



# BRANT HALDIMAND NORFOLK Catholic District School Board

## Minutes

Catholic Education Centre  
322 Fairview Drive  
Brantford, ON N3T 5M8

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### \Southwest Brantford (Elementary) School Attendance Boundary Review Wednesday, April 5, 2023 6:30 pm Teams Meeting

#### COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

**St. Basil Catholic Elementary School:** Lexie Beaudoin, Donna Bozdarov  
**St. Gabriel Catholic Elementary School:** Amanda Gowan, Hillary Miles-Smiley  
**St. Theresa School:** Alix Consorti

#### RESOURCE PERSONNEL:

**Administration:** Scott Keys, Lorrie Temple, Jack Ammendolia  
**Principals / Vice-Principals:** Joe Atanas, Kerri Chartrand, Jennifer McLaren-Gibbons, Giovanna Oviedo-Kinrade

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1. **Opening Prayer**  
Principal McLaren-Gibbons opened the meeting with prayer.
2. **Land Acknowledgement**  
Principal Atanas gave thanks and acknowledged the land that we are gathered on today.
3. **Attendance Boundary Review Committee Minutes**  
Superintendent Keys asked the Committee to forward any revisions or changes to the Minutes to [swbrantford@bhncdsb.ca](mailto:swbrantford@bhncdsb.ca).
4. **Presentation / Discussion**
  - 4.1 **Possible Scenarios**

Mr. Ammendolia reviewed the outcomes of the Committee Survey regarding the main issues and existing conditions at the various schools in the boundary review. Fifty percent of the Committee indicated that enrolment pressures and a large quantity of portable classrooms were the main issues. As well, many of the themes were largely related to space pressures and outcomes, i.e., parking, increased traffic, walking conditions, staffing and resources, safety, etc.

Mr. Ammendolia provided a review of the existing boundaries and noted that the boundary review is not a long-term solution to rectify the issues at St. Basil and St. Gabriel Schools. The Committee must also resolve short-term and interim issues. He reviewed the following possible boundary options with the Committee:

Option #1: Southwest Brantford

    - Extend the existing St. Basil School boundary into the St. Theresa School catchment.
    - Extend the existing St. Basil School boundary into the St. Gabriel School catchment.  
Mr. Ammendolia noted that, in previous years, in order to address some of the existing pressures at St. Basil School, students were given the opportunity to cross boundaries to attend St. Gabriel School. This option will make this scenario a permanent arrangement.
    - Extend the existing St. Theresa School boundary into the St. Gabriel School catchment.



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What does this boundary change mean:

- It will reduce the enrollment at St. Basil School.
- It will increase the enrollment at St. Gabriel School.
- It will equalize the enrollment pressures at St. Basil and St. Gabriel Schools.
- It will increase the enrollment at St. Theresa School to capacity.

### Option #2: Southwest Brantford

- Extend St. Teresa School catchment into St. Basil School catchment.
- Extend St. Gabriel School catchment into St. Basil School catchment.

What does this boundary change mean:

- It will utilize St. Theresa School to a greater extent by increasing the number of students attending the school.
- It will decrease the enrollment at St. Gabriel School.
- It will equalize the enrollment pressures at St. Basil and St. Gabriel Schools.

### Option #3: Southwest Brantford

- Extend St. Teresa School catchment into St. Basil School catchment.
- Extend St. Gabriel School catchment into St. Basil School catchment.
- Extend St. Gabriel School catchment into St. Basil School catchment.

What does this boundary change mean:

- This scenario incorporates the boundary changes in Options #1 and Option #2.
- It will create an over-lapping walking web between St. Basil and St. Gabriel Schools.

Mr. Ammendolia asked the Committee to reflect on the following:

- The Board does not have the luxury of having an empty school to relocate all the students.
- Portable classrooms are the reality now, so a school that is at capacity will become over-capacity and portable classrooms will be utilized.
- Consider which students will be relocated or remain at their current school, i.e., Grade 8 students remain at their current schools?
- The Board and Administration will be contemplating boundary changes from an urgency point of view, i.e., utilization and capacity of permanent space, but they need to be informed about on-the-ground truths, i.e., parking, staffing requirements, safety measures, etc.

