



dialogue)))

CBE Areas I and II - Schools Impacted by New School Openings

Summary of Key Themes at Oct. 25 – 27 Engagement Sessions with Parents and Community Members

This compilation of key themes was prepared by Stantec Consulting Ltd.

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Nine Area I and II engagement sessions were held October 25 – October 27, 2016 at the following schools:

Cambrian Heights
Georges P. Vanier
Colonel Macleod
Sir John A. Macdonald

Simon Fraser
North Haven
Tom Baines
Colonel Irvine (2 sessions)

Feedback was gathered from parents and other stakeholders on three potential scenarios for Areas I and II that considered the CBE's planning principles and the needs and desires of CBE stakeholders. Summaries of discussions at each engagement session are posted on the CBE website.

A total of 717 participants attended the 9 sessions. The following are the key themes that emerged during these sessions.

Definition of Dual-Track Schools

Many of the key themes refer to dual-track schools. Dual-track schools have more than one program in their building. It could be a regular program with an alternative program or two different alternative programs. The two school communities share the building and participate in school-wide events that include all students. Dual-track schools also share a principal and school resources. All schools, regardless whether dual or single-track (only one program in the building), work towards establishing a strong sense of community with all students who attend the school.

Common Themes

Across the nine engagement sessions held in Areas I and II, common themes emerged regarding the scenarios and available space. The most common themes and how frequently they were heard are listed in the points below:

- Eight of nine sessions had participants that felt stability in programs and minimizing disruption should be a key factor in decisions, especially for students that have recently or will soon face a disruption (i.e. last year in a grade division, etc.).
- There was a general feeling in seven of nine sessions that since many students in alternative programs are already travelling to their preferred program, they would be disrupted less by a move to another school than regular program students currently attending a school in their community (many of whom can walk to school).
- Numerous concerns were expressed about how student travel to school would be affected by the proposed changes at every session. This includes questions about increased transportation fees and costs, distance and time on the bus, impacts on student safety, and whether or not scenarios would increase the CBE's overall carbon footprint.
- With the increased number of middle schools proposed, five of the nine of the nine sessions featured discussions on both the opportunities and challenges that this new grade configuration would present for many Grade 5 and 6 students. Participants indicated that if they had more information on how a middle school operates, there would likely be less fear about this possibility.
- Participants at seven of the nine sessions expressed support for keeping students at schools close to their homes.
- There was a strong desire expressed at seven of nine sessions to keep student groups together. This was defined in several different ways, including keeping students in a single neighbourhood together, keeping students in adjacent neighbourhoods that traditionally have gone to school together, and keeping students who currently attend the same school together regardless of where they live.



- Every session contained numerous requests for more information on the scenarios – school capacities, program sizes, etc.
- There were discussions at six of the nine sessions on whether single-track or dual-track schools were more favourable, with no clear consensus on either side.
- Attendees at all nine sessions noted the importance of long-term planning for all programs – regular and alternative – to account for growth, space requirements, and continuity.
- At seven of nine sessions, concerns were raised about more moves for Mandarin program students and a desire to have long-term stability for the program.

Top Opportunities and Challenges

The opportunities and challenges that are identified below are those that were expressed at a majority of the sessions (five+ sessions) across Area I/II.

SCENARIO 1

Opportunities

- Potential for strengthening and expanding programs with more options for students
- Maintains community schools
- Less need for busing and shorter travel times in some communities
- Potential for shared resources and collaboration between programs
- Addresses overcapacity issues in most schools and maintains smaller class sizes

Challenges

- Disruption to existing regular community programs resulting from alternative programs moving into schools
- The move of the Mandarin program could have long-term impacts on the sustainability of the program
- Transportation challenges for families with students traveling further and to multiple locations
- Disrupts and separates established groups of students and communities
- Possible disruption to existing community afterschool programs
- Concerns with combining younger students with older students in a middle schools (i.e. Grades 5-9)

SCENARIO 2

Opportunities

- Balanced support for both single and dual-track schools
- Better proximity to schools for families in some communities
- Keeps groups of students together
- Maintains program continuity
- Less disruptive for Mandarin program
- Alternative programs have room to grow and provides a solution to long wait lists

Challenges

- Further distance to schools for families in some communities
- The move of the Mandarin program may impact the long-term sustainability of the program overall
- Limited opportunities for growth in most programs
- Concerns over regular community programs moving to accommodate alternative programs
- Concerns with combining younger students with older students in middle schools (i.e. Grades 5-9)
- Disrupts and separates established groups of students and communities
- Concern that the same communities seem to get impacted whenever changes take place



SCENARIO 3

Opportunities

- Positive for TLC location due to its better access from feeder schools and overall potential for growth
- Less disruptive than other scenarios for many programs and the most students, including the Mandarin Program (except for Midnapore/south Calgary Mandarin parents)
- Allows several groups of students to stay together
- Shorter travel times for some families
- Comfort with the move back to the traditional elementary/junior high model (K-6 and 7-9)
- More opportunity for students to participate in extracurricular activities before or after school if they are closer to home and in their community
- Takes growth and community's demographics into account with aging population and families

Challenges

- Further distance to schools for families in some communities
- Challenges for the TLC program – disruption to students and programming (band especially) with a move to a new school, and close to another TLC school (Balmoral) with same grades
- Multiple moves for some students limits continuity at a school
- Impacts the sense of established culture or sense of identity at some schools
- Does not address overcapacity issues or plans for the future at some schools
- Alternative programs do not have room to grow or address wait lists