

HALIFAX REGIONAL SCHOOL BOARD

Report on Boundary Review for the New Eastern Passage High School

PURPOSE: To refer the Final Report of the Eastern Passage High School Boundary Review Committee to the Governing Board and seek approval of the recommendations from the committee and staff.

BACKGROUND: In July 2013, the Province announced a capital construction project for a new high school in Eastern Passage. According to Halifax Regional School Board Policy B.003 *Creating School Populations*, a boundary review process will be recommended “To respond to new school construction”.

At the June 24, 2015 Halifax Regional School Board meeting, staff presented Report 2015-06-20: *Boundary Review for New Eastern Passage High School* seeking direction from the Governing Board for a boundary to be established for the new school.

The Governing Board approved the boundary review, as noted below:

“It was moved and seconded (Jakeman/Boutilier) that the Governing Board direct staff to complete a boundary review of Cole Harbour District High Family of Schools to establish a catchment area (boundary) for Eastern Passage High school.”

CONTENT: Following the Governing Board decision and pursuant to policy B.003 *Creating School Populations*, the Superintendent established a Boundary Review Committee and appointed a facilitator.

On September 10, 2015 prior to the Boundary Review Committee’s first meeting, the Facilitator and central office staff met with Principals and School Advisory Council members from the schools that were invited to sit on the committee, for discussion of the boundary review process and the initial public meeting.

On September 17, 2015 the first public meeting was held at Eastern Passage Education Centre to share information with the school communities regarding the boundary review process, introduce data to be considered in the review and obtain feedback regarding the proposed boundary.

The committee began its work on September 21, 2015. The proposed boundary scenario developed by staff was presented to the Boundary Review Committee. Potential revisions were

assessed and the committee voted not to recommend changes to the proposed boundary.

The committee completed its Interim Boundary Proposal on October 19, 2015 and presented it to the community at the second public meeting on October 26, 2015. The Boundary Review Committee met once after the public meeting and considered the public input.

Staff has reviewed the Boundary Review Committee's final report (Appendix A) and agrees with the committee's recommendation. In considering the committee's recommendation, staff has included additional recommendations to clarify the defined Family of Schools.

The student transportation implications resulting from this recommendation have been reviewed with Stock Transportation. Based on an analysis of existing routes and resources currently assigned to the region, there is no anticipated student transportation cost increase resulting from this new school boundary.

A transition plan to support students and families will be developed and implemented.

- COST:** N/A
- FUNDING:** N/A
- TIMELINE:** The boundary changes are proposed for implementation upon opening of the new high school.
- APPENDICES:** Appendix A: Catchment Area Map
Appendix B: Final Report from the Boundary Review Committee for the new Eastern Passage high school
- RECOMMENDATIONS:** That the Governing Board approve the following recommendations to be effective upon opening of the new high school in Eastern Passage:
- 1) Create a boundary (catchment area) for the new high school that is the same as the boundary for Eastern Passage Education Centre.
 - 2) Redirect Grade 9-12 students from this catchment area to the new high school.
 - 3) Reassign the following schools from the Cole Harbour District High School Family of Schools to create a feeder system for the new high school:
 - a. Eastern Passage Education Centre
 - b. Ocean View Elementary
 - c. Seaside Elementary
 - d. Tallahassee Community School

COMMUNICATIONS:

AUDIENCE	RESPONSIBLE	TIMELINE
Principals at schools included in boundary review	Director School Administration	Following Board decision
School Advisory Councils of Identified Schools in Citadel Family of Schools	School Principal	Prior to posting on web site
School Communities of Identified Schools in Citadel Family of Schools	Superintendent	After Board Decision
Stock Transportation	Director Operations	Following Board decision
Baragar Demographics	Director Operations	Following Board decision

From:

