



Yonge-Eglinton Phase 2 Program Area Review for Eglinton Junior Public School, John Fisher Junior Public School, and the Bannockburn Building (12 Bannockburn Avenue)

To: Planning and Priorities Committee

Date: 23 June, 2021

Report No.: 06-21-4127

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) John Fisher Junior Public School become a dual-track school, beginning with Junior Kindergarten in the English program (and expanding by one grade per year up to and including Grade 5), effective September 1, 2022;
- b) The portion of Eglinton Junior Public School's existing junior attendance area north of Broadway Avenue (including the north side of Broadway Avenue) be assigned to John Fisher Junior Public School, beginning with Junior Kindergarten (and expanding by one grade per year up to and including Grade 5), effective September 1, 2022;
- c) New students included in Part b) above with an older sibling attending Eglinton Junior Public School (in the same year that the younger sibling enters the school) be allowed to attend Eglinton Junior Public School until they graduate;
- d) The Bannockburn building be re-opened as Bannockburn Public School effective September 1, 2023, initially as a Junior Kindergarten to Grade 3 French

Immersion centre, and expanding by one grade per year up to and including Grade 6 in September 2026;

- e) Senior Kindergarten to Grade 3 French Immersion students at John Fisher Junior Public School residing within the Bedford Park Public School/Blythwood Junior Public School shared attendance area, Bedford Park Public School attendance area, and John Wanless Junior Public School attendance area be redirected to Bannockburn, effective September 1, 2023;
- f) Senior Kindergarten to Grade 3 students with an older sibling in Grades 4 to 6 attending John Fisher Junior Public School in September 2023 be allowed to remain at John Fisher Junior Public School until they graduate;
- g) The John Fisher Junior Public School Special Central Placement Process, approved by the Board of Trustees in March 2017 to relocate students wishing to withdraw from the French Immersion program at John Fisher Junior Public School in light of construction at 18-30 Erskine Avenue, be ended effective September 1, 2022; and
- h) The reversal of residential development redirections in Eglinton Junior Public School's and John Fisher Junior Public School's proposed attendance areas be considered in 2024-25, pending a review of accommodation pressures and space availability at the two schools.

Context

Rationale for the Review

The Yonge-Eglinton Phase 2 Program Area Review is a study in the Long-Term Program and Accommodation Strategy for 2020-2029, approved by the Board of Trustees in November 2020. It is a continuation of an extensive Program Area Review that was first undertaken in 2015-16. The first phase of the Program Area Review resulted in a series of grade changes, boundary changes, program adjustments, and capital projects including a replacement school at Davisville Jr PS, an addition at Hodgson MS, as well as internal renovations at Forest Hill Jr and Sr PS.

Accommodation pressures have persisted at local schools, particularly at Eglinton Jr PS. The school has continued to operate with exemptions to primary class sizes, no music room, and classes being delivered in resource-sized rooms. Because the site is very small at 1.6 acres and cannot accommodate portables, 14 new residential developments in the school's attendance area have been assigned to two holding schools, Whitney Jr PS and Rippleton PS. There are 22 proposed developments that still need to be accommodated within the next five years. A Special Central Placement Process was established in 2017 to prevent students leaving French Immersion at John

Fisher Jr PS from attending Eglinton Jr PS and adding to the enrolment pressure (these students are placed at other nearby schools).

The focus of this phase of the Yonge-Eglinton review is to continue looking at options to address overcrowding at Eglinton Jr PS and to balance growing student enrolment among local elementary schools in the area. In addition to Eglinton Jr PS, the review included John Fisher Jr PS and the Bannockburn building located at 12 Bannockburn Avenue. These schools are located in Ward 8 (Trustee Laskin) and Ward 11 (Trustee Chernos Lin).

Preliminary Work of the Local Feasibility Team

A Local Feasibility Team (LFT) composed of staff representatives of the impacted schools and the appropriate central departments, met on three occasions in February and March 2021 and developed a recommended scenario to address the pressures in the Yonge-Eglinton area that involved using John Fisher Jr PS to accommodate students from Eglinton Jr PS and the Bannockburn building to accommodate students from John Fisher Jr PS.

John Fisher Jr PS is a French Immersion centre located within the Eglinton Jr PS attendance area and is in an ideal location to receive Eglinton Jr PS students because it is within walking distance. As a French Immersion centre, John Fisher Jr PS does not have an English Program attendance area. An English Program attendance area is needed to determine which Eglinton students will be accommodated at John Fisher Jr PS. An attendance area will be created by splitting the Eglinton attendance area in two, using Broadway Avenue as the dividing boundary.

