



Pupil Accommodation Review for George Harvey Collegiate Institute and York Memorial Collegiate Institute – Final Staff Report

To: Special Planning and Priorities Committee

Date: 14 June, 2021

Report No.: 06-21-4101

Strategic Directions

- Provide Equity of Access to Learning Opportunities for All Students
- Allocate Human and Financial Resources Strategically to Support Student Needs

Recommendation

It is recommended that:

- a) George Harvey Collegiate Institute and York Memorial Collegiate Institute be consolidated as a single school effective September 1, 2022;
- b) The consolidated school be accommodated in the George Harvey building located at 1700 Keele Street effective September 1, 2022 until the new York Memorial building at 2690 Eglinton Avenue West is completed;
- c) The name of the consolidated school be York Memorial Collegiate Institute effective September 1, 2022;
- d) The attendance area for the consolidated school be composed of the secondary attendance areas of George Harvey Collegiate Institute and York Memorial Collegiate Institute;
- e) A Principal be named, on or before September 1, 2021, as Project Manager for the 2021-2022 school year and as Principal of the newly consolidated school starting in September 2022, to work with students, current administrators and staff on both the

retrofits for the George Harvey building and the plans for the new school building at 2690 Eglinton Avenue; and

- f) Staff develop a detailed implementation plan concerning:
- i. The roles and responsibilities of a Transition Committee, working with the Project Manager Principal, to work out such consolidation issues as the timetable, the uniform/dress code decision, and other similar issues;
 - ii. The role of students on the Transition Committee to provide input into the Transition Committee's decisions and to lead the discussion of ways to honour the traditions of both schools and to create new traditions for the consolidated school;
 - iii. The immediate identification of any needs for extra administrative and support staff allocations for the 2021-2022 school year (with some student supports remaining for the first year of the consolidation if needed), to support student and staff mental health and safety, to assist with the complex issues of retrofitting a school with students and staff present, and to address the time and workload impacts of combining the equipment and resources of two schools into one building and bringing about the physical move of those materials;
 - iv. The provision of time and resources to bring student leaders from both schools together to plan for activities to support the students coming together into the consolidated school; and
 - v. The provision of time and resources for team building activities for teaching and support staff who will be assigned to the school for September 2022.

Context

The purpose of this report is to submit the recommendations that have been developed as a result of the pupil accommodation review for George Harvey Collegiate Institute and York Memorial Collegiate Institute to the Board of Trustees for approval. The schools are located in Ward 6 (Trustee Tonks).

Reasons for the Review

In February 2020, the Board of Trustees approved that staff conduct a modified pupil accommodation review to develop a student accommodation plan for George Harvey CI and York Memorial CI. This study was included in the TDSB's Long-Term Program and Accommodation Strategy to address declining enrolment, under-utilization, geographic redundancy, and attendance area anomalies. The fire that devastated the York

Memorial building in May 2019 caused an urgent need for the review to be completed to provide certainty for the students, parents and staff of York Memorial CI about the future of their school and to ensure that the building does not sit dormant in its current state for a prolonged period of time.

A modified pupil accommodation review was determined to be the appropriate consultation process because it takes less time allowing a decision to be made about the future of the York Memorial site as soon as possible, it is minimal in scope impacting only two schools, and it meets the eligibility condition of involving a school that is highly under-utilized (George Harvey CI is currently 38% utilized, well below the threshold of 65% identified in the TDSB's Accommodation and Program Review Policy).

Consultation Process

The pupil accommodation review process began in February 2020 with an Initial Staff Report providing background on the schools and the issues to be addressed. The Initial Staff Report contained three scenarios for the accommodation of students. The scenarios increased to five with the addition of two scenarios coming from early feedback received from the school communities. Scenario 1 represented the status quo (the two schools continue to exist as separate schools). Scenarios 2 to 5 all proposed the consolidation of the two schools into one school. The scenarios differed in the timeline for implementing the consolidation with one scenario also proposing a two-building campus model.