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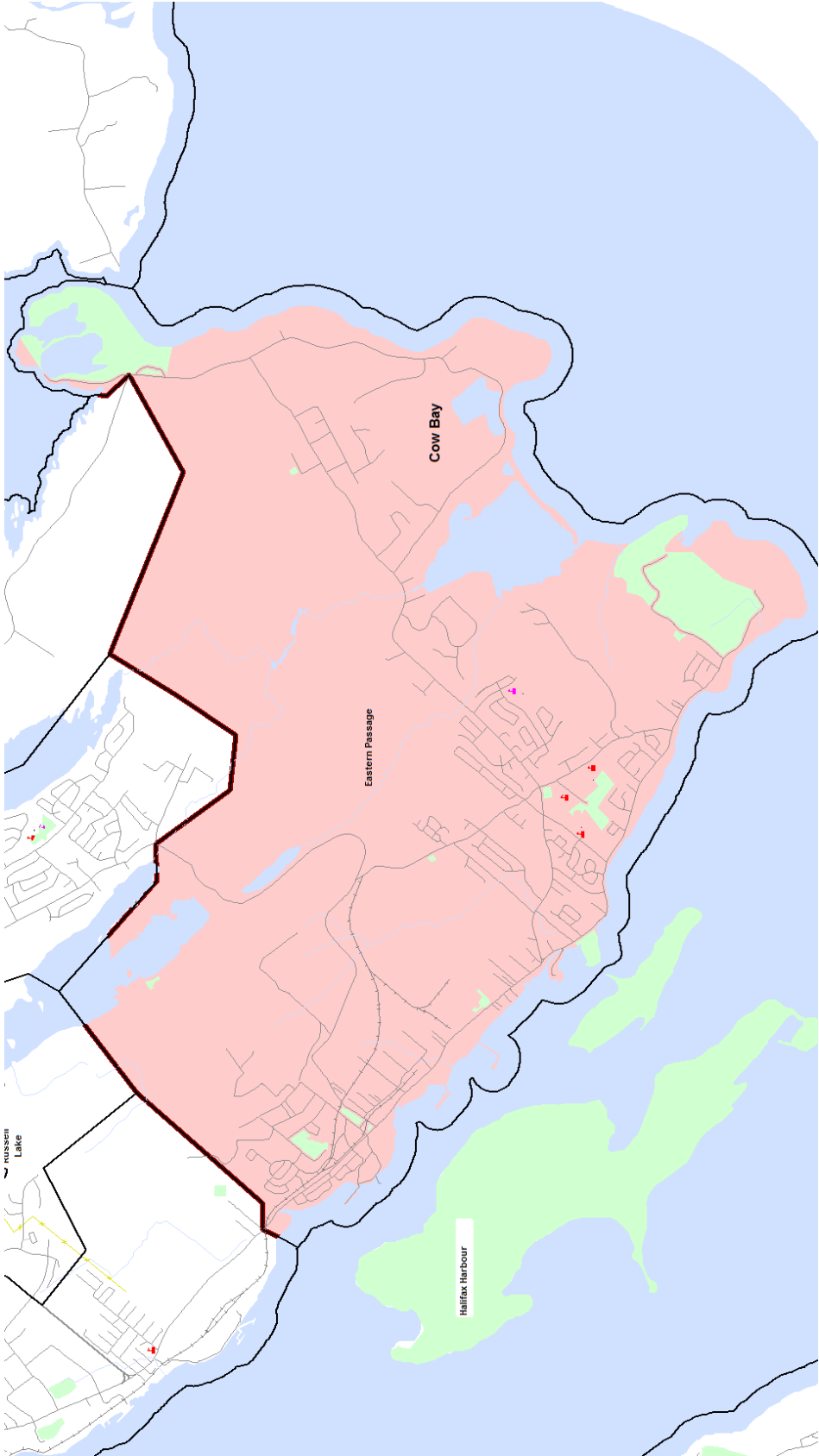
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To:

Senior Staff: November 10, 2015
Board: November 25, 2015

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Date last revised: November 19, 2015

Appendix A- Proposed Boundary for new high school in Eastern Passage



Appendix B- FINAL REPORT FROM THE BOUNDARY REVIEW COMMITTEE FOR THE NEW EASTERN PASSAGE HIGH SCHOOL

Introduction

The Boundary Review Committee (the Committee) respectfully submits its Final Report to the Superintendent of the Halifax Regional School Board (HRSB). The members of the Committee, School Administrators and HRSB Staff reviewed the Board Motion of June 24, 2015 to establish a catchment area (boundary) for Eastern Passage High School. The Committee met between September 10th and October 26 to develop, review and evaluate various scenarios to determine the preferred recommended scenario. The Committee also held a Public Meetings on September 17th and October 26th to gain public feedback on the interim recommendations.

Purpose

The purpose of the Eastern Passage High School Boundary Review Committee is to develop, review and evaluate various scenarios to determine the preferred scenario which will be the Interim Boundary Proposal.

Mandate

The Boundary Review Committee will serve as a forum to develop and evaluate potential boundary revisions for the new Eastern Passage High School. The committee has representatives from the following potentially affected schools: Cole Harbour District High School, Eastern Passage Education Centre, Ocean View Elementary, Seaside Elementary and Tallahassee Community School.