Space needs to be freed up at John Fisher Jr PS to receive the Eglinton students. To do this, French Immersion students will be accommodated in the Bannockburn building. The Bannockburn building is a core holding site that is currently leased out but will become available for TDSB use in the summer of 2022. The building will be re-opened as a French Immersion centre to accommodate John Fisher students. It is in a great location to receive the John Fisher students who live in the northern portion of the John Fisher French Immersion catchment area. A French Immersion catchment area will be created for the Bannockburn centre by merging the northern portion of the John Fisher French Immersion catchment area with the eastern portion of the Glen Park French Immersion catchment area.

Work of the Program Area Review Team

A Program Area Review Team (PART) was established in March 2021 involving the staff of the LFT and parent representatives of the impacted schools. The objective of the PART was to continue the work of the LFT in evaluating scenarios to address the pressures in the Yonge-Eglinton area through public consultation. The PART carefully

analyzed actual and projected enrolment data, capacity and utilization data, and the recommended scenario by the LFT. The PART sought advice and feedback on the LFT's recommended scenario from parents of the impacted schools and the broader community over the course of four working meetings and a public meeting. Two feedback surveys were also opened to school and community members to provide feedback. Two Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) documents were prepared to address questions received throughout the PART process; they are posted on the Program Area Review page of the TDSB's website (<https://www.tdsb.on.ca/About-Us/Strategy-Planning/Search-All-Reviews?id=166>).

The feedback showed mixed views. Most of the responses received in the consultation process indicated support for the recommended scenario, but there was also significant support for preserving John Fisher Jr PS as a French Immersion centre.

The PART was in support of the major concepts of the LFT's recommended scenario. The PART made some refinements to the scenario such as modifying the proposed French Immersion catchment areas. After thorough discussion and analysis, the PART members achieved consensus on all recommendations.

Commentary on the Recommended Changes

If approved, the boundary change between Eglinton Jr PS and John Fisher Jr PS, in conjunction with continued development redirections, will decrease and stabilize enrolment at Eglinton Jr PS. Enrolment is projected to decrease to 75% in this scenario by 2028, and remain stable at this level into the foreseeable future. In this scenario, John Fisher Jr PS will become a dual track, English and French Immersion school, with enrolment projected to stabilize at around 80% by 2027. At that time, the balance of French Immersion students to English students is projected to be approximately 60% to 40%.

It is important to note, however, that this recommendation assumes the continued redirection of residential developments away from the proposed Eglinton and John Fisher attendance areas for the time being. Additional reviews will be undertaken to continue redirecting residential developments to another site as they near completion.

The re-opening of the Bannockburn building as a French Immersion centre will allow John Fisher Jr PS to provide much-needed accommodation relief to Eglinton Jr PS by creating space for an English program.

The lease of Bannockburn to a private school is set to end in July 2022. Based on discussions with Facility Services staff, one year is required to retrofit the Bannockburn building and site to ensure compliance with TDSB standards. As such, the building cannot re-open until September 2023. The Bannockburn building will re-open in September 2023 with a JK to Grade 3 French Immersion cohort, expanding by one

grade per year until the program reaches Grade 6 in September 2026. The PART agreed that a larger grade range at Bannockburn will provide the critical mass required to best deliver programming and potentially childcare at the site. At the same time, existing John Fisher students in Grades 4 through 6 would be allowed to remain at John Fisher Jr PS through to graduation.

Once the French Immersion program is fully phased-in, Bannockburn is expected to be fully utilized at 95% in 2030. The combined number of Early French Immersion spaces at John Fisher Jr PS and Bannockburn PS in this scenario is approximately 70 more JK to Grade 6 students than what John Fisher Jr PS currently offers on its own. These additional spots at Bannockburn PS could potentially be used to absorb French Immersion students residing in the Ledbury Park EMS and John Ross Robertson Jr PS attendance areas (or growth from the existing catchment area), pending an annual review of French Immersion applications.

To minimize transitions for students as these recommendations are implemented, the grandparenting of younger siblings was an important consideration for the PART and has been factored into staff's recommendations.

Aligned with the implementation of the Eglinton and John Fisher boundary change, the John Fisher Jr PS Special Central Placement Process could be ended in September 2022. Sufficient space would be then made available at Eglinton Jr PS and John Fisher Jr PS to accommodate students wishing to withdraw from the John Fisher Jr PS French Immersion program.

