



Hodgson Middle School Relocation to 529 Vaughan Road During Construction of Addition and Renovation

To: Finance, Budget and Enrolment Committee

Date: 2 November, 2021

Report No.: 11-21-4163

Strategic Directions

- Allocate Human and Financial Resources Strategically to Support Student Needs

Recommendation

It is recommended:

- a) That Hodgson Middle School be relocated to the 529 Vaughan Road building, effective 1 September 2022, until the addition and renovation to the current school building located at 282 Davisville Avenue is constructed and ready for occupancy; and
- b) That the timing of the above recommendation be adjusted, with adequate community notice, in the case of unexpected delays in the design and construction process.

Context

The purpose of this report is to provide the rationale for relocating Hodgson Middle School to 529 Vaughan Road while the school building undergoes a large capital project.

Hodgson Middle School is located at 282 Davisville Avenue in Ward 11 (Trustee Chernos Lin). A locational map and aerial photo of the site can be found in Appendix A. In November 2016, the Ministry of Education provided \$5.8M in funding through the Capital Priorities program to support a 12-classroom addition at the school. The addition was required to support the implementation of a Grade 6-8 model to respond to accommodation pressures at the four junior schools that feed into Hodgson MS.

In the fall of 2017, enrolment projections were refreshed to reflect over 8,000 newly proposed residential developments within the school's catchment area, along with higher pupil yields from newly constructed dwellings. It was determined that the approved 12-classroom addition would be insufficient to accommodate enrolment growth over the long term.

A new business case was submitted to the Ministry of Education in September 2019 requesting funds to construct a larger addition at the school that fully addressed the long-term accommodation pressure. In August 2020, the Ministry of Education announced an additional \$12.45M for the project. Once complete, the school will have a capacity of 838 pupil places.

In June 2021, the Board of Trustees approved the program and sketch plan for the Hodgson MS project. The school will undergo a large addition and renovation that will see the 1960's portion of the building demolished and replaced with a new, fully accessible, three-storey addition, directly connected to the 1920's portion of the building. The 1920's portion of the building will also be renovated as part of the project.

Accommodation of Students During Construction

After careful consideration, staff are recommending that Hodgson MS be relocated offsite during construction to provide the necessary classrooms to accommodate the projected enrolment, protect the health and safety of students and staff, ensure students have access to specialized instructional spaces to support the programming, and minimize the timeline for completing the capital project.

Site Configuration, Construction Area and Portables

Due to rapid enrolment growth in the Yonge-Eglinton community, projections suggest that up to 19 portables could be required on the Hodgson MS site by 2025. There are currently nine portables onsite. Of the additional ten portables projected to be required, seven are to address enrolment growth, two would replace existing classrooms to be demolished in the 1960's portion of the building, and one is a washroom portable.

An assessment of the Hodgson MS site shows that a maximum of only 12 portables are feasible. This is insufficient to accommodate the projected number of students.

Impact on Health and Safety

TDSB engaged an external Safety Consultant to review the site configuration during construction with students remaining on the site and accommodated in 19 portables.

The report highlighted that the proximity of an active school and construction site presents a risk of construction-related incidents that could impact the safety of students

and staff. An active construction site also presents other significant health and safety risks including noise and air quality, and personal injury.

For the school administration and staff, student supervision would be very challenging with students traveling from portables to the building, or to the washrooms, throughout the day. Lastly, there would be no central space to gather in the event of an emergency.

Impact on Program for Students

The existing gymnasium, along with an art room and instrumental music room, are situated within the portion of the building to be demolished and replaced.

This means that students would be without a gymnasium or any onsite greenspace for at least a two-year period. As a result, any physical activity or instruction would need to be held offsite, and assemblies, team sports etc. would not be possible during construction.

If the students were to remain on the site then offsite opportunities for a gymnasium and greenspace would need to be identified and leased, if available. A preliminary scan of the area suggests that these opportunities are limited.

Impact on Timelines for the Project

By relocating the students offsite during construction, the timeline for the project is reduced by one year. If students are kept onsite during construction, the project is anticipated to take 39 months to complete (the addition and renovation would be ready for occupancy by September 2025). If students are relocated offsite during construction, this timeline is reduced to 25 months (the addition and renovation would be ready for occupancy by September 2024).

Summary

To summarize, the addition and renovation to the Hodgson MS building is a substantial undertaking that requires a large portion of the site to be encumbered with active construction. This presents significant health and safety concerns that are best addressed by relocating the school offsite until the project is complete.

