

Harris Educational Consultants International
Comprehensive Education Consulting

Final Report on Catchments

April 4, 2022

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of this report is to summarize the consultation process and to address specific school catchment concerns, with a view to assisting the Board on understanding the hopes and concerns of stakeholders.

BACKGROUND

A Consultation Plan was developed as follows:

1. Meet with the Principals of Ecole South Pointe School, Arthur A. Leach School, Ecole Bonnycastle School, Ecole Viscount Alexander, and Ecole Crane.
2. Develop an online survey in conjunction with the Assistant Superintendent to solicit feedback from parents at the above noted schools.
3. Collate the information derived from the parent online survey.
4. Invite parents selected by the principals to a one-on-one meeting with the Consultants for discussion of their issues.
5. Report progress regularly to the Superintendent's Department.
6. Work with Elaine Egan, Assistant Superintendent, to make recommendations for Bison Run and the catchment area of Ecole South Pointe School.

MEETINGS WITH PRINCIPALS

Feedback from meetings with the Principals of Ecole South Pointe School, Arthur A. Leach School, Ecole Bonnycastle School, Ecole Viscount Alexander and Ecole Crane

Re: Catchments and effect on students and staff.

Meetings Held:

November 5, 2021 Ruthanne Dyck and Diane Wiebe, Ecole South Pointe School

November 9, 2021 Stan Hall and Carla Sadler, Arthur A. Leach School

November 15, 2021 Caterina Romeo-Mzakar, Rodelyn Stoeber and Ty Fillion, Ecole Bonnycastle School

November 16, 2021 Tori Patzer and Michael Moreau, Ecole Viscount Alexander

November 17, 2021 Brenda Stewart, Ecole Crane

The following are areas of commonalities from all principals on the topic of school catchments:

- Every principal wants a defined catchment.
- All schools are at capacity or over capacity except for École Viscount Alexander.
- Lack of space requires the need for portable classrooms (except for E.V.A.).
- Need for reliable divisional transportation.
- Leaders want defined catchments for their school based on best geographical decisions.
- Fluid catchments may lead to schools being at overcapacity affecting larger classes and lack of space in the schools.
- Busing is a prominent concern for all parents at all schools.

During the meetings with Harris, many other themes were discussed. In the interests of staying on point, only a few are highlighted below:

- All schools have diverse student populations.
- All schools have high numbers of EAL learners and families
- All schools have struggled in various ways with COVID challenges, and note stress on families as well
- All school leaders are very proud of their school and their staff
- PAC groups are supportive. Tend to be non-diverse and Caucasian dominated.
- In a perfect world, every school would have a bus loop and unlimited EAL teachers and very small classes 😊

School Specific Concerns Relevant to Catchments and/or Growth of Student Population

École South Pointe School

- i. Overcrowding and lack of space.
- ii. Principal wants to retain all students currently in the school.

Arthur A. Leach School

- i. There are two entry points for grade 7 and 8 from two other schools. One entry point would be ideal.
- ii. Grade 7 to 9 Prairie Pointe students are geographically far from the school and receive no busing.
- iii. Lack of space.

École Bonnycastle School

- i. Lack of space including lack of a meeting room for staff meetings.
- ii. Safety of children - loading and unloading buses on the street. Police called often due to dangerous driving.

École Viscount Alexander

- i. Busing – students load and unload on the streets-safety issue.

École Crane

- i. Lack of a bus loop creates a safety issue for students.

SURVEY TO PARENTS

A total of 777 parents responded to the survey. Please see the results on Appendix 1.

SUMMARY OF THE ISSUES RAISED BY THE PARENT SURVEY RESPONSES

Please refer to Appendix 2.

Recurring themes from the comments were:

- Concerns around changes to the current catchment areas would result in childcare (daycare and before and after school programs) issues.
- Busing and transportation concerns.
- Safe routes to the school (busy streets to cross for students).
- Long journeys for students from Prairie Pointe to Arthur A. Leach School and Ecole Crane.
- Children in the same family going to different schools.
- Purchasing a house in an area where you can see the school, but your child cannot attend there.
- Safety and well being of children, both physical and mental.
- Congestion for student pick up and drop off by parents at certain schools.
- Verify students' addresses in all schools at least once per school year.

PARENT MEETINGS

We met with the principals of all 5 schools on the following dates to talk about the survey and to have them develop a list of parents/guardians who they recommended as being amenable to speaking with us as the Consultants about their catchment concerns. Approximately 30 parents would have meetings with the facilitators with representation of 6 per school. The selected parents would be from a cross-section of schools, communities, French Immersion program, English program, and including different cultural groups.

