



Hodgson Middle School Questions and Answers – July 18, 2018

Background

The 2015/16 Yonge-Eglinton Program Area Review Team (PART) explored a number of options to address accommodation pressures in the Yonge-Eglinton area. In addition to boundary changes, the grade configuration changes that the Board voted on as part of the 2015 PART were necessary to accommodate the growth in K-5. At the time of that review, all of the junior schools—Eglinton Jr PS, Davisville Jr PS, Maurice Cody Jr PS, and Oriole Park Jr PS—were already at or over capacity. Enrolment growth was projected to take place at all of the schools, and small and/or constrained school sites limited the number of portables (if any) that could be placed on those sites. The only option available to accommodate the projected student growth was Hodgson—the site could accommodate portables, as well as an addition. Reconfiguring the grade ranges of all of the junior schools from K-6 to K-5 (as opposed to keeping some schools K-6) was also felt to be the most beneficial from a pedagogical and social/emotional perspective by enabling all students to transition into Hodgson MS together (this began in September 2017). To accommodate the projected increase in student enrolment, in 2016, the TDSB submitted a business case to the Ministry of Education for a 12-room addition at Hodgson MS. In November 2016, the Ministry of Education approved a \$5.8 million capital funding project to build the 12-room addition.

1. Is the TDSB now considering a larger addition to Hodgson Middle School?

As a result of ongoing accommodation challenges and projected growth within the area, TDSB Planning staff has recommended that the project at Hodgson MS be reviewed to explore opportunities to increase the number of pupil places.

A recent update of enrolment projections suggests that the current proposal for 12 additional classrooms may be insufficient to manage longer term enrolment growth. Approximately 8,300 units have been proposed within the Hodgson MS attendance area since the conclusion of the Yonge-Eglinton PART in 2016, which increased the number of students projected at local schools.

The City of Toronto's Midtown in Focus study, which will result in a new secondary plan for the Yonge-Eglinton community, has identified even further growth over the longer-term, meaning that any opportunity for the TDSB to provide additional capacity should be explored. More information on the Midtown in Focus study can be found at <https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/planning-studies-initiatives/midtown-in-focus/>.

Given the need to build substantial additional capacity at the school beyond a 12-room addition, the Board is now investigating other options such as a complete replacement school or a much larger addition combined with a deep retrofit of the older part of the facility. These options require further review and consultation with provincial and City staff.

2. **What are the options being considered?**

Following initial discussions with the Ministry of Education in February 2018 with respect to the need for additional capacity at Hodgson MS, TDSB staff was instructed to further study the condition of the existing school and prepare alternative design options, including that of a replacement school. Three options were presented to the Hodgson MS community at the public consultation meeting on June 11, 2018:

Option 1: Three-Storey Addition/Renovation of Portions of the Existing School

This option is not recommended due to high exposure to risk of unforeseen building conditions. It is also limited in its ability to provide opportunities for future expansion and would not address other space issues within the school.

Option 2: A New Replacement School

This would provide the greatest flexibility in addressing future needs for growth and development. It would, however, require the demolition of the existing building and the relocation of students and staff during construction.

Option 3: A Hybrid Option - Demolition of the 1960s Wing, Construction of a Major Addition, and Renovation of the 1914-1927 Wing of the Existing School

This design provides flexibility to accommodate growth while retaining and improving a major component of the existing school. This option, however, will constrain the use of the site due to a phase project implementation process. The school would have to be relocated during construction and the project may not begin until 2021 with completion in 2023.

A link to the slide deck presented at the June 11, 2018 public meeting can be found at: http://www.tdsb.on.ca/portals/default/ARC_helpful_info_docs/P20180429-HodgsonCommunityMeeting-V3.pdf.

3. When would construction start/end?

Construction timelines will depend on the option that is selected. Options 2 and 3 will take approximately 24 months to complete, with construction anticipated to begin in September 2021.

4. Would students be relocated during construction?

A final decision has yet to be made with respect to whether students would stay on-site or be relocated to another location during construction. This will be contingent on the final renovation or rebuild option that is chosen. As part of the Davisville Jr PS replacement school project, both TDSB and the parent community discussed the pros and cons of maintaining a school presence on-site during construction. Analysis there led to support for the relocation - based on student safety, experience, and quality of education. The relocation option for Hodgson MS is a strong recommendation of TDSB staff at this stage, but it will be discussed with the community as the options and associated timelines evolve.

5. If a decision is made to relocate, where will the students move to?

The TDSB has the former Vaughan Road Academy building as a holding site. Davisville Jr PS/Spectrum Alternative School will be relocated there for the next two years (beginning September 2018) as their school is rebuilt. The same model could potentially be used for Hodgson MS. All students would get bussed to Vaughan Road Academy regardless of their grade.

6. How does Hodgson MS plan to accommodate rising enrolment until the new addition is completed?

There are currently six portables on-site, which were placed to accommodate the influx of Grade 6 students as per the Yonge-Eglinton PART (<http://www.tdsb.on.ca/About-Us/Strategy-Planning/Search-All-Reviews?id=95>). All six portables were placed on-site simultaneously as a means to provide adequate accommodation for the students until the 12-classroom addition was built and opened in 2019. Recent changes in enrolment, development, and pupil yields, however, are currently manifesting themselves at the junior schools, meaning that their impact will reach Hodgson MS a few years from now. Updated projections for Hodgson MS indicate that six portables won't be sufficient to accommodate the number of students projected after 2019. In 2020, enrolment is expected to surpass the original projections meaning that one additional portable will be needed (seven in total).

