

Proposal for West Arc

1. Close Parkside June 2012.
2. Build new schools on Highland site (capacity 1050) and Ancaster site (capacity 1200) (ensure it saves the pool and auditorium section and is built down Meadowbrook and attached to the pool and auditorium west wing section to save the boiler room for both.)
3. Move students to Highland/Ancaster Sept. 2013 according to the following projection information. This would involve a review of the boundaries for each school. Since we have not seen enrolment information by geographic area, it is difficult to project what this could involve. For example, are there 1050 high school students within the town limits of Dundas itself? If so, then Highland would become home school to town students only. Students bussed from between #8 highway and #6 highway could be added and bussed down to Highland, leaving students west of #8 highway to be bussed to Ancaster.
4. Enrolment for the above plan

School	Projected loss per year over the next 5 years divided by 5	Projected enrolment Sept 2013 Current ADE – 2 years of change	Enrolment for 2013 with Parkside closure (not including any from possible students from closures of Parkview and Mountain)
Highland	-43	811-86 = 725	1050
Parkside	-27	628-54 = 574	0
Ancaster	+1	962+2 = 964	1213
Totals	-69	2263	2263

5. The above proposal can address the need for a reduction in capacity (777 spaces for Parkside) and the savings resulting from the closure of the building and the replacement of Highland and Ancaster. A business plan to support the replacement of the two schools can be made based on the fact that under the above plan, both schools are over 50 years old, contain asbestos, are not energy efficient, and in general, do not provide the type of environments that are conducive to 21st century learning. The business plan should request that both schools be rebuilt on the existing sites and that both continue to operate while the building occurs with potential opening dates of Sept. 2015.

Savings that would accrue from the above plan:

	Operations	Administration	Sale of Property	Maintenance and repair (5 years)	Total
Parkside	599511	504274	??	5 133 259	\$6 237 044
Highland replacement				11 649 454 **	
Ancaster replacement				8 320 404 **	

**these amounts should be greatly reduced if the existing buildings are replaced

6. To fortify the business plan, changes in the south ARC should also be considered. The escarpment divides the West Arc and makes transportation routes tend to run in an east-west direction, making direct connection between west end schools difficult to impossible. This makes programming difficult in that if any programs are centralized in any given west end school, then it would be extremely difficult for students in different parts of the west end to attend. Ancaster shares a boundary with Sir Allan MacNab in the South ARC and students flow more freely between those two schools than across the West ARC schools. I hope that the board will consider the flaws created when it chose to divide the board's schools into ARCs when in the past it organized by cluster. This new organization has led to Westdale being considered a "West" School when it was always considered a downtown school. This has led to the appearance of two IB programs in the West ARC and none in the South. When Ancaster was suggested as a possible new location for IB, it was to ensure there was an IB program in the West. This shows what happens when arbitrary divisions are assigned to the schools within the board for program purposes. The board must look at the whole slate of schools that would remain after possible closures and ensure that each area of the city has access to the best buildings and program available. The changes proposed below serve to achieve three purposes: 1) to build Ancaster enrolment to fortify the business plan that would enable a new school to be built on what is arguably the best property in the board and 2) to achieve a goal of having two new schools built in each of the South and West ARCs, and 3) to PROVIDE THE "Westmount Program" with a home that enables growth of the program.
7. The following are steps to achieve the above three goals:
 - a) Rebuild the Westmount building on-site with a new school. Move the Westmount program to MacNab which has a larger OTG capacity and can facilitate growth in the Westmount program and is located in the same general west mountain area with access to similar public transportation. Move the MacNab students after boundary changes described below to the new school built on Westmount property. (New MacNab capacity 1100)
 - b) Close Mountain and Sherwood, June 2012
 - c) While the building of the new school occurs on the Westmount site, schools could be switched in 2013 or the shift could wait until construction is complete to avoid disruption twice for the MacNab students.
 - d) Change the west boundary of MacNab to send 70 students to Ancaster (possible Scenic Woods area or rural area feeding MacNab) (again this information re: number of students in each boundary area is not available through the ARC info) This would require Board transportation from Scenic Woods and through Meadowlands to Ancaster (perhaps as an extension of the bus that already serves Meadowlands to Ancaster).
 - e) Build a new school on the south mountain to replace Barton (capacity 1100)

f) Disperse students as per below:

School	2013 with Mountain closed and Sherwood closed (differs from board proposal as boundaries would need to be realigned)	2015 changes to south arc boundaries (estimate based on projected enrolment decline)
Ancaster at new school	1283	1270 (capacity 1200)
Westmount at MacNab	1337	1295 (room for growth as capacity 1413)
MacNab at Westmount site new school	1151 (capacity 1134)	1116 (new capacity 1100)
Sherwood	0	0
Hill Park	1194	1146 (capacity 1194)
Mountain	0	0
Barton (new school 1100)	1092 (capacity 1092)	1059 (New school capacity 1100)

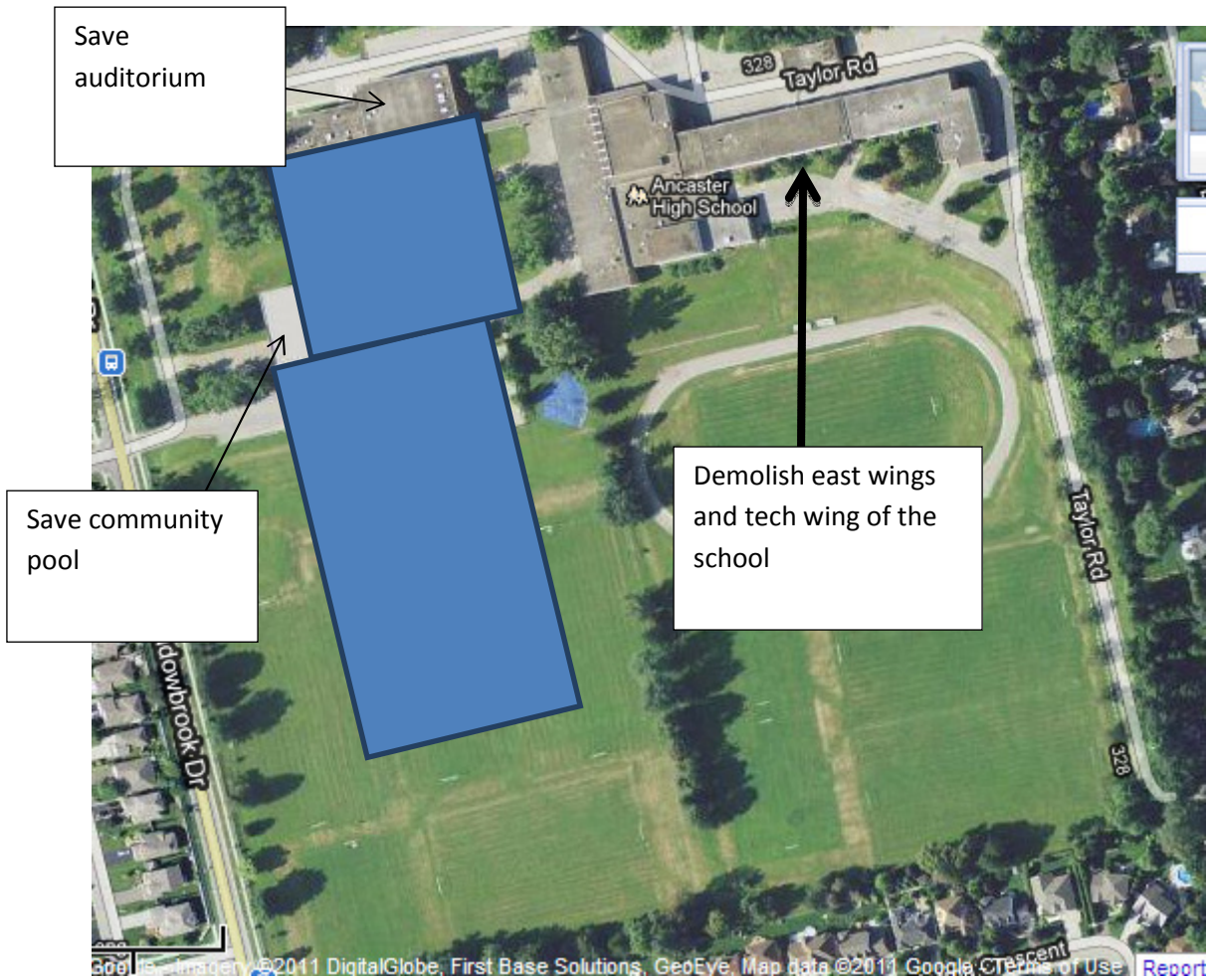
This plan brings utilization in 2013 and 2015 to near 100%.

