

Halifax Regional School Board Charles P. Allen Family of Schools Interim Overcrowding Options

Purpose

To provide the Governing Board with a report on the interim options to address overcrowding in schools within the Charles P. Allen Family of Schools.

Background

The communities within the Charles P. Allen family of schools continue to experience residential growth that is causing overcrowding or overutilization of schools. The overutilization has been identified as a pressure in previous reports and is the rationale for capital funding requests from the Governing Board to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD) to support new school construction in this area of the Board. The reports below have supported or referred to this identified need:

- 2015-09-35 Long Range Outlook Action Plan
- 2016-02-06 Capital Construction Projects 2017-18
- 2017-11-44 Capital Infrastructure and Improvement Priorities

Subsequent to the March 2016 capital funding submission to EECD, there has not been a capital construction project approved by EECD for this family of schools.

During the summer 2017, two portable classrooms were installed on site at Basinview Drive Community School, and 3 portable classrooms were placed at Madeline Symonds Middle School to accommodate overcrowding. Portable classrooms were also placed at other schools in this family of schools in previous years (as noted in Table 1 of the Appendix). Population growth is projected to continue and schools will be further overcrowded in September of 2018 due to increasing enrollment.

On November 22, 2017, the following motion was passed by the Governing Board:

It was moved and seconded (Raven/Wright) that at the request of the Basinview SAC and community, the Governing Board requests a report from the Superintendent on interim options for CPA family of schools with current overcrowding.

Content

The Long-Range Outlook 2017 contains demographic data and other information relevant to this report including current and projected enrollment that indicates overcrowding or overutilization of schools within the Charles P. Allen family of schools (see Map 1 in Appendix A).

Analysis of September 2017 enrollment data point to multiyear trends of increasing enrollment at Basinview Drive Community School and Bedford South Elementary School, as indicated in Table 1 of Appendix A. These schools will become increasingly overcrowded in September 2018 and beyond.

In the short term, immediate measures are necessary at Basinview Drive Community School for September 2018. Additionally, interim measures will need to be considered after 2018 at Bedford South Elementary School and possibly other schools within this family of schools.

Staff considered various options to provide overcrowding relief at Basinview including:

1. **Boundary Review**- applied under policy to permanently revise school catchment areas
2. **Portable Classrooms**- addition of temporary stand-alone structures adjacent to schools
3. **Split Shifts**- assignment of two concurrent class schedules in one building for two cohorts
4. **Enrollment Restrictions**- limiting number of students registered at a school based on the capacity
5. **Grade Reconfigurations**- changes to grades assigned to a school to reduce or increase enrollment
6. **Temporary Relocation**- moving a portion of the school population to another site

Detail of these considerations are included in Appendix A.

Funding Details

Funding for implementation of interim strategies to mitigate overutilization will be allocated within the HRSB General Fund.

Timeline

Measures will be implemented for the start of school in September 2018.

Appendices

Appendix A - Charles P. Allen High Family of Schools Interim Overcrowding Options Report to the Superintendent

Recommendations

It is recommended the Governing Board receive the report for information.

Communications

AUDIENCE	RESPONSIBLE	TIMELINE
Governing Board	Ron Heiman	February 28, 2018

Contact

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Appendix A

Charles P. Allen High Family of Schools
Interim Overcrowding Options
Report to the Superintendent

Interim Options

The Long-Range Outlook 2017 current and projected enrollment indicates overcrowding or overutilization of schools within the Charles P. Allen family of schools (see Map 1 attached).

Analysis of September 2017 enrollment data identifies the following trends as indicated in Table 1:

- Madeline Symonds Middle School will continue to be overcrowded in September 2018, but the enrollment trend is projected to decrease in the long term.
- Increasing enrollment at Basinview Drive Community School and Bedford South Elementary School in September 2018 and beyond.
- Immediate measures are necessary at Basinview Drive Community School.

Using EECD class cap guidelines, Baragar Demographics data projections and preliminary enrollment data analysis by staff, the enrollment at Basinview Drive Community School is projected to exceed the available regular classroom spaces by as many as 10 classes in September 2018.

Options for Basinview Drive Community School for September 2018

Staff from School Administration and Operations Services reviewed a wide variety of scenarios guided by the following principles:

- Minimize the transition or disruption impact to students and staff.
- Align class configurations as close to EECD class cap guidelines as possible.