The Boundary Review Committee will develop a report that will recommend the catchment area for the new EPHS and outline the opportunities and constraints of these potential boundaries.

Reporting

The Committee reports to the Superintendent of the Halifax Regional School Board. Reports and recommendations will be forwarded to the Superintendent of Schools who will refer the Boundary Review Committee's report to the Governing Board with a recommendation.

Committee Composition

The Boundary Review Committee will be comprised of 11 members (5 Voting and 6 non-voting) as follows:

- **Voting Members** - One (1) School Advisory Committee member from Cole Harbour District High School, Eastern Passage Education Centre, Ocean View Elementary, Seaside Elementary and Tallahassee Community School.

- **Non Voting Members** - One (1) School Administrator from Cole Harbour District High School, Eastern Passage High School, Eastern Passage Education Centre, Ocean View Elementary, Seaside Elementary and Tallahassee Community School.

Committee Members:

- Facilitator: Al Reyner
- CHDHS: Tracey Mohr, Ken Fells
- EPEC: Cori Ferguson, Karyn Cooling
- EPHS: Pat Savage
- Ocean View: Kristal Sampson, Darcel Williams Hart
- Seaside: Rod Smith, Louise Henman-Poirier
- Tallahassee: Michelle Myers, Joe Walsh and Tracey MacDonald

Meetings

The Boundary Review Committee met on September 21, 2015. The committee elected Cori Fergusson Chair, Michelle Myers Vice Chair and Tracey Mohr secretary.

Quorum

The quorum for voting purposes shall be **3 voting** members. A majority vote shall be considered 50% plus 1.

Officers

The Boundary Review Committee shall have a Chair, and may have a Vice-Chair, and Secretary to be elected from among its members at the first meeting. The Vice-chair shall act as Chair in the absence of the Chair. These positions are listed above.

Communications

Boundary Review Committee minutes will be posted on the HRSB website subsequent to approval by the committee. SAC representatives may forward this information to their communities. These meeting notes are the official communication of the Committee and as such should form the basis for public discussion.

Staff Support

Staff support will be provided from Halifax Regional School Board Operations Services and School Administration, Program Department, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, and Halifax Regional Municipality.

Committee Duties and Responsibilities

- The Chair will ensure that notes and attendance are kept
- The Facilitator will provide the Boundary Review Committee with:
 - Data on enrollment patterns
 - Demographic trends, development prospects
 - Transportation information, facility assessments, and any other data considered relevant by the Facilitator.
- The Facilitator will present boundary scenarios for consideration by the Boundary Review Committee, as prepared by the Halifax Regional School Board Staff
- The Facilitator will assist in the development of additional scenarios suggested by the Boundary Review Committee.
- The Boundary Review Committee members will individually evaluate the scenarios presented with reference to Section 6.0 below.
- The combined evaluations will be used to determine the preferred scenario and this scenario will be the Interim Boundary Proposal.
- The Chair, with the support of the Facilitator, will hold a public meeting for the purpose of explaining the Interim Boundary Proposal and providing opportunity for public input.
- Members of the public will be given opportunity by the Chair to respond to the Interim Boundary Proposal by addressing the public meeting and/or responding to the Boundary Review Committee in writing.
- The Chair will reconvene the Boundary Review Committee to consider the public input. After consideration of the public input, if, in the view of the Boundary Review Committee, their Interim Boundary Proposal has been altered enough to warrant further public consultation, then the steps outlined in Sections 5.7 through 5.9 would be repeated.
- The Boundary Review Committee will consider the input from the public, prepare its final report, and advance it to the Superintendent.
- The Superintendent will refer the Boundary Review Committee's report to the board with a recommendation.
- Upon receipt of the Boundary Review Committee's report and the Superintendent's recommendation, the board will determine boundary for the Eastern Passage High School.

When evaluating the various scenarios, the Boundary Review Committee will reference:

- Long-term viability;
- Potential enrollment growth;
- Use of space that is disused due to enrollment decline;
- The optimum utilization of facilities;
- The board's policy *C.010 Race Relations, Cross Cultural Understanding, and Human Rights in Learning* that promotes principles that value and celebrate diversity;
- The impact on the affected students and communities;
- The impact on the delivery of programs;
- The Family of Schools structure of the board;
- The clarity and consistency of the proposed boundary;
- Student transportation and safety.