January 7	Brenda Stewart – École Crane
January 11	Tori Patzer – École Viscount Alexander
January 12	Ruthanne Dyck – École South Pointe School
January 19	Stan Hall – Arthur A. Leach School
January 20	Caterina Romeo-Mzakkar – École Bonnycastle School

Each principal provided a list of parents/guardians for the Consultants to invite to an individual meeting and they emailed their list to us.

Invitations were emailed to each parent/guardian on the lists of parents that was provided by the schools.

The respondents were given numerous dates and times of availability during the month of February and the first week of March.

Respondents:		Program represented
Arthur A. Leach School	1 of 13 invited followed up	English
Ecole Bonnycastle School	3 of 12 invited followed up	2 English, 1 French
Ecole Crane	3 of 13 invited followed up	French
Ecole South Pointe School	12 of 17 invited followed up	French (many RW)
Ecole Viscount Alexander	<u>5 of 16 invited followed up</u>	French
24 of 71 invited followed up (3 EN, 21 FI)		

SUMMARY OF THE ISSUES RAISED BY THE PARENTS AT THE INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS

Compilation of verbal comments from parent meetings.
Please refer to Appendix 3 for the range of comments.

Themes that emerge include:

- Daycare challenges
- Confusing for families when boundaries and configurations change
- Make up our mind and stay with a plan
- Allow for grand-fathering when catchment changes are made
- Do what's best for families and not least expensive
- Recognize that change is difficult
- Transportation issues (see chart)
- Students there should stay – move the newest students further (against policy)
- Verify addresses to ensure that only catchment students attend (SP)

PROGRESS REPORTS TO THE SUPERINTENDENT'S DEPARTMENT

December 1, 2021

December 17, 2021

January 24, 2022

March 16, 2022

RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING BISON RUN SCHOOL CATCHMENT

Recommendations

Bison Run School will be the designated school as per the Assistant Superintendent's plan for designated area, the catchment areas for the Bison Run K-8 School be established as per Board motion and bounded as follows:

Permanent Catchment Area

1. Commencing from the intersection of Waverley Street and Cadboro Road southerly to the western intersection of Waverley Street and Lee Boulevard; then
2. Westerly along Lee Boulevard to a line extending from Lee Boulevard to Kenaston Boulevard; then
3. Northerly along Kenaston Boulevard to the intersection a line extending westerly from Cadboro Boulevard; then
4. Easterly along the extension of Cadboro Boulevard, then along Cadboro Boulevard to the point of commencement at the intersection of Waverley Street.

Interim Catchment Area #1 Bridgwater Centre

1. Commencing from the western intersection of Kenaston Boulevard and a line extending easterly from Lee Boulevard and travelling northerly along Kenaston; then
2. Westerly along North Town Road to the eastern side of the southbound intersection of Kenaston Boulevard; then
3. Southerly along eastern side of Kenaston Boulevard to the intersection of a line extending easterly from Lee Boulevard; then
4. Easterly along a line extending from Lee Boulevard to the point of commencement at the northbound side of Kenaston Boulevard and a line extending from Lee Boulevard.

Interim Catchment Area #2 North West Corner of South Pointe

1. Commencing from the intersection of Kenaston and a line extending easterly from Lee Boulevard, southerly along the easterly side of Kenaston Boulevard; then
2. From a line extending easterly from Southview Crescent to Kenaston Boulevard, and easterly behind the homes on Southview Crescent to the intersection of Southview Crescent and John Angus Drive; then
3. Travelling along the northerly side of John Angus Drive to the intersection of John Angus Drive and Northridge Road; then
4. Northerly along the western side of Northridge Drive, extending along a line through green space to Lee Boulevard; then
5. Westerly along Lee Boulevard and continuing along a line extending to the point of commencement at the intersection of Kenaston Boulevard.

