, and well-maintained classrooms that are well-suited to meet the educational and support needs of ESAS students. Additionally, the retrofit cost for Rexdale is significantly lower than Burnhamthorpe Adult Learning Centre. The retrofit cost for Rexdale Learning Centre is approximately \$384,000. Only minor upgrades are required, primarily the installation of a kitchen and minor interior improvements.

Rexdale Learning Centre also provides a dedicated section within the building that can be exclusively designated for ESAS, featuring its own offices and washrooms. The discussion demonstrated broad consensus that the Rexdale Learning Centre offers the most viable and sustainable solution for the long-term relocation of ESAS.

Staff concluded the first PART meeting with a clear consensus that the Rexdale Learning Centre was the preferred and most suitable option for the relocation of ESAS. With strong support from both staff and PART members, and no outstanding issues requiring further discussion, it was determined that an additional PART meeting before the Public Meeting would not be necessary.

Staff advised that the process would move forward to the next phase, which would be a public meeting to share the recommendation and gather community feedback.

### Virtual Public Meeting

The Virtual Public Meeting for this review was held on May 8, 2025, using the Zoom Webinar platform. To ensure accessibility, registrants were also given the option to join by telephone. A total of 30 individuals registered for the session; however, 14 attended on the day of the meeting.

At the public meeting, staff provided background information about the review and presented the current recommendations to solicit feedback from the broader community. Attendees were invited to submit written questions/comments via a 'Q and

A' window in the Zoom Webinar. An option to ask live questions was also provided to participants.

Feedback received from meeting attendees included:

- The impact of the proposed new school at 160 Silverhill Drive on traffic and parking;
- The community supports that would be provided to the neighbourhood surrounding Rexdale Learning Centre given the influx of new students, and
- The distance between Rexdale Learning Centre and ESAS' current location as well as the lack of transportation plans for ESAS students.

Staff answered all questions live during the discussion.

A Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document was produced and posted on the TDSB website after the meeting (Appendix F). The FAQ is a consolidation of questions received throughout the process and the live discussion portion of the public meeting.

#### Final PART Working Meeting

The final PART working meeting was held directly after the Public Meeting on May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

PART members discussed feedback received at the public meeting. Staff addressed all questions raised during the Public Meeting in detail, providing additional context and clarification where needed. Staff shared that existing ESAS students reside all over Etobicoke, with several students residing in close proximity to Rexdale Learning Centre. As an alternative secondary school, ESAS does not have a defined attendance boundary, and students are eligible to enroll from anywhere within the city. As a result of this open enrollment structure, the TDSB does not provide transportation services for the school. Staff clarified that it would remain the responsibility of students and their parents or caregivers to make their own arrangements for travel to and from school. In response to the request for neighborhood improvements around the Rexdale Learning Centre, staff clarified that such matters fall outside the jurisdiction of the Toronto District School Board (TDSB).

Following the discussion, the PART members were asked the following:

1. Is there consensus that Staff's Recommendation be put forward to Trustees for approval?

- The PART did not speak against this. As such, the PART recommends that Staff's Recommendation be put forward to Trustees for approval.
2. Is there consensus that implementation be for September 2026? Yes or No.
- The PART did not speak against this. As such, the PART recommends that implementation be for September 2026.

When invited to provide any additional recommendations, the PART membership did not offer further input. The Chair concluded the meeting by expressing appreciation to all participants for their time, engagement, and contributions throughout the process.

Slide presentations from all PART working meetings, as well as the public meeting, were made available on the TDSB accommodation review webpage.

### Survey Feedback

An online survey was conducted over 8 days, closing on May 14, 2025, with 14 responses received. Of those, 71% were affiliated with Etobicoke Secondary Alternative School (ESAS), with 50% identifying as TDSB staff and 36% as parents or guardians. Overall, 57% of respondents supported the proposed relocation to Rexdale Learning Centre, while 43% opposed it (Appendix G).

Supporters cited the quality of the Rexdale facility, its cost-effectiveness, and the minimal disruption it would cause to existing programs.

Opposition came primarily from parents and guardians who expressed concerns about increased commute times, loss of school stability, and the absence of transportation support. Some suggested relocating to the Mimico Adult Learning Centre; however, that site is already designated for the relocation of the Caring and Safe Schools program effective for September 2025, and cannot accommodate ESAS.