Public Meeting

A Public Meeting was held on September 17, 2015 at Eastern Passage Education Centre. At the meeting there was a presentation that focused on the background of the new EPHS, the timeline, the policies we were addressing, the process we would follow and a proposed starting point of reference from the staff at HRSB.

There were approximately 100 people in attendance representing communities potentially affected.

The public were seated at tables and after the presentation they were asked to address 3 questions provided by the facilitator.

1. If you were creating a boundary for the new Eastern Passage High School, where would it be?
 - a. *Use the data and maps at your table to formulate a consensus.*
 - b. *Draw the boundary on the paper map.*
 - c. *Create a rationale for your choice.*
 - d. *Select a participant to share the idea.*
2. Considering the information presented this evening, what else do you need to know to form an opinion on the preferred boundary for the new Eastern Passage High School?
 - a. Can be discussed at the table and presented or completed by individuals and submitted.
3. What do you feel are the major considerations that the committee must keep in mind as they move forward?
 - a. This is an individual opinion and each person here can submit a completed sheet.

Tables were allowed to work on the questions for approximately 30 minutes at which time representatives from each table were asked to come to a microphone and respond to the questions.

Several people addressed the concern that the population of Cole Harbour District High School would be too small once EPHS opened to sustain both Curricular and Co-curricular activities to the degree to which they are currently being offered. It was explained that a School Options Committee would be formed immediately after EPHS boundary was established.

These concerns were allowed to be addressed as they related directly to the points the committee is mandated to reference.

Several of these people stated that the EPHS should not be built. They were reminded that this meeting was not about whether the school should be built, rather what the boundary should be.

There were several concerns brought forward regarding diversity for the students at the EPHS. This became a fairly heated discussion at times and although some members of the public thought that these comments should not have been allowed, they were directly related to the points the committee is mandated to reference.

There were several comments regarding whether Astral Drive Junior High might become a part of the EPHS boundary or whether it might be used to populate CHDHS.

There was also a recommendation that Woodside students attend EPHS.

There was a general consensus that the obvious boundary for EPHS is the scenario presented by HRSB Staff.

E-mail correspondence mentioned the possibility of extending the boundary to Highway 111. Another correspondence expressed frustration that Astral Drive Parents were permitted to speak about diversity and problems that the new school would cause for Cole Harbour.

All correspondences were copied for review at the Committee Meeting on September 21st.

HRSB Staff Scenario for Consideration

Based on the projected enrollment data provided by Baragar in the table below. The staff of HRSB offer the following as a proposed scenario:

To use the current boundary for Eastern Passage Education Centre which includes the communities of Shearwater, Eastern Passage and Cow Bay. This includes the following feeder schools: Eastern Passage Education Centre, Ocean View Elementary, Seaside Elementary and Tallahassee Community School.

Projected Enrolment – Eastern Passage High School (Total)												
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Gr.9	143	126	139	116	158	157	155	147	161	163	162	174
Gr. 10	166	151	128	142	119	160	161	158	150	165	167	166
Gr. 11	131	154	145	117	134	111	149	150	147	140	154	155
Gr. 12	154	121	150	139	113	130	107	144	144	142	136	149
Total	594	552	562	514	524	558	572	599	602	610	619	644

Source: Baragar Demographics 2015

Committee Meeting
September 21, 2015

Agenda

- Introductions
- Review Committee Duties and Responsibilities
- Review items for reference
- Elect a Chair and Secretary
- Review Public Input material
- Evaluate HRSB Scenario
- Discuss alternatives
- Schedule future meeting dates

The EPHS Boundary Review Committee met on September 21, 2015 at 7PM at the Eastern Passage Education Centre.

The following members were present: Cori Ferguson - EPEC SAC representative, Michelle Myers – Tallahassee SAC Representative, Kristal Sampson - Ocean View SAC Representative, Tracey Mohr CHDHS – SAC Representative, Ken Fells - CHDHS Principal, Karyn Cooling – EPEC Principal. Louise Henman-Poirier – Seaside Elementary Principal, Joe Walsh – Tallahassee Community School Principal, Darcel Williams-Hart – Ocean View Elementary Principal, Pat Savage – EPHS Principal, Tracey MacDonald, Tallahassee Community School – Vice Principal.

The meeting started with introductions at 7 PM. Al Reyner reviewed the committee's duties and responsibilities emphasizing the importance of keeping the focus on the mandate. More specifically, there is a new High School being built in Eastern Passage and the committee has been charged with bringing forward a recommendation for an Interim Boundary Proposal.