Staff identified and considered six options to address overcrowding at the school. Details of each, including the opportunities and constraints each presents, are below.

1. Boundary Review (applied under policy to permanently revise school catchment areas)

Opportunities

- For a boundary review to be considered a viable option, another adjacent Family of Schools would need to be considered. Based on the LRO projections, in 2018 the Sir John A Macdonald Family of Schools has some available capacity at the P-6 level. Additionally, there is capacity in the Halifax West Family of Schools at Rockingham Elementary.

Constraints

- A boundary review must follow HRSB's *School Boundary Review Policy (F.008)*. It is not possible to meet the timeline requirements of the policy and to transition the students appropriately before September 2018.
- Further, if a new school construction project is announced in the near future, a boundary review will be required to determine the catchment area of the new school and revised catchment areas of adjacent schools. This will result in the process being undertaken twice in a short time period.

2. Portable Classrooms (the addition of temporary stand-alone structures adjacent to schools)

Opportunities

- It may be possible to locate two additional portable classrooms on the Basinview Drive site.
- Bedford South has space on site to accommodate portable classrooms. Three units were used at this location in the past.

Constraints

- The placement of two additional portables at the Basinview Drive site will not fully address the projected overcrowding.

- There are currently two portable classrooms at Basinview Drive Community School located in the rear parking lot. The placement has impacted playground activity, reduced parking, and limited after hour community access to the school. The addition of two more portables will worsen these issues.

3. **Split Shifts** (assignment of two concurrent class schedules in one building for two cohorts)

Opportunities

- The option of a split shift requires the division of a school's student population into two cohorts, typically with one group attending school in the morning and the other group attending in the afternoon. The two cohorts would normally be created by grade level, i.e. grades P-2 and 3-6 as an example.
- A split shift would address the overcrowding issue at Basinview Drive.

Constraints

- Although this option has been implemented in the past, during new school construction and after Hurricane Juan for example, it is typically recommended for higher grade levels.
- A split shift would have a negative impact on the families of the Basinview Drive area as children would not be in school for part of the day, typically either the morning or the afternoon. This will necessitate child care and transportation arrangements for many families.
- A split shift will require rerouting of buses throughout the CPA Family to accommodate new runs.

4. **Enrollment Restriction** (close a school to any future registration)

Opportunities

- An option exists to declare current schools over capacity as full and to direct any future registration to an alternative school with available capacity.

Constraints

- While this option may prevent future overcrowding, it does not address the current situation at Basinview Drive Community School.
- Declaring a school full to students and families living in the catchment creates inequity and will divide neighbourhoods and communities.
- This will also require rerouting of buses throughout the CPA Family to accommodate new runs.

5. **Grade Reconfiguration** (changes to grades assigned to a school to reduce / increase enrollment)

Opportunities

- Reconfiguration of grades usually occurs when balancing enrollment for an entire family of schools. For example, it might result in changing schools with grades P-6, 7-9, 10-12 to a grade configuration of P-5, 6-8, 9-12. The considerations start with the assumption of available space in the high school, allowing for increased enrollment at the high school and subsequent bumping of grades to relieve or decrease the elementary enrollment pressure.
- There is available space within Rocky Lake Junior High that could accommodate grade reconfiguration to a grade 6-9 school to accept grade 6 students from Basinview Drive Community School.

Constraints

- As detailed in Table 1 below, there is minimal capacity within the Charles P. Allen family of schools to accommodate a complete Family of Schools grade reconfiguration to relieve elementary school overcrowding.
- Although there is available space within Rocky Lake Junior High to accommodate grade 6 students from Basinview Drive Community School, this scenario would result in repeated annual bumping, adjustments and transitions for students and staff. In addition, while this option reduces the

overcrowding at Basinview Drive for the coming school year, it does not address the projected future growth.

- The resulting enrollment at Rocky Lake would be very large for a junior high, and could create program delivery challenges due to limited access to specialty spaces.