Additionally, since ESAS is an open-boundary school drawing students from across the city, busing is not provided by the TDSB. This was clarified during the review process and remains consistent with TDSB transportation policy for alternative schools.

All feedback was reviewed. Despite concerns, the PART maintained its support for relocating ESAS to Rexdale Learning Centre.

## STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

### Program Area Review Team and Staff Resources

Name	Title	School(s)/Program
Dennis Hastings	Trustee, Ward 1	Rexdale Learning Centre
Patrick Nunziata	Trustee, Ward 3	Etobicoke Secondary Alternative School
Jim Spyropoulos	Superintendent, FOS 25	Etobicoke Secondary Alternative School
Ross Murray	Centrally Assigned Vice Principal	Caring and Safe Schools
Christina Saunders	Site Manager / Centrally Assigned Principal	Rexdale Learning Centre / Caring and Safe Schools
Ellen Walsh	Principal	Etobicoke Secondary Alternative School
Mohammed Hegazy	Parent Representative	Etobicoke Secondary Alternative School
Nelly Hegazy	Student Representative	Etobicoke Secondary Alternative School
Joyce Kwong	Manager, Accommodation Planning	—
Michelle Bullough	Assistant Architectural Design Coordinator, Design & Renewal	—
Manpreet Sian	Planner	—

### Meeting Details

Meeting Type	Date	Time
Working PART Meeting #1	Friday, March 28, 2025	5:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.
Public Meeting	Thursday, May 8, 2025	5:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.
Working PART Meeting #2	Thursday, May 8, 2025	6:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

## ANALYSIS OF PROPOSED CHANGES

The Recommended Option will provide Etobicoke Secondary Alternative School (ESAS) with a well-suited, dedicated space at the Rexdale Learning Centre that meets both the program's current and long-term needs. The facility offers large, bright, and well-maintained classrooms, as well as access to separate office spaces and washrooms, fostering a strong sense of identity, autonomy, and community for students and staff. Minimal renovations are required, making this a cost-effective solution with an estimated

retrofit cost significantly lower than alternative options. The site also became available at an opportune time due to the recent vacating of space previously occupied by LINC programs, allowing ESAS to move into a section of the building with little to no disruption to other services. Its condition, layout, and readiness for immediate use support a smooth transition while maintaining the integrity of ESAS programming.