The Facilitator outlined the significant information that the committee should reference when making their decision. These include:

- Long-term viability;
- Potential enrollment growth;
- Use of space that is disused due to enrollment decline;
- The optimum utilization of facilities;
- The board's policy *C.010 Race Relations, Cross Cultural Understanding, and Human Rights in Learning* that promotes principles that value and celebrate diversity;
- The impact on the affected students and communities;
- The impact on the delivery of programs;
- The Family of Schools structure of the board;

- The clarity and consistency of the proposed boundary;
- Student transportation and safety.

Upon conclusion, the committee elected a Chair, a Vice Chair and a Secretary. Cori Ferguson was elected Chair, Michelle Myers was elected Vice Chair and Tracey Mohr was elected Secretary.

The Committee then reviewed the material from the Public Meeting held on September 17, 2015.

Community input had been received on the three questions presented at the Public Meeting:

1. If you were creating a boundary for the new Eastern Passage High School, where would it be?
 - a. *Use the data and maps at your table to formulate a consensus.*
 - b. *Draw the boundary on the paper map.*
 - c. *Create a rationale for your choice.*
 - d. *Select a participant to share the idea.*
2. Considering the information presented this evening, what else do you need to know to form an opinion on the preferred boundary for the new Eastern Passage High School?
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 - a. This is an individual opinion and each person here can submit a completed sheet.

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Question 1:

There was clear consensus that the Boundary Scenario given to the committee as the HRSB Staff Recommendation was the most viable.

There was one reference to include Woodside students, referencing that they felt out of place at Dartmouth High.

There was another mention regarding the Astral Drive students, stating that they wished to remain a feeder school to Auburn Drive.

Question 2:

Will the school be large enough to handle projected enrollments?

What is the rationale for a HS of 9 – 12?

The ability to offer O2.

Consider the impact on CHDHS and other Dartmouth schools.

Could Highway 111 be considered for a boundary?

How can you ensure cultural diversity?

Might the boundary grow after the decision?

How will “out of area requests be handled?

Where will the grade 6’s go?

Question 3:

Concern for diversity

Impact on other schools

Population

Out of area requests

Impact on Co Curricular

Impact on the community at large

Keep disruption to other boundaries at a minimum

Growth in the area

The cost of keeping EPEC

The rationale from the public input for the HRSB Staff recommendation was that the new school would serve the communities of Shearwater, Eastern Passage, and Cow Bay; so, using the current EPEC Boundary was an obvious choice.

Criteria Evaluation

Upon review of the Public Input data, the committee began evaluating the HRSB Staff Scenario. Using the list indicated in the Creating Schools Populations Policy, the committee discussed each of the points of reference. Considering that some of these points might be more relevant if the Boundary Review Committee was not dealing with a new school, we felt it was important to discuss all of the points.

Long Term Viability

The first issue discussed was the fact that according to the projected enrollments, EPHS would exceed its capacity by 2024. High school Principals at the table (Ken Fells and Pat Savage) talked about the ability of high schools to schedule students beyond the capacity of the school through management of class use and size. This was accepted by the committee and they agreed that the long term viability of the school was positive.

Potential Enrollment Growth

There was discussion as to whether the Baragar Data included all of the growth that was happening in the communities of Shearwater, Eastern Passage and Cow Bay. The Facilitator explained that Baragar is a recognized supplier of data that both EECD and HRSB had confidence in. There was a discussion that the efficacy of the data decreased the further the projection went out in time. However, there was great confidence in the numbers for the next five years. The committee accepted and agreed that potential enrollment growth was not an issue.

Use of under utilized space due to enrollment decline

It was evident that this reference point was not relevant in the context of building a new school and the determining of a new boundary. However, there was discussion that this boundary would create a significant amount of under utilized space at Cole Harbour District High School. The Facilitator reminded the committee that upon completion of this Boundary Review, HRSB would be seeking Board approval for a School Options Committee to address issues regarding Cole Harbour District High School.

Recognizing that Cole Harbour High School's enrollment would drop to approximately 300 students in grades 10 to 12, the committee was satisfied that HRSB recognized there would be the need to address these issues at CHDHS as soon as possible.

The optimum utilization of facilities

The committee discussed the fact that Cole Harbour would be under utilized as a result of the HRSB proposed boundary. The committee acknowledged that the School Options Committee that would begin after this process would focus on this issue. As for the other schools within the proposed boundary, it was agreed that there was potential for a better utilization of the facilities once the School Options Committee was formed at the end of this process.