8. Savings result from the savings in Maintenance and repair and sale of property for:
 - a. Parkside
 - b. Mountain
 - c. Sherwood

9. Savings result from the difference in maintenance and repair for the following schools and reduced need for such in new buildings.
 - a. Westmount
 - b. Ancaster
 - c. Highland
 - d. Barton

10. Recreation centres are saved at Ancaster, Hill Park, Westmount, and MacNab site.
11. New schools would have a better chance of repatriating students from the Separate schools in each area thus slowing the drain from our board and this effect would only enhance our numbers.
12. The 4 new buildings proposed under this plan would be better able to provide 21st century learning and teaching opportunities and would provide a needed boost to teacher morale and student engagement. New schools can include facilities that meet the need of the new teaching environment and should include fitness centres, library learning commons, areas for elearning and blended learning as well as supervised areas for students to meet, work and collaborate and socialize. New schools would provide improvements in electrical service, technology, climate control, internal and external lighting, driveway access and include bright, cheerful and inviting spaces, spaces that facilitate collaboration and flexible learning environments.

Map showing where new school on Ancaster site could be built.



Why Ancaster High needs a new school

The West ARC needs to look at the environmental, program and logistical needs of **all** the students of the west end of the city. Ancaster High School cannot be left un-improved in a fifty year old, fragmented building and left to compete for students with a new building in our co-terminus board in the community and a possible new building in Dundas. To do this would have a huge detrimental effect on our already declining enrolment and potentially leave Ancaster at a lower enrolment than exists today.

The ARC must expand its vision at this time to create new learning environments that can:

- 1) Attract and engage students
- 2) Repatriate students lost to the newer buildings of the Separate school board
- 3) Facilitate the delivery of curriculum in the 21st century through the updating of our old and high maintenance buildings

Some history:

Ancaster is the only school in the West Arc that faces direct competition from a Separate school in the same community. Waterdown has no separate high school and St. Mary draws from all three other schools in the West end, but not one directly.

Ancaster is over 50 years old, was originally part of its own school board and included in the original Wentworth County School Board, was built in sections over a number of years, and eventually was the had a separate building attached to it by a tunnel when its enrolment increased.

The school has always had incredible support from its community and a long history of educating generations of Ancaster citizens.

It is attached to the community pool, the boilers for which are included in the west wing of the building. It is across from the community's recreation centre. So its location is central to the community and the outdoor property is a huge asset to programming and community use. It does lack in public accessibility due to the poor access via public transit.

Enrolment issues

The school's enrolment has been dropping due not only to demographic trends, since Ancaster is a growth area of the city, but started with the opening of Bishop Tonnos High School in 2005 and the board's decision to rearrange boundaries that resulted in the loss of Scenic Woods and Meadowlands as feeder areas for Ancaster High. Faced with the loss of students due to these boundary changes and competition from the separate board whose new building only highlighted the dysfunctional nature and poor condition of the Ancaster building, the school's enrolment declined and has continued to decline. The focus of the school seemed then to shift from education of the students we did attract to competing for students. We tried to add new technology, add new programmes (hockey, aviation SHSM, biotechnology, IB), and highlight our strength which has always been our dedicated staff and wide range of extracurricular activities and its academic excellence, but the declining trend continues to this day. Public transit limitations (i.e. no direct route from Dundas and sporadic bus service from

the across the mountain makes it difficult to attract students to programming even if we are the only ones offering it if there is no school bus to bring them.