## **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

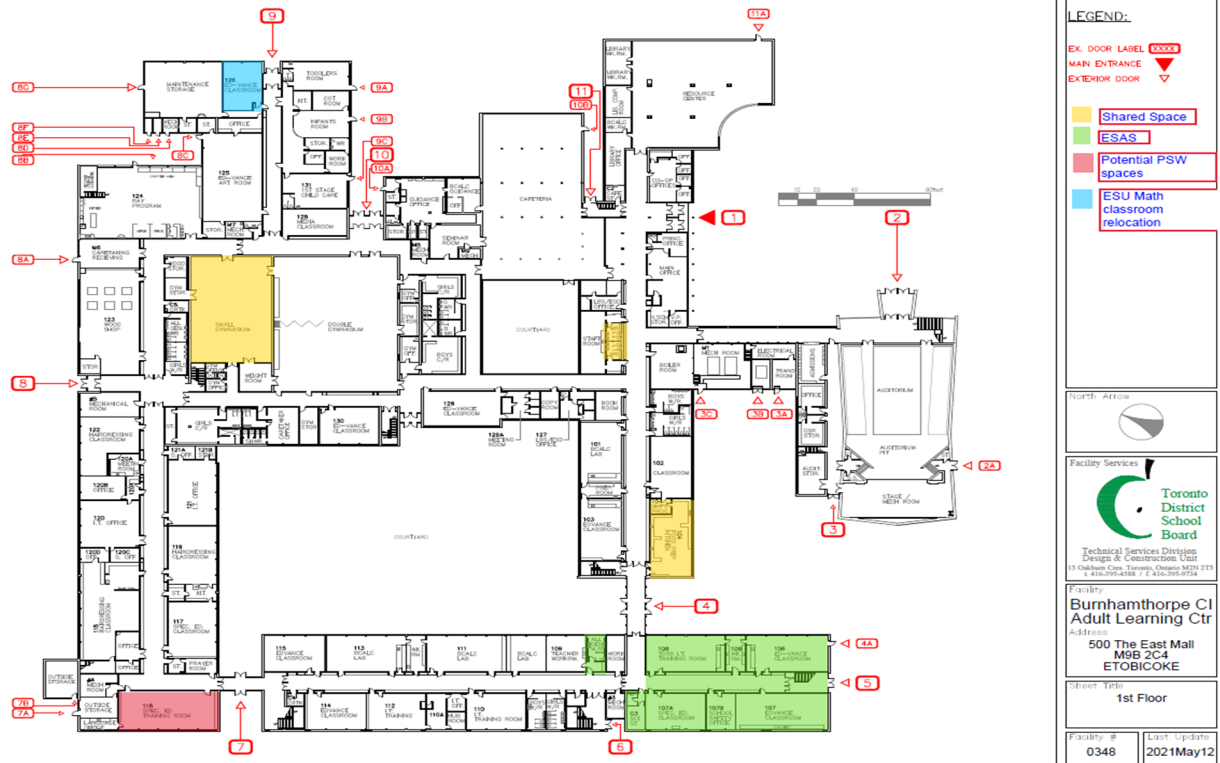
The relocation of Etobicoke Secondary Alternative School (ESAS) is required to allow for the demolition of the existing building at 160 Silverhill Drive and the construction of a new elementary school. Two relocation options were explored in detail: Burnhamthorpe Adult Learning Centre and Rexdale Learning Centre. While Burnhamthorpe presented significant challenges, including the displacement of five specialized classrooms, complex program disruptions, and high retrofit costs estimated at approximately \$860,000, the Rexdale Learning Centre emerged as the preferred and most feasible option. This preference was supported by both staff and PART members due to the site's readiness, minimal impact on existing programs, and significantly lower retrofit cost of approximately \$384,000. The Rexdale site offers bright, spacious classrooms, dedicated space for ESAS with access to private offices and washrooms, and only requires minor renovations such as kitchen installation. Although transportation concerns were raised during the public meeting, staff clarified that it would remain the responsibility of students and their parents or caregivers to make their own arrangements for travel to and from school. The overall review process concluded with support for ESAS relocating to Rexdale Learning Centre.

## **APPENDICIES**

Appendix A: Burnhamthorpe Floor Plan  
Appendix B: Rexdale Learning Centre Floor Plan  
Appendix C: ESAS Floor Plan  
Appendix D: ESAS student enrolment map  
Appendix E: Rexdale Preferred Staff option  
Appendix F: FAQ  
Appendix G: Survey Results