6. Temporary Relocation to Alternate An Sites (moving a portion of the school population to another location)

Some schools with available space in this area include Rocky Lake Junior High, Bedford Central and Bedford Forsyth Education Centre (BFEC). Schools outside this family of schools were also considered. After a review of potential sites, two warranted further consideration:

Bedford Central

Opportunities

- Currently, this facility is vacant, but is still within the Board's inventory and awaiting turnover to the municipality. No other students or programs would be disrupted if this building was used as a relocation site
- With renovations, this school could accommodate a temporary reassignment of elementary students from other schools. The building has 10 classroom spaces available, enough to address overcrowding at Basinview Drive Community School.

Constraints

This school was constructed in 1941 and has been closed for the last two years. It requires substantial repairs if it is to be reopened. This would include a new roof. The scope of the renovations is yet to be determined but based on preliminary reports, it would likely require TCA Repair capital funding support.

- Although there is a wheelchair ramp at the rear entry door on the main level, this is not an accessible building. There are two stories and a basement with no elevator. The student washrooms are located on the bottom level.
- There are 10 classrooms, some of which have been converted into offices. These will also require renovations.
- There is no gymnasium at this school.
- There is limited safe outdoor space for student activities.

BFEC

Opportunities

- This school was constructed in 1960, is in good condition and could readily accommodate a large elementary school population. The building was a junior high school up to June 2013.
- It can accommodate the grades 4, 5 and 6 classes from Basinview Drive Community School as identified in table 3 and will alleviate the pressure at that school for 3-5 years.
- There are 20+ classrooms available as well as a library, family studies, science lab, music room, tech. ed. lab and gymnasium. It has all of the infrastructure necessary to operate as an elementary school.
- Depending on the relocation site of the alternate high school, it may open opportunity for some high school students who are currently unable to attend at this location.
- Additional portable classrooms are not required.

Constraints

- Some modifications may be required to adjust specialty spaces for use as regular classrooms.
- This school is currently used as one of the sites for BFEC high school programming. Selecting this option would require reassignment of BFEC students from the Bedford site to another location. This would negatively impact approximately 161 high school students.
- This will require rerouting of buses throughout the CPA Family to accommodate new runs.

Next Steps

1. Consult with CPA Family of Schools community (SACs, parents and staff) for input on the options outline above.
2. Determine best overall option for September, 2018.
3. Assign a transition team to develop a timeline and implementation framework addressing the following areas:
 - a. Community Communication
 - b. Transportation
 - c. Renovations (as necessary)
 - d. Staffing and school changeover

Data Tables and Map

Table 1: Current and Projected Enrollment

Charles P. Allen High Family of Schools Utilization Rate								
School	School Capacity	Portable Classrooms 2017	Current Enrolment (September 2017)	School Utilization	Projected Enrolment (2018)	School Utilization	Projected Enrolment (2021)	School Utilization
Basinview Drive Community	579	2	676	117%	752	130%	877	151%
Bedford South Elementary	575	0	616	107%	644	112%	820	143%
CP Allen High	1490	0	1325	89%	1500	101%	1594	107%
Hammonds Plains Consolidated	508	5	588	115%	592	116%	574	113%
Kingswood Elementary	625	0	560	90%	592	95%	585	94%
Madeline Symonds Middle	635	3	745	117%	736	116%	744	117%
Rocky Lake Junior High	797	0	691	87%	710	89%	849	106%
Sunnyside Elementary	360	2	364	101%	356	99%	339	94%

Source: HRSB and Baragar Systems; based on September 30, 2017 enrollment information

Table 2: Charles P Allen family of schools Classroom counts

School	# of classrooms (excluding specialty spaces)	# of classes September 2017	# of classes Projected 2018	Available classroom spaces
Basinview Drive Community School	24	27	34	There are no vacant spaces available.
Bedford South Elementary School	25	27	28	Family Studies, Tech Ed. rooms are used as classrooms, and Music may need to be on the stage.
Hammonds Plains Consolidated	21	27	28	An additional classroom is required, so all portables and teaching spaces will be utilized.
Kingswood Elementary	25	25	27	The core French class will be utilized as well as one of the learning centres.
Madeline Symonds Middle	22	30	30	No additional spaces will be required.
Rocky Lake Junior High	33	25	25	12 classes are available;
Sunnyside Elementary	15	17	17	The 2 portables on site are used for core French and could be repurposed.