Enrolment growth requires that additional portables be added to the site. A review of the site suggests that the number of portables required is not achievable given the physical and logistical constraints that exist.

The project requires that a significant amount of the site and existing building be removed from the daily operations of the school during the construction period. This restriction on site utilization will place additional pressures on school operations by

severely limiting green space and removing access to a gymnasium and specialized instructional spaces.

The duration of construction is reduced by making the site free and clear for that purpose. The risk of additional costs and construction delays is reduced.

529 Vaughan Road

529 Vaughan Road is the site of the former Vaughan Road Academy, a TDSB secondary school that was closed in June 2017 due to low enrolment. A map can be found in Appendix B. In February 2017, the Board of Trustees voted to retain ownership of the building to be used for TDSB purposes such as a holding site during the construction of major capital projects.

Most recently, Davisville Junior Public School and Spectrum Alternative Senior School were accommodated at 529 Vaughan Road from September 2018 until their new facility opened in September 2021. The building currently accommodates an operating child care centre and TDSB administrative functions. Two rooms are available for lease to a community agency. Aside from these uses, the building is otherwise vacant.

The 529 Vaughan Road building offers many advantages and benefits to the Hodgson MS community during the holding period. Most importantly, there are no health and safety risks to students or staff due to an active construction site.

The capacity of the Vaughan Road building provides space to accommodate all current and projected students that allows them to continue their programming. There are no portables required for the holding period.

In addition to instructional classrooms and specialized spaces like science labs, the Vaughan Road building offers a full range of facilities such as a swimming pool, two full-size gymnasiums, an auditorium for assemblies and concerts, as well as a large library.

Several facility improvements were undertaken prior to the relocation of Davisville Jr PS and Spectrum Alt Sr PS in 2018. These included interior renovations to ensure classrooms were in a state of good repair, and exterior renovations to the field, track and upgraded hard-surface play area. The facility offers an opportunity to provide a full range of extra-curricular activities.

Transportation to 529 Vaughan Road

The 529 Vaughan Road building is located approximately 5.6 km west of Hodgson MS. To ensure that all students can access the facility, staff have determined that transportation to and from the Vaughan Road building should be provided.

For September 2022, students will be able to choose to take a school bus or receive TTC tickets as some families may find the TTC more convenient for them. The Hodgson attendance area has numerous existing TTC stops, while school bus stops will be distributed throughout the Hodgson MS attendance area. Moving forward, each school year the students will be able to choose their transportation option.

Action Plan and Associated Timeline

During the 2021-22 school year, committees will be established as necessary to ensure a smooth transition offsite during construction. Further, an open house will be arranged in the fall of 2021 for students and parents to visit 529 Vaughan Road.

A survey will be conducted around March 2022 to determine each family's choice for transportation (school bus or TTC).

Hodgson MS will begin at the 529 Vaughan Road building for the start of the 2022-23 school year. The school will return to the site at 282 Davisville Avenue once the capital project is complete, which is anticipated to be September 2024.

If there are unexpected delays in the design and construction process, the timeline for relocating Hodgson MS may be adjusted.

Resource Implications

The relocation of Hodgson MS to 529 Vaughan Road will require transportation through a combination of school buses and the TTC. The estimated cost for transportation is approximately \$1M each year.

There is no retrofit or renovation of the 529 Vaughan Road building that is required to support the relocation of Hodgson MS.

Communications Considerations

Two virtual public consultation meetings were held with the Hodgson MS community in the spring of 2021: May 3 and May 21. Notice of these meetings was circulated to all current Hodgson MS families, along with all families enrolled at the feeder schools: Davisville Jr PS, Eglinton Jr PS, Maurice Cody Jr PS and Oriole Park Jr PS. Notice was also provided to the residential properties that abut the site. There were a total of 302 registrations for the May 3 meeting and 261 registrations for the May 17 meeting.

Following the consultation meetings, a Question and Answer document was prepared and posted on the TDSB public website. This document will be expanded as the plans for relocation evolve. The website also contains copies of both PowerPoint presentations, notes from the public meetings and the safety consultant's report.

Board Policy and Procedure Reference(s)

Not applicable.

Appendices

- Appendix A: Location of Hodgson Middle School and Aerial Photo of the Site
- Appendix B: Location of 529 Vaughan Road

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