

DISTRICT ATTENDEES:

Woody Bradford - Assistant Superintendent
Mal Gill – Assistant Superintendent
Jo Abshire - Communications Manager

Jeremy Lyndon – Principal, ACSS
Carla Clapton – Vice Principal, ACSS
Jason Malo - Vice Principal, ACSS
Jonathan Harris – Principal, BGMS
Dan Woelders – Vice Principal, BGMS

Lynn Fairley – Vice Principal, Parkside
Cathy Gracie – Principal, Parkside
Mark Touzeau – Vice Principal, Shortreed
Rhonda Krisko – Principal, Wix-Brown

Presentation by Assistant Superintendent - Woody Bradford**Welcome, Introductions, First Nations Acknowledgement**

Overview of the District Vision – it is what guides District teachers and staff in the work they do everyday.

Purpose – Woody Bradford explained the Board motion to implement a middle school programming in the DWP region. The Board of Education has requested staff consult with the DWP and ACSS communities regarding the best educational opportunities for student success. Staff will bring a recommendation to the Board of Education in December, based on feedback gathered during the community consultations.

Focus on Students – Woody Bradford explained how the process will focus on children/students social/emotional needs, physical well-being, and learning opportunities that are sustainable.

Relationship Building – Woody Bradford explained the importance of building trusting relationships in this process, trust between the District and parents/families, and acknowledged that not everyone will agree with each other, but people must be respectful.

Communications Plan Overview – Jo Abshire, Communications Manager, highlighted four guiding principles specific to the consultation: Integrity, Trust, Listening and Respect.

Level of Engagement – Jo Abshire outlined the spectrum of public participation and explained the definition of consultation. Consult - We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision. We will seek feedback on drafts and proposals.

Communication Objectives – Jo Abshire described the goals of the consultation process. This includes educating the public about the background through to communicating the Board's decision once it has been made.

Timeline and Audience – Two-month public consultation from September 18 to November 15, 2019. The consultation is centred around school communities impacted, but is open to the community, district wide.

Method of Outreach – Jo Abshire explained the three ways to engage: attend a community meetings, complete the online survey, email feedback@sd35.bc.ca.

Community Meetings Schedule – as per presentation

Wednesday, Sept. 18 6:00pm – 8:00pm @ Betty Gilbert Middle School (BGMS & Parkside)

Thursday, Sept. 26 6:00pm – 8:00pm @ North Otter Elementary (North Otter/Wix-Brown)

Thursday, Oct. 3 6:00pm – 8:00pm @ Aldergrove Community Secondary (ACSS & Shortreed)

Thursday, Oct. 10 6:00pm – 8:00pm @ DW Poppy Secondary School

Thursday, Oct. 17 6:00pm – 8:00pm @ Fort Langley Elementary

Wednesday, Oct. 23 6:00pm – 8:00pm @ Peterson Road Elementary School (Peterson Road & Coghlan)

Thursday, Nov. 7 6:00pm – 8:00pm @ School Board Office – livestream (district wide)

Background on DWP Transition Plan – Woody Bradford shared the timeline, beginning with consultation in the DWP region in June 2017 through to present (Sept-Nov community consultation), followed with expected Board decision in December 2019.

Consulting with DWP Community – Woody Bradford explained how there were main themes that surfaced during the transition committee meetings: people care about students, community, opportunities and learning. There were three non-negotiables agreed on: educational improvements, safety & well-being, and facility & scheduling.

Consulting with ACSS Community – Woody Bradford explained along with the consultation with the DWP community, District staff have also been consulting with Administration at ACSS from September 2018 through to present, following with an expected Board decision in December 2019. The same themes were expressed by the ACSS school community.

Other Considerations from Community Feedback – Woody Bradford listed the other areas families expressed including extracurricular activities, transportation, enrollment, timeline.

Overview of Plans

- Plan 1 - Continue to submit the capital letter for DWP
- Plan 2 - Place portables at DWP for the Grade 6 and 7 students
- Plan 3 - DWP Middle and ACSS Secondary

Artefacts – Educational Programming – Woody Bradford noted the comparison of middle school explorations found on each table and encouraged people to review them. Woody also directed people to the course guides from the secondary schools available at the back of the room.

