

Question 1: Do the presented Key Themes make sense to the group? What is not there that is important for us to know?

- Work done recently on the school and now the money has been wasted...ie: new windows, boiler system, play ground. That is a lot of tax payer money that is being wasted.
- If the school is closed down I am worried it will be another empty building
- I bought the house so that we could walk our children to school...affects my desire to live in the community.
- How was the impact on students decided? How is the transition handled. They are going to be just a number. They need to be in their own neighbourhood....even for the parents to know each other. That is who information is shared about the community.
- I would like to see a separation between the older grades and the younger grades. I wouldn't want my grade 1 playing with a grade 8 if my school has to close.
- I like the smaller concept...they feel important in grade 5 and then they can deal with it better in grade 6. Our grade 5s will lose their sense of leadership that they have right now. That needs to be incorporated into the new school. In grade 6 they feel more like an individual and they don't just blend in as one of the crowd.
- Is there anywhere on the website where I can see suspension rates and violence.
- Concerns around safety...even if close to school there are no traffic lights and transportation would make it safer.
- **I don't have a car...my school is walking distance...but if I need to get to the school because something happens then will the school pay for my cab fare? (another member asked for this point to be bolded)**
- Safety of putting little kids on school buses...students are missing the important lessons of taking cross walks. I purposely bought in my neighbourhood so my kids could walk. Teaching them about exercise and having them walk is important to me
- What kind of education will my students get? Big difference in the quality of education in a big school. I like my student in a small setting.
- It's a nice feeling when my child has a name and not a number
- How will bullying be dealt with? What about learning disabilities? Will there still be early identification of concerns?
- In the smaller schools, kids are learning more. I am concerned about losing this.
- One group member brought EQAO data from all the schools and said that in big schools they are no longer an individual...they don't adjust well.
- Different communities have different needs...with different nationalities and income levels. Some kids might need more depending on where they are living instead of where the school is. There could be different issues.
- How does this impact nutrition programs? Volunteering? We are a community. I would not feel comfortable volunteering in a big school. I also couldn't get there...how would I get there, walk? I think you will lose all your volunteers.
- There are a lot of fights at Ballard? How will they fit in together? There will be bullying and violence. They are going to be fighting together.
- They need the kids who are close to one school to go to that school and the ones who are closer to another school to go their...it will stop bullying (I did my best to capture this point but there was a daughter trying to translate for dad)

- We are going to tear down a school that has had money poured into it...and send kids to a school that needs a lot of work.
- Has it been considered to keep Parkdale and Roxborough to keep it from JK-5? Instead of closing them both down.
- Worried about safety of students walking to school long distances. Dad can watch the kids go to school right now to make sure they are safe. I can't see them if they go to another school.
- After school care...now neighbours can bring them home...but now that won't happen. We need after school care.
- Will they change boundaries? Will they give people the option?
- If they close Parkdale, I'm sending them to catholic school. This issue is not reflected in the themes.
- No local school affects the value of my house...people don't want their kids on the bus.
- It will be bad for businesses around here too....people go into stores to and from school. That won't happen anymore
- There are only 2 parks in the rosdale community. You would be taking one away. And there are only swings at the school...there would be no swings
- Who decides what happens to the closed schools?

Identified Themes for decision making: Transportation, Community & Community Partnerships, Accessibility, Operations, Class sizes, School size

Question 2: In creating an ideal elementary learning facility, what considerations do you feel are most important?

- Really splitting up the ages....younger kids on one side, older kids on another side...kindergardens on their own.
- Public nurses, gym teachers, librarians, technology...would a larger school mean we would get this programming?
- Quality of education
- Safety...everyone knows my son's name. Will he be noticed if he disappears or runs. What if he wanders and gets lost. Safety should be a number 1 concern.
- Something within walking distance
- Somewhere they can identify their neighbours.
- Smaller class sizes
- Nutrition...snack times, milk program....this needs to be offered. Will there be the volunteers to do this?
- Lunch time hours...with 800 kids in a school, who is watching them?
- Able to come home for lunch...especially for the kindergarten kids
- Do we really want to max schools out? I'm not ok with that. Do we want to be having portables everywhere.

- Child care before and after school
- No bullying. We need a program to teach and deal with this when there are such large numbers.
- I would like to see lots of extra-curricular activities (book clubs, art clubs).
- What are the playgrounds like at the bigger schools? Will they only get to play on the playground once a week? I want them to get on the playground. They will be doing bad things and bullying if they are not on the jungle gym.
- I've seen grades 6, 7 and 8s smoke. I don't want that around my kids.
- It was requested that I type: **"WE DON'T WANT CHANGE!"**
- Dangerous if teachers are not outside watching...what will the older kids be teaching them?