In February and March 2020, four separate consultation meetings were held with students and parents of George Harvey CI and York Memorial CI. In late March 2020, the consultation process was put on hold due to the shutdown in response to the pandemic.

In March 2021, the Board determined that it was safe to continue the consultation process following the TDSB's new virtual consultation procedure. The scenarios were updated to reflect new timelines because of the time lost due to the hold. The five scenarios were reduced to four because one of the scenarios was no longer possible with the change in timing.

In April and May 2021, six virtual consultation meetings were held with the staff of the two schools, the alumni of the two schools, the elementary feeder school council chairs, and the public.

The Final Staff Report containing details on the scenarios and the feedback received from the consultations is attached as Appendix A.

Recommended Scenario

Staff is recommending that Scenario 2 be approved and implemented. In this scenario, George Harvey CI and York Memorial CI will be consolidated into a single school of approximately 1,300 students in September 2022. The consolidated school will include the programs from both schools. It will be a true composite school offering a broad range of academic and technical courses.

The consolidated school will be accommodated in the George Harvey building in September 2022. The building will be well-utilized with a utilization rate of approximately 90%. A new school will be built on the York Memorial site at 2690 Eglinton Avenue West with a capacity that can accommodate the consolidated school (approximately 1,300 pupil places). Once the new school is ready for occupancy, estimated to be in 2026, the consolidated school will move out of the George Harvey building and into the new York Memorial building. Projections indicate that the new York Memorial building will be efficiently used with a utilization rate of approximately 90% over the long term.

Staff is recommending that the name of the consolidated school be York Memorial CI to honour the unique historical significance of the school in the York community that is protected by a heritage by-law. In 1929, the school was built as a memorial to commemorate the youth of the Township of York who died in World War 1. It was rededicated in 1949 as a World War 2 memorial. It is the only secondary school in Ontario built expressly as a memorial to Canadian war dead with memorial features built into its design. It is included in the Canadian Military Memorials Database of Veterans Affairs, Canada. The Ministry of Veterans Affairs, Canada, and the Provincial President of the Royal Canadian Legion have stated that this building is a memorial site and the name must be retained to honour the sacred pledge of remembrance.

Staff is recommending that the attendance area for the consolidated school be composed of the secondary attendance areas of George Harvey CI and York Memorial CI.

Rationale for the Recommended Scenario

This scenario achieves the vision for a TDSB secondary school approved by the Board of Trustees in the Secondary Program Review. It supports equity of access for students by establishing a strong neighbourhood school that will offer a wide range of programs including specialty programs that will meet the needs and interests of all students and support all post-secondary destinations.

By consolidating the two schools, students will benefit from the increased course offerings associated with a composite school of over 1,000 students. Students will be

able to take courses that support the five pathways to university, college, apprenticeship, direct to workplace, and independent living.

By implementing the consolidation in 2022, students will benefit from the increased course offerings at the earliest opportunity. Most of the students who experienced the fire and the resulting relocations in 2019 will have graduated and will not have to go through another relocation.

By establishing the consolidated school in the George Harvey building in 2022, the students will benefit from a location that is easier to access. The school will be located within the neighbourhood that it is intended to serve. It will have excellent access to public transit. Students who live in the York Memorial attendance area will no longer need transportation to Scarlett Heights.

By moving the consolidated school to the reconstructed building at 2690 Eglinton Avenue West in 2026, the students will benefit from state-of-the-art instructional spaces housed within a unique facility that preserves the historical significance of the site.

By consolidating the schools, the TDSB will achieve efficiencies in staffing and facility operations with one less small school and under-utilized building to operate. The consolidated school is anticipated to have a utilization rate of approximately 90% while it is temporarily accommodated in the George Harvey building and when it is permanently relocated to the new York Memorial building.

Feedback Received through the Consultation

Over the course of the pupil accommodation review, staff held ten consultation meetings and conducted two online surveys.