#### 4.2 **Holding Zones**

Mr. Ammendolia noted that holding zones could be developed where significant development is expected. Holding zones would hold students at a school(s) with existing surplus space until a new school is built. For example, a boundary review would identify that School A is your home school. However, until a new school is built, students will attend School B, which is a school that has space. He noted that if holding zones were created, the three schools in the review will be over-capacity until a new school is built, which could possibly happen in three-to-five years. Mr. Ammendolia is hopeful that a holding situation is not needed.

#### 4.3 **Out of Boundary Students**

Mr. Ammendolia reviewed the cross border / out of boundary scenarios for each school:

- St. Basil – 30 students from other areas attending St. Basil, 132 students from this area attending other schools, which equals a net crossing of -102 students.



- St. Gabriel – 116 students from other areas attending St. Gabriel, 17 students from this area attending other schools, which equals a net crossing of 99 students.
- St. Theresa – 19 students from other areas attending St. Theresa, 39 students from this area attending other schools, which equals a net crossing of -20 students.

Mr. Ammendolia noted that, in previous years, in order to address some of the existing pressures at St. Basil School, students were given the opportunity to cross boundaries to attend St. Gabriel School. This scenario will become important when examining boundary options as this situation is currently occurring and will be the least impactful.

#### 4.4 **Next Steps**

Mr. Ammendolia noted that:

- The Public Meeting will be held on Monday, April 17<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm in the Cafetorium at Assumption College School. The meeting will include items from the March 27<sup>th</sup> and April 5<sup>th</sup> meetings.
- Another quick survey will be forwarded to Committee members regarding the three proposed options.
- If parent's have questions or would like feedback, they can email [swbrantford@bhncdsb.ca](mailto:swbrantford@bhncdsb.ca).
- Tonight's presentation will be available on the Board website.

#### 4.5 **Questions**

Question: How up-to-date is the student data?

Answer: The data is based on the October 31, 2022 Ministry reporting data. A second Ministry reporting date occurred on March 31, 2023, however, the data from that reporting period will not be available for some time. Student Transportation Services of Brant Haldimand Norfolk (STSBHN) will be asked to validate the October 31<sup>st</sup> data.

Question: Are we looking at the older boundary that was changed when St. Basil School opened?

Answer: When looking at the options, historical boundaries will not be considered.

Question: Currently, at St. Gabriel School, the school has no busses and there are a considerable number of students who are dropped off on Flanders Drive, so there is lots of double parking and near collisions. What would happen if we have bussed students?

Answer: Perhaps we can ask the City of Brantford to assist with traffic concerns.

Question: The parking at pick-up times at St. Gabriel School is ridiculous. Will the boundary changes consider the property size of the School and the number of portable classrooms?

Answer: Those items are some realities that need to be considered.

Question: How is the April 17<sup>th</sup> Public Meeting being communicated?

Answer: The meeting date has been posted on the Board website and a communique will be forwarded to the parents at the three schools. Boundary review information has been posted on the Board's website and it has been shared on Parent Council pages. Please share the information with your school community via any social media you may have, include the information in school newsletters, etc.



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**Question:** Currently, there are 15 students enrolled at St. Gabriel School, but they are living in the St. Theresa School boundary. If we look at Options #1 and #2, have these students been moved out of St. Theresa School?

**Answer:** Currently, out of boundary students have not been returned to their home school. The status quo has been assumed for now as this is something that the Committee should decide as the decision will become part of a permanent solution.

**Comment:** When looking at Option #2, I worry that the enrollment at St. Theresa School is almost at capacity and this option will be moving more students to their school. When looking at Option #1, the boundary change is moving more of the current St. Gabriel School students to St. Basil School.

**Answer:** Currently, all of the options, equalize the enrollment at the three schools. Option #1 is the least impactful, it makes a situation that is already happening official, but it still provides some immediate relief at St. Basil School. Option #2 will impact some students twice and Option 3 will keep the students in their current schools. The Committee must decide which option is the most reasonable or decide if none of the options are reasonable and we begin the process again.