Comparison of the Three Plans – Woody Bradford outlined what the plans would look like in relation to relevant categories.

Information for Plan 1

- Educational Programming – Fixed Timetable
- Safety and Well-being – Grade 6's and 7's inside the building

- Facility – One school Grades 6-8 and 9-12
- Extracurricular – Gym time, Split Bell Schedule, alignment with other schools in the District
- Transportation – 2 Schedules - Middle and Secondary; Split Bell Schedule
- Enrollment – Middle 300-350, Secondary 600-650 Students
- Timeline – Based on Ministry's Decision: unknown

Information for Plan 2

- Educational Programming – Fixed Timetables
- Safety and Well-being – Grade 6's and 7's outside of the building
- Facility – Adding portables for Middle School
- Extracurricular - Gym time, Bell Schedule, alignment with other schools in the District
- Transportation - 2 Schedules Middle and Secondary; Split Bell Schedule
- Enrollment – Middle 300-350, Secondary 600-650 Students
- Timeline – Based on Board's Decision: 2-4 years

Information for Plan 3

- Educational Programming – Personalizing Learning – Flexible, Choice
- Safety and Well-being – Standalone Middle School
- Facility – Learning Spaces converted to Middle Explorations (ie. Peter Ewart)
- Extracurricular - Aligned with other Middle/Secondary Schools
- Transportation – 40 Minute Max Ride Time
- Enrollment – 700 Middle, 1100 Secondary Students
- Timeline – Based on Board's Decision; 1–3 years

Workshop/Group Questions – Woody Bradford explained the workshop activity. The first question asked participants to put sticky notes on the top 3 items they value the most out of a list of categories. The other three questions were completed in groups with a facilitator recording.

Question 1:

When considering options and planning for DW Poppy as a middle school, which THREE of these items do you value most?

- Educational Programming
- Safety and Well-being
- Facility
- Extracurricular
- Transportation
- Enrollment
- Timeline

Outcome:

Educational Programming	29
Extracurricular	20
Transportation	15
Safety & Well Being	10
Facility	9
Timeline	2
Enrollment	0

Question 2:

When planning for a middle school in the DW Poppy region, what are you most excited about?

- Nothing exciting. Students wouldn't have to travel from one site to another to experience explorations. Providing more equity in programs for middle and secondary students throughout the district. Participation in extracurricular programs
- Enough students to improve programming options. More opportunity for explorations. Have explorations within the building. Less supervision of walking to another building (more independence), liked the independence and not driving students to different school. Kids love the idea of a bus, go together to school, socializing on the bus. Safety of not leaving building. Exciting about additional extracurricular activities especially for girls who have to join boys teams. Higher enrollment for sports teams. More funding. Beautiful building. Gym that's their own and not using high school gym. Timeline as quick as possible (next Sept). Remove the stigma (line) between the regions.
- Programming. Availability of a wide selection of electives. More students = more opportunities. Middle school is able to "stand alone" and look after electives "in house" - not reliant on the high school's time schedule. Facility - having a true middle school building, not an elementary school "dressed up" as a middle school. Extra curricular - sports teams because of large numbers. More options all around. Student clubs because of a larger student population. More options for friends.
- Expansion of explorations. More opportunities and flexibility (for explorations and other courses). Expansion of community connections. More options (to experience explorations). Blending of more students. Transportation (students have the opportunity to socialize on their way to school).
- Gives students from Aldergrove more opportunities (athletics, programming, academics). Opportunities for more explorations.
- Opportunities/Electives at ACSS really limits what can be done in the classroom - the flexibility would help to run a better classroom program. Helps for teacher planning and provides consistent structures for students. Facilities would be much improved - gym at Betty Gilbert is not sufficient for a middle school. Not enough time, blocks too short. Safety and well-being would improve because the walk between Betty Gilbert and ACSS causes significant problems with behaviours. Extracurricular would improve. Would be able to provide more programs/opportunity to play on sports teams.

- More electives at the high school level. Better opportunities for extracurricular sports teams (e.g. football). BGMS kids would no longer have to walk across the field in the rain and snow.

Question 3:

When planning for a middle school in the DW Poppy region, what concerns do you have?