The online surveys showed that approximately 70% of respondents were in support of the status quo – no consolidation. Approximately 20% were in support of the consolidation occurring in 2026 when the reconstructed York Memorial building is ready for occupancy. The respondents expressed that they want to preserve the two schools' histories and identities. They were concerned that the quality of education would be impacted by a consolidation. They had a negative experience with the temporary relocation of York Memorial CI into the George Harvey building after the fire. They wish to postpone the consolidation as long as possible to avoid having multiple transitions within a short time period.

In the consultation meetings with the students, the attendees generally were not in support of consolidation. They were concerned that the identities of their schools would be lost. They were concerned that there would be conflict and bullying between the two student bodies. They were concerned that the George Harvey building would be overcrowded. They emphasized that they are stressed about moving into a consolidated

school and then moving again into a rebuilt school. The transitions have impacted their mental health and well-being. The students from both schools submitted their own surveys. In the York Memorial CI survey, 93% of students were opposed to consolidation and 7% were in support of an early consolidation. In the George Harvey CI survey, 53% of students were opposed to consolidation and 33% were in support of an early consolidation.

In the consultation meetings with the parents, the attendees expressed concern for their children's mental health and academic performance. The York Memorial parents emphasized the importance of preserving the school's name and history. The York Memorial parents submitted two petitions that requested that York Memorial CI remain in the Scarlett Heights building until the reconstructed York Memorial CI building is complete. The George Harvey parents thought that a small school was a better learning environment for their children.

In the consultation meeting with the elementary feeder school council chairs, attendees expressed concerns about potential student conflict with a larger school population and operating a larger school during the pandemic.

In the consultation meetings with the school staff, the attendees had mixed views. Many expressed that if a consolidation was to occur, it should be delayed as long as possible so that staff and students can experience some stability before making another move. They were concerned that the George Harvey building would not have the appropriate specialized spaces to support the consolidated programs.

In the consultation meetings with the alumni, the attendees were supportive of the school being rebuilt at 2690 Eglinton Avenue West. They were most concerned about how a consolidation would be implemented: that it must preserve the programming of both schools; that it must honour the histories of both schools; and that implementation must support student well-being and prevent conflict. The York Memorial alumni strongly expressed that the name of the consolidated school must be York Memorial CI to respect and preserve the memorial aspect of the school.

Transition and Implementation Plan

Staff acknowledges and recognizes the significant change and stress that students and staff of George Harvey CI and York Memorial CI experienced over the past two years from the devastation of the York Memorial building, the emergency relocation of York Memorial CI to the George Harvey building, the move of York Memorial CI to the Scarlett Heights building, and the impact of the pandemic. Consolidating the two schools will be another challenge that the students and staff will experience. To support the students and staff through this change, staff are recommending that a Project Manager Principal be assigned on or before September 2021 to be the new principal of

the consolidated school a year in advance of the consolidation occurring. The Project Manager Principal will develop and implement a comprehensive transition plan to support the consolidation.

The Project Manager Principal will establish a Transition Committee to address all issues related to the consolidation such as determining the timetable and deciding on uniform or dress code of the consolidated school. They will ensure that students have a role on the Transition Committee to participate in decision-making and to lead the discussion on ways to honour the traditions of both schools and to create new traditions for the consolidated school.

The Project Manager Principal will identify the needs for additional administrative and support staff to support student and staff mental health and safety in the transition process. Staff from Professional Support Services will work with students on an individual, family and collective level to support their well-being. They will work with staff and students of the two schools over the next year to ensure concerns and anxieties around the move are addressed as soon as possible. They will work with the Student Support Teams of each school to determine the best ways to address the mental health needs of students before, during, and after the transition.

The Project Manager Principal will also identify the needs for additional administrative and support staff to assist with the complex issues of retrofitting the George Harvey building with students and staff present, and to address the time and workload impacts of combining the equipment and resources of two schools into one building and bringing about the physical move of those materials.

The Project Manager Principal will ensure that time and resources are provided to bring student leaders from both schools together to plan for activities to support the students coming together into the consolidated school. They will also ensure that time and resources are provided for team building activities for the teaching and support staff who will be assigned to the consolidated school for September 2022.