Interim Catchment Area #3 Prairie Pointe (unbuilt stages)

1. Commencing from the intersection of PTH 100 (Perimeter Hwy) and Brady Road, northerly along Brady Road to a line extending behind the homes located on the northern boundary of William Hall Drive; then

2. Easterly along the line extending behind William Hall Drive to a line extending northerly through greenspace behind the homes on the western boundary of Kilroy Street; then
3. Southerly along the line extending behind the homes on the western boundary of Kilroy Street, across Skyline Drive to a line continuing through greenspace behind the homes on Berry Hill Road to the western intersection of Eaglewood Drive and Waverley Street; then
4. Westerly along the north side of Waverley Street to the western edge of the intersection of Waverley Street and Firestone Drive, then
5. Southerly along the west side of Firestone Drive to a line extending behind Yaletton Street; then
6. Westerly along the line extending behind the homes on the north side of Yaletton Street to a line extending northerly across Yaletton Street from Florence Road; then
7. Southerly along the line extending from Florence Road, continuing across Yaletton Street and the line extending behind the homes on the west side of Florence Road and continuing across Ken Oblik Drive; then
8. Continuing southerly along a line extending behind the homes on the western boundary of Bear Creek Bay to a line extending to PTH 100 (Perimeter Hwy); then
9. Westerly along PTH 100 (Perimeter Hwy) to the point of commencement at Brady Road.

Rationale

Those students in Interim Catchment Area #2 North West corner of South Pointe are geographically close to Bison Run School. (Present SP parents suggest sending those students from the newer south part of the Ecole South Pointe School catchment to Bison Run).

These students will remain at Ecole South Pointe School to continue their education until Bison Run School is open to accept them. At the Bison Run School opening all students in the school are new to the school at one time.

The parents of these students will be informed by letter regarding the enrolment of their children at Bison Run School.

A supportive suggestion might be that parents with children with Special Needs or Special Programming should have the option of staying at South Pointe or moving with the other children living in their immediate area.

École South Pointe School

Recommendations

1. Keep the students living in the Richmond West/Fairfield Park area in Ecole South Pointe School until they age out as per Board Motion #BD20210513 and as per E. Egan's interpretation on March 16, 2022 during the virtual meeting with the Consultants held that day.

Rationale

Board Motion #BD20210513

Other

As per Elaine Egan, March 16, 2022, to address the overcrowding at École South Pointe School the French Immersion classrooms “may be above class size guidelines” until RW/FP students age out.”

The parents of RW/FP will be informed by letter regarding the continued enrolment of their children at Ecole South Pointe School per Board Motion #BD20210513.

Additional Recommendations

1. Parent community has asked for transparency, clarity, and decision-making regarding school catchments. Any movement of students out of a school should be handled with transparency, and clarity. Parents should be advised as to the rationale behind the move.
2. Make the best geographical decision for catchment that is possible.
3. Parents should be informed prior to the end of June as to the most likely date for the opening of Pembina Trails Collegiate and Bison Run School. Transparency and clarity are important considerations when dealing with the parent community.
4. Articulate the defined catchment and capacity information for A.A. Leach School, Ecole Bonnycastle School, and Ecole South Pointe School. Defined catchment refers to boundary streets. This will eliminate the confusion as to which students belong in the catchment areas for these schools. Promote School Locator more widely.
5. Define catchment areas for the proposed two additional Waverley West Schools prior to June 30, 2023 as this will give parents in that community plenty of time to plan for daycare and before and after school programs.
6. The school division strives to maintain the value of the neighbourhood school. The school division also reserves the right to restrict and redirect student placement to limit inefficiencies in the use of space, programs and resources.
7. Verify addresses of all students in all schools annually and prior to proposed catchment boundary realignment.
8. More information is needed to give to parents on how decisions are made regarding new school builds.
9. It is important to take into account future student enrolment projections and future housing developments noting that schools may not have capacity. Realignment of catchment boundaries should be clear and defined.

CONCERNS

1. While daycare in the schools is not the school division's responsibility it is a significant concern for the modern family. i.e. both parents working outside of the home to be able to afford housing and cost of living. Daycare and before and after school program spaces are at a premium and difficult to access. Families apply at the pregnancy stage for placement.

Moving children from schools can have a devastating effect on families as the younger siblings lose their daycare and before and after school program placement. The impact on every child and every family needs to be considered.

2. Continuous, undisruptive learning is best for children. When children are required to change elementary schools on more than one occasion at the school division direction it can have a negative impact on the child as not all children are resilient. Increased anxiety, difficulty making new friends and academic performance can be some of the factors affecting them.
3. The effects of the pandemic have played a significant part in perceived increased anxiety in students, parents, and teachers.

CONCLUSION

We wish to thank the community and all the stakeholders for their input and participation in these consultations. Pembina Trails School Division is a vibrant hub of educational excellence with outstanding administration, dedicated teachers and support staff.

Respectfully,

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