If the school remains on-site during construction, the number of portables required will increase substantially after 2020. A total of 10 portables would be required in 2021, 13 in 2022, and 15 in 2023. The situation is more challenging if the school remains on-site when the 1960s wing is demolished because two classrooms within the school would be lost. This means that two additional portables would be required as an offset, increasing the maximum number of portables to 17. Other factors such as loss of outdoor recreational space and the impact on physical education are all contributing factors that have led staff to recommend moving off-site.

7. Does the location of the portables make it difficult for students to access the main building?

The six portables currently on-site are located within close proximity to the 1960s wing with two easy points of access. Each portable has a swipe card to get access to door #5 by the music room, and it is a short walk down the hall to the washroom. Students can also buzz and be let into the school through the front door, and it is a short walk down the hall to the washrooms. Both door #5 and the front entrance are about the same distance to the washroom. Portables 1, 2, and 3 are closer to door #5, while portables 4, 5, and 6 are closer to the front entrance. Hodgson MS is also on a rotary-based schedule, so students enjoy the ability to move from class to class and are not in a portable the whole day.

8. Will the skating rink be impacted if/when additional portables are required?

There are currently no plans that impact the on-site skating rink. The TDSB currently has a ten-year lease with the City of Toronto and the rink itself is also considered a community resource. Trustee Laskin has had conversations with Councillor Matlow to ensure that the City is aware that community members who attended the public consultation meeting on June 11, 2018 expressed support for portables to be located in the rink area as a way to avoid moving off-site during construction. Discussions will continue regarding what may be feasible given the existing lease agreement between the City and the TDSB, and whether or not it is feasible to place portables on the rink pads without damaging the structure itself.

9. Why can't students from the four feeder schools attend other middle schools to alleviate the accommodation pressures at Hodgson MS?

Hodgson MS is the feeder school for Davisville Jr PS, Eglinton Jr PS, Maurice Cody Jr PS, and Oriole Park Jr PS. There are currently no plans to split up the feeders to Hodgson MS given that adjacent schools in the area are all at capacity with local students.

10. What are the next steps?

As enrolment keeps increasing at all junior schools in the area, even with the grade changes, the TDSB is changing a portion of the catchment area from Eglinton JPS to Maurice Cody JPS, beginning September 2019.

Staff has also brought forward a number of residential development redirections to Board in June 2018 to provide additional accommodation relief to Eglinton Jr PS.

In the fall 2018, staff will proceed with the Yonge-Eglinton PART Phase II to explore a series of accommodation options to mitigate local growth, particularly at Eglinton Jr. PS. This study will involve many schools in the area and include an analysis of the Bannockburn property, a former elementary school located at Avenue Road, north of Lawrence Avenue. This facility, which is currently leased to a private school could accommodate up to 300 students. Implementation of any potential changes is targeted for September 2020.

11. What else is the TDSB doing to address enrolment pressures in the area?

The TDSB has expressed the stress new developments put on critical public infrastructure and the TDSB's ability to provide accommodation for future students in local schools.

The TDSB has advised the City and local developers of its concerns throughout the development approval process and has indicated that the TDSB opposes the approval of development in the Yonge-Eglinton area until the accommodation of the projected students can be appropriately addressed.

On June 20, 2018, the Board of Trustees approved its City Growth and Intensification Strategy aims to strengthen the role of the TDSB in the land-use planning process to ensure the TDSB is able to provide adequate long-term accommodation for students. More information on the strategy can be found at: <http://www.tdsb.on.ca/About-Us/Strategy-Planning/City-Growth-and-Intensification-Strategy>

In addition, the TDSB keeps advocating for the Ontario Government to amend the Education Development Charges regulation (Ontario Reg. 20/98) under the Education Act to allow the TDSB to collect EDCs to help support urgent school infrastructure needs and reduce overcrowding in high-growth areas of the City. More information about Education Development Charges can be found at: <http://www.tdsb.on.ca/About-Us/Accountability/Renewal-Needs-Backlog-and-Facility-Condition-Index/Education-Development-Charges>

12. In the intervening years until the addition is built, will the quality of the educational experience be compromised?

Hodgson is a school that prides itself on high academic achievement. We create a learning environment that supports the individual growth of students. Teachers work in teams to design activities that reflect the curriculum and that are engaging and relevant for all students.

Hodgson offers many extracurricular activities that engage the interest of our diverse group of learners. Our activities include music groups, sports teams, student government, social justice groups, arts and crafts groups, and many more. We encourage all students to participate in extracurricular activities.

Hodgson offers a Homeroom and Rotary program for students. Grade 6 homeroom includes Language, Social Studies, Health, and the Arts. Rotary subjects for Grade 6 are French, Math, Music, Science and Technology, Physical Education and Fitness. Grade 7 and 8 Homeroom includes Language, Drama, History and Geography. Rotary subjects for Grade 7 and Grade 8 include Math, Science & Technology, French, Music, Visual Art, Dance, Health, Physical Education and Fitness.

Hodgson has an Extended French Program for students in Grade 6, 7 and Grade 8. Students come from the Extended French program at Eglinton Public School. French Language, History, Geography, Visual Arts, Dance & Drama are all instructed in French.

This past year we introduced a school wide inquiry which explored the question, What Does Social Injustice Look Like in Canada? In June and on the June 29 PA Day, our teachers worked on planning the school wide inquiry for the 2018-2019 year, which will focus on Well-Being and Mental Health.

Programming or resources or the achievement or educational experiences of students at Hodgson will not be compromised - we are prepared. In fact, it is about to be even stronger next year and onward as we build on our first year as Hodgson Middle School. In our first year as a Middle School, we added an Open House Arts Night and a Family Wellness Night. These examples illustrate that, we continue to improve the educational experience at Hodgson.