The Project Manager Principal will work with students, current administrators, and staff of both schools on the retrofits for the George Harvey building to receive the consolidated school. They will also serve as the academic lead to work with Design and Construction staff on the plans for the reconstructed school building at 2690 Eglinton Avenue.

Action Plan and Associated Timeline

If the consolidation of George Harvey CI and York Memorial CI is approved by the Board of Trustees as recommended in this report, the following actions will occur at the estimated timelines:

The Project Manager Principal will be appointed – Summer 2021;

The Project Manager Principal will develop and implement the transition plan with a Transition Committee – September 2021 to August 2022;

The George Harvey building will be renovated to receive the consolidated school – July 2021 to August 2022;

York Memorial CI will move out of the Scarlett Heights building and into the George Harvey building and any required movement of equipment and resources in the George Harvey building will be completed – Summer 2022;

George Harvey CI and York Memorial CI will be consolidated as a single school in the George Harvey building – September 2022;

The consolidated school will remain in the George Harvey building until the new York Memorial building is constructed at 2690 Eglinton Avenue West – estimated to be 2022 to 2026;

Staff will work with the Ministry of Education to secure funds for the expansion of the new York Memorial building at 2690 Eglinton Avenue West – Summer to Fall 2021;

The new York Memorial building at 2690 Eglinton Avenue West will be designed and constructed – estimated to be 2021 to 2026;

The Scarlett Heights property will be reviewed to determine the TDSB's long-term need for the site – Fall 2021 to Fall 2022; and

The George Harvey property will be reviewed to determine the TDSB's long-term need for the site – estimated to be 2026 (when the consolidated school has moved into the reconstructed York Memorial building at 2690 Eglinton Avenue West).

Resource Implications

Renovations to the George Harvey building will be funded from the School Condition Improvement budget. The estimated cost is \$500,000.

The construction of the York Memorial building at 2690 Eglinton Avenue West will be funded from the insurance settlement received for the fire. The amount is still being assessed.

To fund the expansion of the York Memorial building at 2690 Eglinton Avenue West to receive the consolidated school, staff will apply for a Capital Priorities grant. If the Ministry of Education does not approve Capital Priorities funds, staff will seek approval

from the Minister of Education to use Proceeds of Disposition. The estimated cost of the expansion is \$10.9M.

The move of furniture and equipment and the allocation of additional staff to support the transition will be paid for from the operating budget. The estimated cost is \$500,000.

Transportation costs of approximately \$280,000 per year will be avoided once the two schools are consolidated in the George Harvey building in 2022.

The high annual facility operating cost for the George Harvey building of \$2,000 per pupil is anticipated to decrease to less than \$1,000 per pupil when the consolidation is implemented in 2022 due to the increase in enrolment and utilization rate (as observed with other schools with more than 1,000 students and 90% utilization). These cost efficiencies will continue to be achieved when the consolidated school moves into the reconstructed York Memorial building in 2026 which will be greater than 90% utilized over the long term.

The system renewal backlog could potentially be reduced by over \$30M when the consolidated school moves out of the George Harvey building and into the reconstructed York Memorial building in 2026.

Communications Considerations

Background information about the review, the final report, and the Board decision will be posted on the TDSB's Accommodation Reviews website. Information and notice of the Board decision will be posted on the school's website and the school's profile page on the TDSB website. The Board decision will be emailed to the students, staff and parents of the schools, as well as all attendees to the public meetings who provided email addresses.

Notation will be added to the street guide notifying anyone using the 'Find Your School' search function of the Board-approved changes and directing them to the latest information about the outcome of this review.

Board Policy and Procedure Reference(s)

Policy P068 Accommodation and Program Review

Procedure PR598 Pupil Accommodation Review

Appendices

- Appendix A: Pupil Accommodation Review for George Harvey Collegiate Institute and York Memorial Collegiate Institute – Final Staff Report

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