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- What do they deem as accessible? Is it that the students can access ANY area of the school? If only being able to not get on the stage mean that the school is not accessible.
- The distance to walk to school what is the limit? Is 1.3km the limit? Does the maximum change by year or grade?
- There are benefits to exercise, but being too far is not safe.
- How were the enrollment number predicted? Are they taking into account the new families that move in to neighbourhoods? Rosedale in particular. Are the specific neighbourhoods being considered, and not overall by the ARC?
- The Rosedale geographic location, creates a community feel in itself that they don't want to lose
- Are they factoring that students might want to go to other boards?
- Should we allow students to be able access other school boards?
- There is no comparison of where the schools are located in comparison to each other?
- How are people affected out of catchment?
- Are the timelines realistic?
- What would be the maximum distance allowed to walk?
- Can there be a consideration to ensure schools are spread out through the ward?
- How will the students be transitioned to the new school? How will the students at the existing school going to be supported with the influx of new students?
- Make sure that the special needs classes/students are supported within the transition
- Smaller schools are a lot easier on the JK-3 students
- JK-8 and JK-5 schools are good for leadership opportunities for the senior students and take a more active role in the running of the school
- There are benefits of allowing the senior students to get more involved with the initiatives of the schools
- Are we actually going to save money by closing schools? Or will the money be spent on busses? Are environmental costs being considered?
- Are decisions being made on money alone? Are we sacrificing the well-being of the students?

Identified Themes for decision making: Transportation, Community & Community Partnerships, Accessibility, Operations, Class sizes, School size

Question 2: In creating an ideal elementary learning facility, what considerations do you feel are most important?

- **Small class sizes are important**
- **Nutrition programs – Lunch/Breakfast/Snacks**
- **Arts programs including music and drama Instrumental music programs**
- **Technology – SMART Boards, iPads, iPods, up-to-date computer systems, what prepares them for the real world**
- **Useable outdoor space, living gardens, play spaces, not just concrete**
- **The ability to run on soft surfaces**
- **EA support**
- **A great library**
- **Air conditioning**
- **Qualified teachers/staff → Being able to recognize and stopping bullying, knowing the technology, supportive staff, administrative staff**
- **Flexible learning programs, tailor the learning to what the children are interested in**
- **Work at your own pace programs**
- **Independent learning**
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Transportation – for Rosedale – 6,7,8 to Viscount don't get a bus. If JK to 5 gets a bus will the 6,7,8 get a bus

Roxborough – outreached to other areas of the community; potential for vandalism and decreased property value due to lack of neighbourhood school

Potential problem with people moving to communities without schools in the neighbourhood within walking distance

Accessibility – Rosedale is accessible with single floor and ramp – Rosedale used for community election because of accessibility

Outlook of HWDSB – problem with super large schools – potential for problems with bullying due to large population, language from intermediates that primary students will hear. Problem with intermediates not being good role models. Creates inner problems that smaller schools don't have to deal with. Staff won't have time for all the students.

K-8 “factory” model doesn't work. Schools in the US are going back to the community school for self-esteem, “community” and behaviour. More programs are offered but the same kids are participating in those programs. Better academic achievement in a small school. Better attitude about themselves in a small school. Students in small schools are more involved. The bigger schools don't allow for “all” kids to participate, only those with abilities. Interpersonal relationships are better between staff and students in a small school.

Class size – larger class size in big schools

Support staff – cannot deal with academics only behaviour and medical

Only declining enrolment until 2014, as per the Drummond report.

Properties of closed schools are standing still – what are they doing with the school/property?

Rosedale – building is occurring in a neighbourhood where the school is closing.

When you close a community school, the community dies – people don't move in, businesses move out.

Hillcrest wears uniforms – concern re: cost to parents

Distance of walking to the new school – especially in the winter or when their kids need to be picked up early due to illness.

School parking lot unsafe with drop-offs due to an extensive walking distance and the requirement to drive.

Job loss – less teachers and support staff.

Worry for the loss of support staff for Special Education students

Administrative cost – teachers will lost jobs.

Children with already high absenteeism are more likely to continue that trend or decline further with distance

Socioeconomic status – lateral change not out of equal status

We want to keep our own schools!

Hillcrest will be over capacity which means that there will be portables, who gets them?

FDK will begin next year in the big schools at the same time as a possible amalgamation of the small schools within the big schools.

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Question 2: In creating an ideal elementary learning facility, what considerations do you feel are most important?