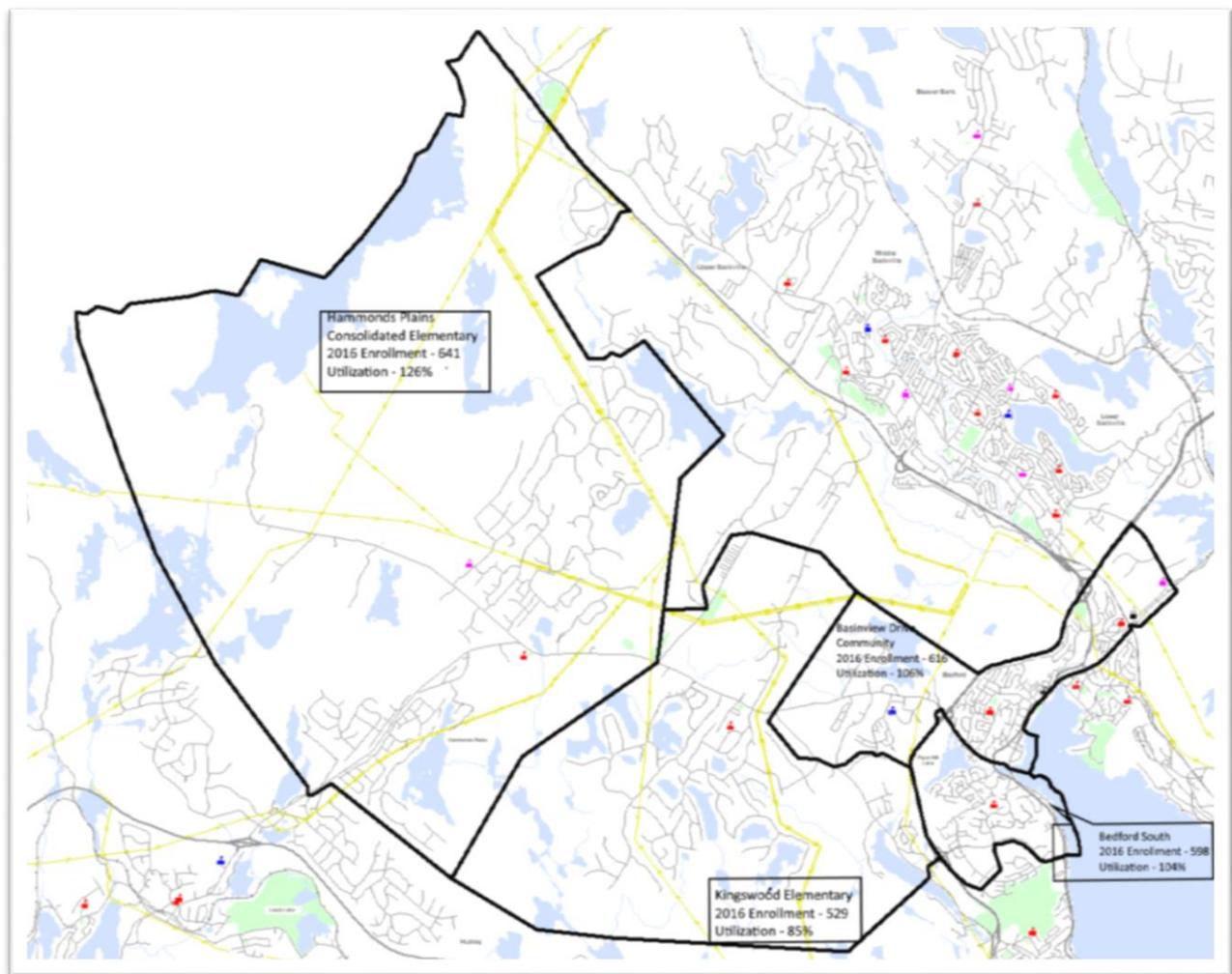
Source: HRSB School Administration student registration data

Table 3: Projected Grades 4, 5 and 6 classes of students

Projected classes of students (Basinview 2018)	
Grade 4	5
Grade 5	5
Grade 6	3.5
Total	13.5

Source: HRSB and Baragar Demographics as of January 2018

Map 1: Elementary School Boundaries – Charles P. Allen High Family of Schools



Source: HRSB and Baragar Systems