# APPENDIX A

## Burnhamthorpe Adult Learning Centre Floor Plan



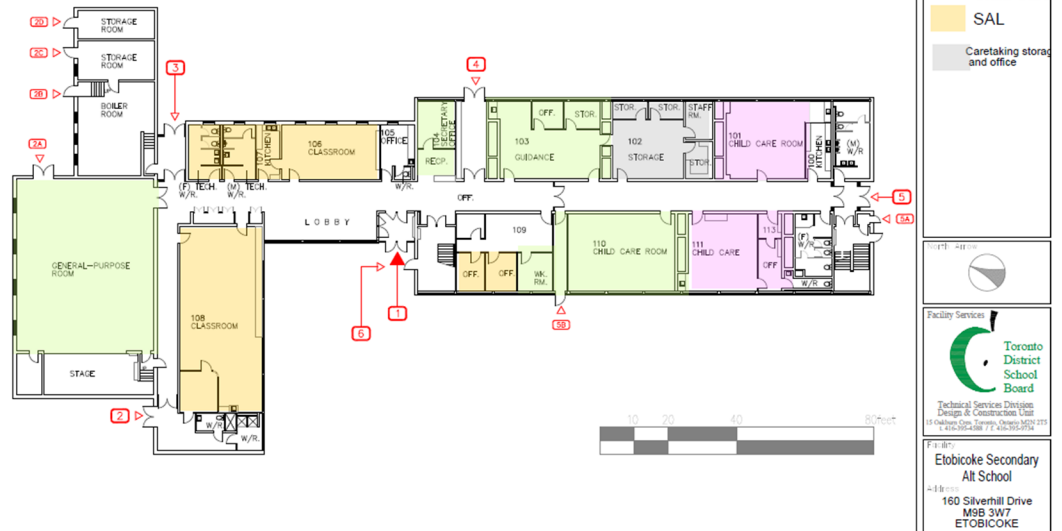


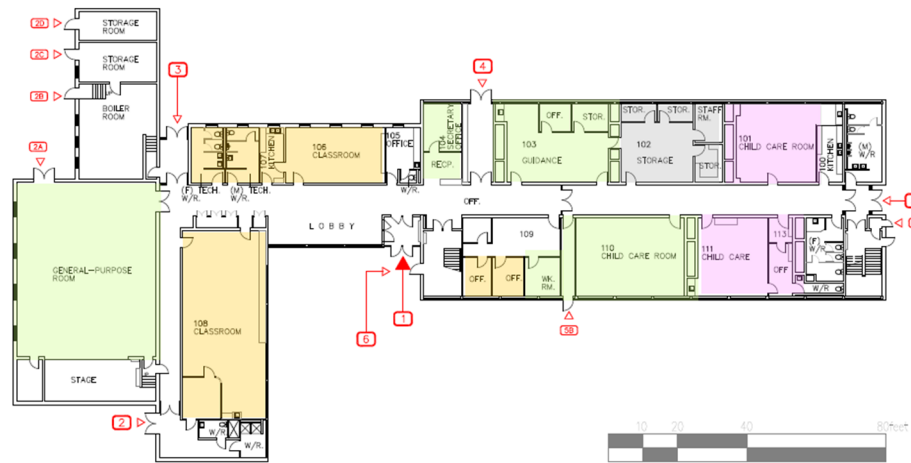
## APPENDIX B

### Rexdale Learning Centre Floor Plan



# APPENDIX C ESAS Floor Plan





**LEGEND:**

- EX DOOR LABEL (XXXX)
- MAIN ENTRANCE
- EXTERIOR DOOR

**ESAS**

**Child Care**

**SAL**

Caretaking storage and office

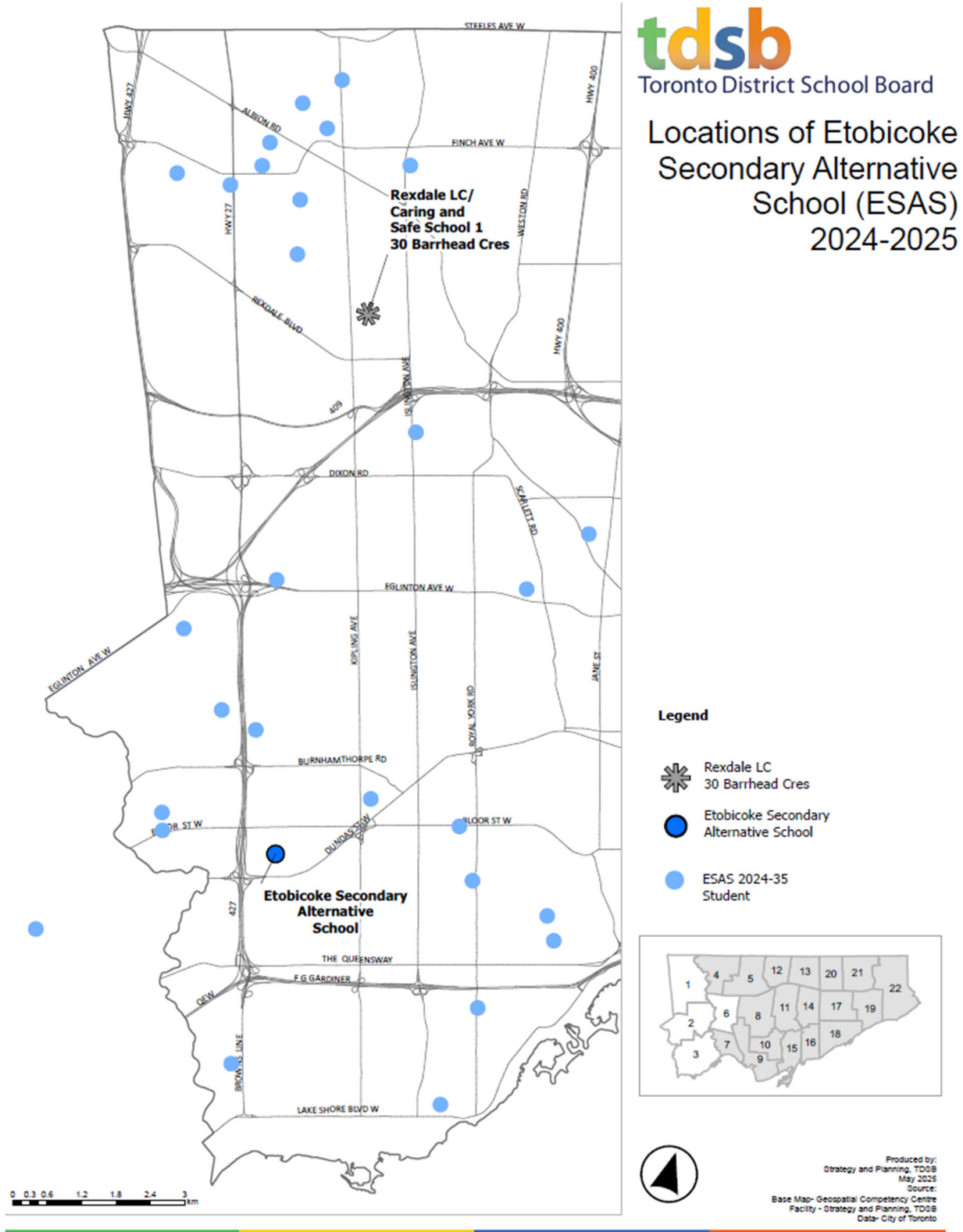
Facility Services

Toronto District School Board

Technical Services Division  
Design & Construction Unit  
111 Adelaide Ave. Toronto, Ontario M5H 2T5  
Tel: (416) 392-7744

**Etobicoke Secondary Alt School**  
160 Silverhill Drive  
M9B 3W7  
ETOBICOKE

Appendix D  
ESAS Student Enrolment Map



## APPENDIX E

### Staff Preferred Option: Rexdale Learning Centre

ESAS / Rexdale Learning Centre – Virtual Public Meeting

### Rexdale Learning Center (Staff Preferred Option)

- Due to the recent loss of Federal funding for LINC programs, several programs will be closing across the City by the end of June 2025.
- One of the locations that will see its LINC program closed is 30 Barrhead Crescent (Rexdale Learning Centre) which will be closed by the end of March 2025.
- This unfortunate news for LINC has provided us with an opportunity to explore this site as a relocation option for ESAS.

#### **Benefits of relocating to Rexdale Learning Center:**

- Rexdale Learning Center has many rooms already fitted up for uses that ESAS is requiring for a successful move.
- The classrooms are in very good shape and will not require any fit-up or renovations
- There are pre-existing offices which can accommodate the office needs of ESAS.

#### **Challenges of relocating to Rexdale Learning Center:**

- No kitchen for the nutrition program – this will need to be constructed for successful integration.

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Strategy and Planning





## **Etobicoke Secondary Alternative School (ESAS) Relocation**

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

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**1. When will ESAS be relocated to the Rexdale Learning Centre?**

The relocation is planned for September 2026.

**2. Where will Grade 11 students enrolling in September 2025 attend?**

They will attend ESAS at the current 160 Silverhill Drive location. The move to Rexdale will take place September 2026.

**3. What is the renovation cost at Rexdale Learning Centre?**

The total renovation cost is approximately \$384,000, which includes classroom upgrades and the installation of a kitchen for the nutrition program.

**4. Will transportation be provided to the Rexdale Learning Centre?**

No. Transportation will not be provided by the TDSB. It will be the responsibility of the parent, student, or caregiver.

**5. When will the new elementary school be built at 160 Silverhill Drive?**

Demolition is scheduled for Summer 2026. The new elementary school is expected to be completed by 2030 at the earliest. Updates will be available on the TDSB Capital Projects website.

