

## **Gatestone and Shannen Koostachin Boundary Review**

### **Committee Meeting**

**Tuesday, December 12, 2023**

**Gatestone Elementary School**

#### **Present**

Chair HWDSB: Gerry Smith, Superintendent of Student Achievement, FOS 1

Trustee: Kathy Archer, Wards Six and Nine

Gatestone Elementary School Principal: Dianne Barlow

Representatives from Gatestone School Council: Paul Uzarowski and Jennifer Sarkis

Shannen Koostachin Elementary School Principal: Tricia Nelson

Representatives from Shannen Koostachin School Council: Kylie Gallagher and Saima Mirza

Manager, Accommodation and Planning, HWDSB: Ellen Warling

Planner, Accommodation and Planning, HWDSB: Ian Hopkins

Research and Analytics, HWDSB: Lorraine Valmadrid

Executive Assistant, HWDSB: Vanessa Aguirre (covering for Karolina Grochowska)

#### **Regrets:**

Associate Director, Business Services, HWDSB: Matthew Gerard

Senior Facilities Manager, HWDSB: David Anderson

#### **Meeting Start Time:** 6:08 p.m.

Presentation led by Superintendent Gerry Smith, Ellen Warling, Manager, Accommodation and Planning, and Ian Hopkings, Planner, Accommodation and Planning.

## Round Table Discussion

### Q and A

**Q.** Has there been any discussion about the lack of people that showed up to the public meeting and additional communication to families so families understand how this boundary review will impact them?

**A.** The Board is looking at different forms of communication continue to be cognisant of language barriers. Additional communication may include email communication to families, letters in backpack and other ways to ensure the message has been received by families. The Board is considering hosting small group meetings with families who have language barriers to ensure they are receiving the information.

**Q.** If the hope is that Trustees will make a decision by end of January or February, when are all those conversations going to happen? After the decision is made? Does the fact that a lot of the affected area does not know what is next, does that affect the timeline for the decision?

**A.** The report will be presented to the Board of Trustee at the Finance and Facilities Committee meeting in February. This is a public meeting where Trustees will review and ask questions about the report and its recommendations. A decision will not be made before Trustees have an opportunity to review. If approved at the Finance and Facilities Committee the report will be reviewed and voted on at a Board meeting. All feedback from the public meeting will be included in the report.

**Q.** Parent from Council: knowing that the utilization percentage will be back up within a couple of years, has there been any thought about reaching out to the Catholic Board and utilizing Assumption as it is supposed to be available in September?

**A.** HWDSB planning staff reached out to the Catholic Board. HWCDSB Planning staff indicated that assumption is currently is use and will be used by their Board next year and into the future.

**Q.** Gatestone is not being fully utilized, the information points to the fact that the community might go through a boundary review in a couple of years again. Any thoughts?

**A.** When considering future boundary reviews the Board takes into consideration the impacted communities from previous boundary reviews and typically does not initiate additional changes in that community within a short period of time. Based on the information we have today, between this boundary change and the new school in Binbrook the proposed boundary should provide a long-term solution for both Gatestone and Shannen Koostachin. HWDSB planning staff will continue to monitor the enrolment trends and demographics in the area.

**Q.** Has there been any consideration to have new students moving into the area/new construction attend Gatestone and leave the ones already attending Shannon Koostachin so they will have less disruption?

**A.** Most of the new residential development is within walking distance of Shannen Koostachin, part of the rationale for the boundary is to maximize the walkability of the schools. The other consideration is that some students that come to Shannon Koostachin are already being bussed, so they would remain on the bus and be move to Gatestone.

**Q.** Has there been consideration for the families that feel frustrated to be asked to move again?

**A.** The Board understands that families have already built relationships and transitions are not easy on students or families. We are trying to think of the long-term benefits for students and ensuring equal access to school facilities.

**Q.** What would trigger another boundary review?

**A.** Would be based on a number of factors. Housing density, population growth and shifting demographics.

**Q.** How will bell times be managed when some families have students at two schools?

**A.** SOSA Smith requested to take this question away. There needs to be coordination with HWSTS and the Catholic Board as student also go to Assumption.

However, most of the time, families request to move the entire family to one site. Some families decide to move because peers are also moving.

**Q.** There are concerns regarding the Before & After at Shannen Koostachin. How are these being addressed?

**A.** At the moment there are two students at SK and some waitlisted students. Umbrella is working with families and the Board is working with the service provider.

**Q.** Any thoughts/considerations regarding the traffic congestion at Shannon Koostachin?

**A.** There is no crosswalk at SK. There are no flashing lights. SK has not had a traffic study done due to Covid pandemic. Also, a school travel plan can be develop/requested. The Board will work with the City of Hamilton who walks the route and develops plans. Travel plans are done in the spring. Families and students are asked to be involved.

**Q.** Regarding the review, are parents/guardians/families allowed to say yes, or no or is this a done process? Some parents/guardians did not participate thinking this was already decided.

**A.** All the information is collected by Board staff and a report is developed and goes to the Board of trustees for vote. This will happen most likely in January/February.

**Q.** What happens when the Board report goes forward?

**A.** -Trustees can approve parts and make recommendations.

-Depending how Trustees see the report, they can approve it in whole or in part.

-Trustees can also send the report back to be reviewed.

-When a report is sent back, this can affect timelines.

School Councils requested that the timelines for when the Report is going to Board be share, put on the website, make it public as there are invested parents.

Prior to report going to the Board (Trustees), it goes to Finance and Facilities for review and approval.



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**Next Steps:**

SOSA Smith indicated that all those who send in a question will get a reply.

For the Transition process, SOSA Smith indicated that he will be hearing/reviewing all the information but will not comment ahead of the Trustee review.

Communication will continue to be received through the schools' email address.

Meeting adjourned at 7:37 p.m.