Limitations of the building

Little money has been put into improvements of the building over the years. New boilers for the east wing were added, and some “dressing up” (painting of lockers, hiding of wires and rebuild of the entry foyer) was done for its 50th reunion in 2009. The following is a list of existing problems with the building and is by no means exhaustive:

- 1) The school still faces on-going problems with climate control and has no air conditioning, except for a few rooms where we added window units and in the main office. Pipes that bring hot water for radiators frequently send heat to some areas and are blocked from reaching others and constantly need to be purged. This leaves some areas stiflingly hot and others at temperatures under 15 degrees Celsius.
- 2) There is inadequate electrical service to meet current needs (from not enough electricity from the street to inadequate number of outlets in classrooms), and we suffer brown outs on a rather routine basis.
- 3) The east wing is still full of encapsulated asbestos (the west wing was closed for a period and the asbestos was removed).
- 4) The main offices are split and should be located in one area.
- 5) Our library was added in 1967 and has boarded up windows, a carpet that is over 15 years old, no working air conditioners, and has no windows that open meaning its temperature can rise to over 35 degrees Celsius when temperatures outside rise.
- 6) The Science labs have plumbing damage that includes drains that do not work and taps that leak. Leaks to classrooms or offices underneath are a semi-regular occurrence.
- 7) Our music room is crowded and poorly climate-controlled.
- 8) Some classrooms have the original 50-year old curtains over windows that, in some cases, have to be bolted shut so they don't fall out and hurt someone. Original paint peels from walls in many rooms. The sun beats in the south side windows on warm days making the temperatures soar to over 30 degrees.
- 9) The cafeterias are too small to accommodate even our smaller enrolment and students have to eat in the halls, stairwells, or outside.
- 10) The art rooms are separated in different wings and are crowded and lack proper plumbing facilities, activity and storage space.
- 11) The staffroom is dated and only visited by a small percentage of the staff since it is not central to everyone.
- 12) The school has no main front entrance and the driveway situation and drop-off/ pick-up situation produces daily congestion and traffic chaos.
- 13) The segmented/fragmented nature of the building with its split boiler rooms and electrical control service makes it a nightmare for caretakers to locate solutions to problems when they arise. As well the square footage that must be maintained and cleaned by caretaking is spread over ¼ of a mile unlike most schools our size that have concentrated the space in a smaller overall footprint.

- 14) The fragmented nature of the building makes any attempts to renovate nearly impossible, since even if everything was “redone”, we would still be left with a dysfunctional basic structure. So any suggestion of “putting some money into the school” but not replacing it will only perpetuate the basic “dysfunctionality” of the building.

The poor state of the building will further drain our enrolment if the ARC decides to rebuild Highland or build a new school in Dundas on some other location. Ancaster will be left in a position where with inadequate facilities we are trying to draw students whose options on either side of us are much more attractive, i.e. a new school in the town (Separate board) or a new school in Dundas that will drain our rural areas of students who may otherwise have attended Ancaster. Ancaster cannot be left sandwiched between such pressures and be expected to survive and offer program to all students. Something needs to be done to support Ancaster as part of the West ARC. What needs to be done...?

- 1) Change the boundaries with Sir Allan MacNab to return some students to Ancaster from the west mountain or west mountain rural areas as well as change the boundaries of the areas feeding the Dundas school(s) to build Ancaster’s enrolment to nearer or above its capacity.
- 2) Build a business plan that supports the building of a new school on the Ancaster site (down Meadowbrook) that saves the community pool and Auditorium but replaces all other facilities.

These measures would result in a repatriation of students from the separate board and stop the drain of students to Dundas and allow Ancaster program to flourish once again in a modern environment where 21st century learning can take place.

Ancaster’s community deserves a public high school that serves the needs of students in this growing area.