**6. Do you have information on where buses will park at 160 Silverhill once the new school is built?**

Currently the TDSB is working on the schematic design process for the new school. More information will be available on the TDSB Capital Projects website as it becomes available. There will also be more chances to participate in the process as the project progresses.

**7. Have traffic impact studies been done for the new school at 160 Silverhill?**

Traffic and parking studies are part of the design and municipal approval process. Currently the TDSB is working on the schematic design process. More information will be available on the TDSB Capital Projects website as it becomes available. There will also be more chances to participate in the process as the project progress.

## **Etobicoke Secondary Alternative School (ESAS) Relocation**

### **Frequently Asked Questions**



#### **8. The URL provided for public input was hard to access. Can this be improved?**

Yes, staff will explore improvement options for future communications.

#### **9. Will ESAS students return to the new elementary school once it's built?**

No, ESAS will not return to 160 Silverhill Drive. The site will be redeveloped to accommodate a new JK-8 elementary school to relieve enrolment pressures in the surrounding area. Rexdale Learning Centre will serve as the new permanent location for ESAS starting in September 2026.

#### **10. Will a recording of the public meeting be available?**

Yes. A recording will be made available on the TDSB Accommodation Review webpage:

<https://www.tdsb.on.ca/About-Us/Strategy-Planning/Search-All-Reviews/id/210>

#### **11. How will the board ensure equitable access to ESAS for students who previously relied on South Etobicoke transit?**

While transportation is not provided, ESAS draws students from across Etobicoke—some already near Rexdale Learning Centre. The open enrollment model allows for city-wide access. It is the responsibility of the student/parent/caregiver to arrive at school on time.

#### **12. Has the TDSB considered the impact on attendance due to relocation and lack of transportation?**

ESAS draws students from across Etobicoke, with some already residing near the Rexdale Learning Centre. While transportation will not be provided, the school's open enrollment policy allows for access from various parts of the city, and many students already utilize existing transit networks.



## Appendix G Survey Results

Responses

14



Average Time

03:47



Duration

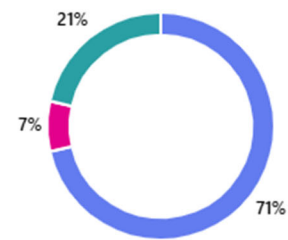
8 Days



1. Which school community do you belong to?

[More details](#)

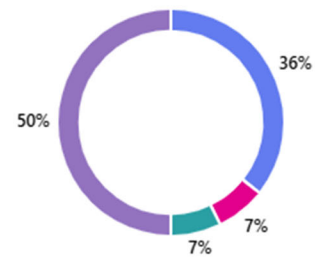
● Etobicoke Secondary Alternative School (ESAS)	10
● Rexdale Learning Center	1
● Other	3



2. Please describe your connection to this school:

[More details](#)

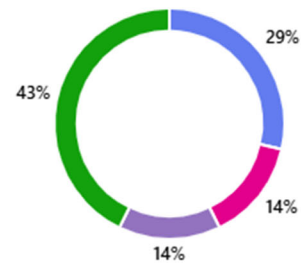
● Parent/Guardian	5
● Community Member	1
● Student	1
● TDSB Staff	7





3. Do you support the proposed relocation of Etobicoke Secondary Alternative School (ESAS) to Rexdale Leaning Centre? [More details](#)

Strongly do not support	4
Do not support	2
Neutral	0
Support	2
Strongly Support	6



4. Please tell us why you agree or disagree with the proposed relocation of Etobicoke Secondary Alternative School (ESA S) to Rexdale Leaning Centre. [More details](#)

10  
Responses

Latest Responses  
"Current location is close to our home"  
...

4 respondents (40%) answered location for this question.

classrooms are large  
space for the school **location** students

5. Do you have any other suggestions or comments that you would like the TDSB to consider?

[More details](#)

10

Responses

Latest Responses

"No"

...

5 respondents (50%) answered students for this question.

available to students school buses alternative options Alternative Programming  
limited access Alternative Schools students Schools West Etobicoke  
North West students on concerns students  
West End Alternative Programs Etobicoke schools West Alternative new school  
Murray - Central relocation of ESAS Programs in South students in these areas

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