Smaller class sizes and Smaller school population

Nutrition programs are important

We don't care about a new building it's who is teaching your kids – it's not about the building it's about what's in the building

Staff that wants to be there/care

Ideal school K-5, then 6-8, then secondary

School Council and Parent Council cares about what the kids want and they work to give them those things

More parent involvement

Supportive Principal and Learning Resource Teacher(s)

Student success and other classrooms for students who require them

Educational Assistants

Safety intervention plan

Shared community space – senior's room, etc.

Every school has a working computer lab

Technology with teacher/staff training, i.e., SMART board

Cursive writing

Extra curricular activities

Greenspace, even if small, but some space to run around

No portables.

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Worried about the effects on students when they go from a smaller school to a larger school

Bigger is not necessarily better

Worried about the kids with learning disabilities

Worried about the specific needs of individual students in a big school – whether students will get the individual attention they need

Want them to get the help now when they are young to avoid big problems later

Worried losing the school culture of the smaller school, a smaller community is a stronger community because easier to make connections because you know everyone

The school culture does affect the community because when schools are gone, will not attract new families to the neighbourhood, and property values decrease

Illiterate children are the result of being pushed through the bigger systems

Many families stayed in this area so that their children could go to a smaller school

Children can walk to school and do not need bussing, kids will need bussing so its disruptive to parent schedules

Lose the community feel, lack of parent involvement as much because you're living further away. Parents will have less interaction with each other because they won't see other parents

Uncomfortable with very young children on busses

This will make it even worse for children who do not want to go to school because they will need to ride the bus

Concerned that the schools that are accepting new students after home schools have been closed will not have the infrastructure to handle the overflow e.g. unsafe banister at Ballard on the second floor

Also concerned about if the population goes up will portables be needed

Will accommodations be made to the physical environment to support students with disabilities, e.g. echoing, noise level, confusions, general busyness,

Harder to concentrate in a louder, busier environment

Worried about children with severe allergies and physical issues (asthma). How will all the teachers know each child's medical issues in a larger school?

Is there a possibility that maximum class size might be increased?

Smaller the class, the better the service to students

Worried about how being in a K-8 school will affect primary students. Like to see the middle school model continue because it better supports the stages that children are in. Worried about losing their innocence too soon.

Worried about what will happen to the teachers if the school is closed – like them and worried about the workload that they might have at a new school

dealing with a larger class.

Concerned that there might not be enough green space for students to get outside with the lack of green space at some of these schools.

Worried about losing the excellent teachers at this school

Will parents get any type of input into catchment boundaries?

Field trips are unbelievable – worried about losing all of it

Does the cost benefit of fixing up the schools really offset building a new school?

Concerned about losing the heritage feature

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Question 2: In creating an ideal elementary learning facility, what considerations do you feel are most important?

Make community input more accessible – i.e. meetings, questionnaires, phonenumber, internet

Centrally located so that it could remain a walkable school

Greenspace

Small class sized

K-5, 6-8 , highschool students separated, but schools all in one area

Decisions that are made would not be all about saving money, but what's best for kids

Parental control is balanced with government involvement

Students able to current with technology

Comfortable learning environenment and air quality

Ability to address the needs of all students and not just the majority

Community space for meetings, nutrition programs

Children feel nurtured in this area with the smaller school and the smaller class sizes

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Date November 7/13

Question 1: Do the presented key themes make sense to the group?

Yes

What is not there that is important for us to know?

The Rosedale (and other) neighborhood is experiencing a turnover and the projected enrollment does not appear accurate.

The numbers do not reflect the full day kindergarten programs

The numbers do not reflect current students who are attending schools out of catchment

Possible growth due to immigration

There has not been any consideration to after school programs (extra curricular, child care, specialty programs ie. autistic programming)

Have EQAO & standardized testing results been considered along with associated program supports for lower scoring schools?

Question 2: In creating an ideal elementary learning facility, what considerations do you feel are most important?

Green space

Community field, community space within the school for volunteers (to run healthy snack, reading buddy)

Large gym

Full resource center

Technology – smart boards, computer labs, wireless access, iPods/Pads

Specialized teachers (phys-ed, music, art, special needs/resource etc.)

Centrally located with the least amount of busses required

Cafeteria with healthy food

Extra curricular programs

Auditorium separate from the gym

Specialty programs (ie. life skills, anti-bullying programs, home economics)

Security features (locked doors, intercom system etc.)

Safety concerns for students who are walking to school – crossing Queenston Road, King Street and other major intersections

Other Questions and Concerns

If the schools end up over capacity then you will end up with portables once more.
(security issues around this)

Transitions for staff and students: how do we prepare for these changes on such a short timeline?

What happens to the buildings after they are emptied? (impact on community of empty buildings in the neighborhoods)