The committee also discussed that a high school of 600 was small considering the programming for the 9 -12 students would have to work with approximately 150 students per grade level. Consideration was given to include the students of Astral Drive Junior High, but this option was ruled out in light of the input from the community meeting, where there was significant support against this idea. As well, the disruption to the feeder schools of Astral Drive brought the committee to the conclusion that Astral Drive not be considered.

The board's policy C.010 Race Relations, Cross Cultural Understanding, and Human Rights in Learning that promotes principles that value and celebrate diversity

There was a fair amount of conversation at the public meeting on September 17 raising the concern that the new high school in Eastern Passage would suffer from a lack of diversity. Another concern raised was the fact that almost all students would be together from grades 6 – 12 and that they would all come from the 3 communities served by the new school.

It was made clear at the public meeting and reiterated by the committee that there is much diversity in the Shearwater, Eastern Passage and Cow Bay communities. Committee members living in these communities agreed that only a narrow definition of diversity was brought forward at the public meeting. It was made clear at both the public meeting and the committee meeting that diversity does not begin in high school and that the feeder schools that will be coming to EPHS are rich in diversity. The Committee acknowledges that diversity is more than race ethnicity, but encompasses gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs and other ideologies and all should be considered when speaking of diversity within the new Eastern Passage High School.

The impact on the affected students and communities

While recognizing the potential impact on the students of CHDHS, the committee agreed that there was a very positive impact for the students who would be attending the new school. Currently, all of the students from Shearwater, Eastern Passage and Cow Bay are bussed to CHDHS and the fact that fewer students would require bussing was seen as a positive. In addition, the students bussed would have a much shorter bus ride. This would create an increased opportunity for the EPHS students to become more involved in co-curricular activities.

Having a school located close to the centre of the communities it serves allows the opportunity to bring the communities together for events and celebrations.

The impact on the delivery of programs

It was recognized by the committee that the delivery of programs at both EPHS and CHDHS would be a challenge. High School Principals at the table identified the challenges of scheduling schools with less than 300 students per grade level. It was brought up that HRSB has procedures in place outside of the “staffing formula” that addresses and supports schools with smaller populations. The committee felt confident that this issue would be dealt with in a satisfactory manner by HRSB.

The Family of Schools structure of the board

The committee did not see any impact on the family of schools structure of the board with the boundary decision.

The clarity and consistency of the proposed boundary

The committee as well as the participants agreed that the boundary identified by HRSB staff for consideration is the most natural and logical boundary for the new EPHS. All of these students currently attend EPEC and it follows logically that they should be the population of the new school. It is believed that this is what most community members agree is the best boundary for the new EPHS and would have the least impact on the other schools affected.

Student transportation and safety

As mentioned above there will be fewer students travelling by bus and those who do are travelling a shorter distance. This is seen as a very positive situation for the community. The committee members identified the concerns of the community when their students had to travel by bus.

Conclusion

After carefully considering the input from the public meeting and subsequent emails received, and after reflecting on the referenced information in the Creating School Populations Policy, the Boundary Review Committee for the new Eastern Passage High School makes the following Interim boundary recommendation:

That the Interim Boundary Proposal for the new Eastern Passage High School be the same as the current boundary for the Eastern Passage Education Centre. This is the boundary that the HRSB Staff presented for the committee to consider and the committee voted unanimously to support this boundary.

This document meets the approval of the EPHS Boundary Review Committee.

Public Meeting 2

On October 26, 2015 a second public meeting was held at EPEC. Approximately 40 people attended.

The Chair presented the Committee's Interim Boundary Proposal recommendation and the process and procedures followed by the committee.

The public was asked if they felt the committee had overlooked anything and if there was any input that would help them make a more informed decision.

The public input at this meeting was either in support of the recommendation put forward or not relevant to the mandate of the committee. There was a comment that if the school is to serve all of Shearwater, Eastern Passage and Cow Bay then a small portion of Bissett Road which is in Cow Bay is outside of the EPEC Boundary and will still attend CHDHS.

The committee recognized that these students had been attending school outside of the EPEC boundary since elementary and including them would be disruptive and therefore agreed not to include them. This was put forward from the public as a comment and not a recommendation.

Recommendation:

The committee met at the end of the public consultation and agreed that there was unanimous community support for the recommendation presented. The committee voted unanimously to forward the following Boundary Proposal recommendation on to the Superintendent:

That the Boundary for the new Eastern Passage High School be the same as the current Eastern Passage Education Centre.