New residential developments in the current Eglinton Jr PS attendance area will still need to be assigned to other schools. As the boundary change and re-opening of Bannockburn PS are implemented and phased-in, space will be created at John Fisher Jr PS and Eglinton Jr PS over time. This will allow staff to engage in a review in 2024-25 to determine a course of action with respect to reversing the redirections at an appropriate time.

Staff concurs with the recommendations of the PART and is putting forth those that require Board approval.

Other recommendations of the PART that do not require Board approval that staff support are:

1. That TDSB begin retrofitting the Bannockburn building in July 2022 to ensure that it is compliant with TDSB standards prior to re-opening.
2. That consideration may be given to Grade 3 French Immersion students at John Fisher Jr PS in September 2023 to remain at John Fisher Jr PS provided there is available space.

3. That the intermediate and secondary pathway for Bannockburn PS's French Immersion program be the same as the current John Fisher Jr PS French Immersion pathway (subject to change as per TDSB's operational procedure PR597).

There is general agreement among parents that, with careful planning and the commitment of school staff, administration, parents, the Superintendents, and Trustees, these recommendations will improve the current accommodation pressures in the Yonge-Eglinton area. With more residential development still being planned for the midtown area, these recommendations serve merely as a short to medium-term solution; a new elementary school is still required to accommodate the long-term student growth in this area.

The French as a Second Language Advisory Committee (FSLAC) representatives who participated on the PART provided feedback on behalf of the FSLAC. The FSLAC does not support the conversion of John Fisher Jr PS into a dual track English and French Immersion school. It is a successful and longstanding French Immersion centre. They provided several recommendations including that the PART be reconvened in 2022 after the pandemic to ensure full awareness of parents in the affected areas and to find an alternate solution to the introduction of an English track at John Fisher Jr PS.

In response to the FSLAC's concerns, staff and the members of the PART consider the introduction of dual track at John Fisher Jr PS and the re-opening of Bannockburn PS as a French Immersion centre as the best solution for the Yonge-Eglinton area at this time: it provides a local neighbourhood school to accommodate growth; it maintains a French Immersion centre; it provides more space for both English and French students; and it provides a better distribution of sites. Delaying the PART will only prolong accommodation issues at Eglinton Jr PS. The PART members were in agreement that the implementation date for the English track at John Fisher Jr PS should remain September 2022.

Appendix A contains tables that show the schools' enrolments, facility capacities, and utilization rates for the recommended scenario.

Appendix B shows the proposed boundary change to establish an English Program attendance area for John Fisher Jr PS.

Appendix C shows the proposed French Immersion catchment area for the French Immersion centre at Bannockburn PS.

The full report of the PART can be found in Appendix D. The report of the FSLAC is included in the PART report.

Action Plan and Associated Timeline

Subject to Board approval, the proposed boundary change between Eglinton Jr PS and John Fisher Jr PS will be implemented effective September 1, 2022.

The John Fisher Jr PS Special Central Placement Process will be ended effective September 1, 2022.

The re-opening of the Bannockburn building and relocation of affected students from John Fisher Jr PS will be implemented effective September 1, 2023.

Pending space availability at Eglinton Jr PS and John Fisher Jr PS, staff will engage in a new review to consider the reversal of development redirections in the 2024-25 school year. This review will be reflected in the Long-Term Program and Accommodation Strategy.

A summary of the actions by school and year can be found in Appendix E.

Resource Implications

The Bannockburn building will require renewal work to ensure compliance with TDSB standards. It will be funded from existing resources such as School Condition Improvement (SCI) and is estimated to cost \$5 million.

Communications Considerations

Details about the outcome of the review will be posted on the TDSB's Accommodation Reviews website. Information and notice of the Board decision will also be provided through the school websites, the school profile pages on the TDSB website, school messenger, and will be emailed to all attendees at the public meeting who provided an email address.

Details regarding the re-opening of the Bannockburn building as a French Immersion centre will also be included in any offer of placement emails being sent to on-time French Immersion applicants during the placement process for the academic year of 2022-23.

Notation will be added to the street guide notifying anyone using '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)

P068 Accommodation and Program Review

PR715 Program Area Review

PR597 French Immersion/Extended French

Appendices

- Appendix A: Planning and Enrolment Data
- Appendix B: Map - Proposed Junior Attendance Areas for Eglinton Jr PS and John Fisher Jr PS
- Appendix C: Map - Proposed French Immersion Catchment Areas for John Fisher Jr PS and Bannockburn PS
- Appendix D: Final Report of the Program Area Review Team for the Yonge-Eglinton Phase 2 Program Area Review
- Appendix E: Student Accommodation Plan by School and Year

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