**Question:** Regarding Option #3, with the boundary that will be extended into St. Gabriel School, would these students be bussed based on the 1.6-kilometer policy?

**Answer:** The red line circle around St. Basil School has been designated as an unsafe walking area, so these students will be bussed. The red lines indicate that these students are walkers, the red/green lines indicate that these students are walkers to St. Basil and St. Gabriel Schools. Further bussing details are needed from STSBHN regarding Options #1 and #2, however, the number of bussed students is probably a wash in terms of transportation.

**Question:** There is a porta-a-pack at St. Gabriel School, there are no portable classrooms at St. Theresa School and St. Basil has several portable classrooms. Will moving portable classrooms be considered when looking at an option, given the current portable situation?

**Answer:** Portables have not been considered when looking at space.

**Question:** When will the March 31, 2023 data be taken into consideration? Are the school enrolments used in the Options close to the real numbers and close to the September 2023 numbers as the impact of the September numbers may not be as small as originally thought?

**Answer:** I believe that the March 31, 2023 enrolment data will not change the recommendations, however, they may make the situations more urgent. From a projection point of view, the March enrolment data will not necessarily change what we are doing, which is a short-term solution until the Ministry approves the construction of a new school. The Board has submitted the necessary paperwork, etc. to obtain approval to build more schools, however, it is not known when the Ministry will allow it.

**Comment:** Due to the residential development on Dalewood Avenue, St. Theresa School has had to reduce some of their playground area. When looking at September projections, space is a concern and a portable classroom will most likely be needed.

**Question:** From a health and safety perspective, how many students are permitted in each washroom, how many adults, etc. Can you supply these numbers?

**Answer:** Yes, the information will be obtained from our Facility Services Department. However, when the Board adds portable classrooms to any school, the municipalities ensure that parking



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spaces, numbers of washrooms, etc. meet certain criteria / ratios. From a municipal code perspective, the schools meet the ratios. Mr. Keys will provide the information to the Committee. He noted that the ratios / criteria may be different at St. Theresa School as the building is located in another municipality.

Comment: Could it please be noted that St. Gabriel School has three schools in close proximity to each other and these schools have very close dismissal times.

Comment: There are no sidewalks in the St. Theresa School neighbourhood, so it would be an ongoing concern for our walkers and the number of parents picking up students.

Answer: Bussing data will be obtained from STSBHN.

Question: Does the Committee have to decide where that the holding school(s) would be?

Answer: Not typically. The Board has left some flexibility with that decision because they also have to ensure that there is room at the holding school and they need to identify the holding area. We are currently seeing signage in the Greater Toronto Area, indicating that the school that is under construction will not be the school that your children will attend and they are distributing flyers to prospective home buyers regarding where their children's school will be.

Question: When considering options, has anyone driven around the streets of the schools, examined the walking distances, etc.?

Answer: Not recently, but it will be an opportunity to get a better feel regarding the options.

Comment: Everyone will want what is best for them and their school community. Parking is crazy everywhere. Pick-up is worse than drop off and bad weather days make the situation worse.

Mr. Ammendolia asked Committee members to consider if any of the options should not be considered, if certain options were less liked or better liked than others, are there any options that Committee members feel really strongly about?

Answer: The Committee felt that Option #3 would be the best option because the students are already bussed students. Instead of them being bussed to St. Basil School, they would be bussed to St. Theresa School. These students would already have their bus stops and bus routines and they would be able to stay with their neighbour friends.

Mr. Ammendolia thanked the Committee for their feedback.

### 5. Future Meetings

- Monday, April 17, 2023 – 6:30 pm (Virtual & Cafetorium, Assumption College School)

### 6. Adjournment

- The Meeting adjourned at 7:55 pm. The next meeting has been scheduled on Monday, April 17, 2023 – 6:30 pm at Assumption College School, 257 Shellard Lane, Brantford. The meeting will be held virtually for individuals who are not able to attend in person.

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**Next Meeting:** Monday, April 17, 2023 – 6:30 pm