- If this happens in a year from now, some students that go to DW Poppy they will only go for one year then back to ACSS (too much transition). I do not like the 6-12 model at all. Transportation is a big concern. Conflict between students from different feeder schools. Would the catchment boundaries be re-drawn? Would students have to leave their current elementary schools to attend a different one?
- Bus for 80 minutes a day - and how that affects after school activities. IEP support because of larger numbers. Sick child for pickup - a lot of people don't drive or have a one-car family. How fast will the opportunities will be implemented for students or will they hold off for years?
- Transportation, unique busing circumstance (i.e. kid gets sick in the middle of the day, other middle of the day circumstances, appointments). No options for public transportation for families. Clarity around transportation for students who are participating in extra-curricular activities (before and after school). Enrollment size. Students who aren't ready for a larger student population.
- Emotional well-being during transition. Students co-existing (Poppy and ACSS students). Transportation (time spent on the bus).
- Transportation issues. How will they get home if they are doing extracurricular activities at DW Poppy? They live in the DW Poppy neighborhood and are invested in the area.
- Would like to know what the specific opportunities are with a middle school at DW Poppy? Detrimental to the sense of community in ACSS catchment. Students who live nearby and struggle to come to school will be even more marginalized by having to take the bus. More kids will slip through the cracks because transportation is not available when they need it. Safety on the bus with regards to bullying. Extra curricular after school with bussing? Kids are done at 4:30pm but the bus is gone?
- Love of BGMS as a small school. Don't want to lose the small school model. Concern about losing the community of BGMS (small school connections). Concerns about loss of communication when moving to a bigger school. Concerns about what will happen to the middle school teaching staff. The system is not broken so why are we trying to fix it? Portables are not okay and they should not be at any school, it makes for a poor learning environment.

Question 4:

Are there any other ideas/needs that should be considered when planning for a middle school in the DW Poppy Region?

- If 130 students from Aldergrove currently attend DW Poppy why are they allowed to go there? Keep the students at ACSS and offer the programs here (do not allow the cross boundary). Finding that the secondary teachers aren't trained appropriately to deal with the middle school-aged teachers.
- DW Poppy students refusing to go to ACSS for final years. How to blend the two sides while minimizing negative impact to students. Maybe delay move for grade 11 and 12 so that they grad from the school they are from to minimize impact. High school sports rule (home school and having to sit for a year not playing sports if move).
- Having a smaller bus available to transport students in the middle of the day (sick kids, etc). Funding for kids to take a taxi who can't afford to take a taxi. Communicating that this is not a done deal. The District has attempted to communicate this, but there continues to be a narrative in the general public that plan 3 is a done deal. Blending the current grade 11's and 12's at both schools.
- Continue the Breakfast Club. What happens with the French Immersion program?
- Would there still be French Immersion? Would ACSS have a large enough population to increase opportunities if it went back to Grades 8-12? Would not be a problem with scheduling or transportation?
- If change happens, at least two years are needed to make plans for the adjustment. What will happen to ACSS in 10 years when the population grows? Will the school be big enough? Cost of driving the students (school busses) will be significant. Would there be a possibility of French Immersion returning to ACSS if this occurs? Will ACSS get a lot of money put into it for repairs and improvements?

Summary of Group Activity – Groups were asked to pick one thing to highlight.

- One group shared that they were concerned that students who struggle to get themselves to school (for whatever reason) will be further marginalized because if they are bussing to DW Poppy they lose the opportunity to get to school once the bus is gone.
- They are also concerned about students who want to participate in after school activities but won't be able to because they would normally ride the bus home.
- One group was excited about having more opportunities at school for our kids. Whether it is more sports teams, a greater variety of electives and courses, or the opportunity to have more clubs, we know that having more students at each school will benefit our kids by providing them with more opportunities, both academic and extra-curricular.
- One group was excited about new opportunities at DW Poppy in terms of new classes, athletics, arts and explorations.

- One group was concerned about the social emotional well-being of the students who are transitioning schools.
- One group was excited about the potential for BGMS students to no longer have to walk across the field in the rain and snow during the middle of winter.

Closing

Summary of Ways to Engage – Jo Abshire reiterated how people can take part in the consultation.

Attend a community meetings, complete the online survey, email feedback@sd35.bc.ca.