

**DISTRICT ATTENDEES:**

Woody Bradford - Assistant Superintendent  
Jo Abshire - Communications Manager

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

Tanya Rogers – Principal, North Otter  
Lynn Fairley – Vice Principal, Parkside  
Chris Wejr – Principal, Shortreed  
Mark Touzeau – Vice Principal, Shortreed

**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 every day.

**Purpose** – Woody Bradford explained the Board motion to implement middle school programming in the DW Poppy region. The Board of Education has requested staff consult with the DW Poppy 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 over the next 10-15 years. He spoke to the core values of the District as a guiding principle, as well as the challenges that the DW Poppy and ACSS regions are facing regarding population decline.

**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. He spoke to the importance of seeing this as a partnership between the community and the schools.

**Communications Plan Overview** – Jo Abshire, Communications Manager, highlighted four guiding principles specific to the consultation: Integrity, Trust, Listening and Respect. She mentioned that honesty and transparency are paramount to the process and requested that people to be mindful and respectful both in person and online.

**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. Jo also spoke to the importance of the process, consultation and engagement.

**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. Jo Abshire emphasized that all shareholders, past and present, are welcome and encouraged to provide feedback.

**Method of Outreach** – Jo Abshire explained the three ways to engage: (1) attend a community meeting, (2) complete the online survey, and (3) email [feedback@sd35.bc.ca](mailto:feedback@sd35.bc.ca).

**Community Meetings Schedule** – as per presentation

Wednesday, September 18<sup>th</sup>, 6pm – 8pm @ Betty Gilbert Middle School (BGMS & Parkside)

Thursday, September 26<sup>th</sup>, 6pm – 8pm @ North Otter Elementary (North Otter/Wix-Brown)

Thursday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 6pm – 8pm @ Aldergrove Community Secondary (ACSS & Shortreed)

Thursday, October 10<sup>th</sup>, 6pm – 8pm @ DW Poppy Secondary

Thursday, October 17<sup>th</sup>, 6pm – 8pm @ Fort Langley Elementary

~ **DATE CHANGE from October 16<sup>th</sup> due to a scheduling conflict**

Wednesday, October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 6pm - 8pm @ Peterson Road Elementary (Peterson Road & Coghlan)

Thursday, November 7<sup>th</sup>, 6pm – 8pm @ School Board Office – livestream (District-wide)

Jo Abshire mentioned that the majority of feedback (about 80%) is coming from the DWP community and stressed that it was important that the opinions of Aldergrove families be properly represented.

**Background on DWP Transition Plan** – Woody Bradford spoke to the population numbers at each school. He mentioned that currently 130 students at DW Poppy are residents of Aldergrove, and that ACSS and DW Poppy students are already intermixing in the community of East Langley.

Woody Bradford shared the timeline, beginning with consultation in the DW Poppy region in June 2017 through to the present (September – November community consultation), followed with expected Board decision in December 2019. He then spoke to the cost associated with middle school programming

**Consulting with DW Poppy 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. He explained that the community felt safety was a crucial component and that grades 6-12 in the same building was not desirable due to intermixing.

**Consulting with ACSS Community** – Woody Bradford explained along with the consultation with the DW Poppy community, District staff have also been consulting with Administration from ACSS from September 2018 through to the present, following with an expected Board decision in December 2019. The same themes were expressed by the ACSS school community. He mentioned that Jeremy Lyndon, ACSS Principal, approached the District Leadership Team regarding concerns about enrollment and what options could be explored to provide ACSS students with more learning opportunities similar to other Langley schools.

**Other Considerations from Community Feedback** – Woody Bradford listed the other areas families expressed including extracurricular activities, transportation, enrollment, timeline. He spoke to the District’s commitment to consultation; the decision has not been made and this is why the consultation process is so important.

### **Overview of Plans**

- Plan 1 - Continue to submit capital funding request for DW Poppy
- Plan 2 - Place portables at DW Poppy for Grade 6 and 7 students
- Plan 3 – DW Poppy Middle and Aldergrove Secondary

**Artefacts – Educational Programming** – Woody Bradford noted the comparison of middle school explorations found on each table and encouraged people to review them. He also directed people to the course guides from the secondary schools available at the back of the room (ACSS, DWP, Brookwood, Walnut Grove).

**Middle-Secondary Overview** - ACSS Principal Jeremy Lyndon talked about the unique system that operated between ACSS and Betty Gilbert Middle (BGMS). He talked to the positive opportunities for culture building within the community and spoke to the leadership and mentorship that is able to develop because of this close relationship. He also mentioned that a major benefit is that student transitions are easier due to this arrangement.

Jeremy Lyndon then talked about the challenges of this relationship. He mentioned that BGMS is an elementary school and does not offer the same exploratory classes as other middle schools. Another issue brought up was that the exploratory students need to walk back and forth across the field in order to attend exploratory classes at ACSS. He also discussed the significant timetable challenges with a limited number of students. The other challenge he mentioned with the timetable is that it is very limited as the BGMS exploratory classes take up a lot of space in the ACSS timetable and this ends up limiting what classes can be taken and when for ACSS students. He mentioned that with the exception of exploratories, DW Poppy also has challenges in building a timetable with such small enrolment numbers.

Jeremy Lyndon concluded by asking if anyone had any questions regarding timetables. There was no further clarification requested.

**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
  - Middle would start earlier and secondary would start later
- 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
  - This plan has a more realistic timeline than Plan 1

**Information for Plan 3**

- Educational Programming – Personalizing Learning – Flexible, Choice
  - Significant increase in choice and opportunity than what is currently offered
- Safety and Well-being – Standalone middle school
- Facility – Learning Spaces converted to Middle Explorations
- Extracurricular - Aligned with other Middle/Secondary Schools
- Transportation – 40-minute Max Ride Time
- Enrolment – 700 Middle, 1100 Secondary Students (enrolment is not changing in next 10-15 years)
- Timeline – Based on Board's Decision; 1–3 years

Woody Bradford stressed that regardless of what decision is made, the decision will not be rushed. The focus of this process is to identify the best option to provide quality learning opportunities for all students in the ACSS and DW Poppy regions.

**Workshop/Group Questions** – Woody Bradford explained the workshop activity. The first question asked participants to put sticky notes on the top three 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	35
Extracurricular	23
Transportation	13
Safety & Well-being	25
Facility	14
Timeline	2
Enrollment	1

**Question 2:** *When planning for a middle school in the DW Poppy region, what are you most excited about?*

- Opportunities for students, more friends/larger peer groups, more options/opportunities for extracurricular, everything taking place in one building - eliminating the transition time between buildings (BGMS & ACSS), having a different experience (i.e. taking a bus to school) - new experiences and new opportunities, providing additional space for the new developments planned in Aldergrove.
- More opportunities for students. Better facilities for explorations and extra-curricular activities. Core teachers for students (fewer teachers to make better connections). Young students are not with the older students (i.e. Gr. 6's with 12's). Leadership skill building.
- Opportunities - educational, extracurricular, electives, ability to take courses that better suit their needs, better facility for middle school, more coaches/teachers for extracurricular, more people would stay within the community, middle school teachers for all programs in middle school. We have outgrown our middle school. Endless opportunities, the possibility for French Immersion or other programs at middle and high school. More options for clubs and intramurals. An actual middle school gym. More opportunities to find peers with similar interests.
- If DW Poppy students comes to Aldergrove: More opportunities for kids in relation to extra-curricular and more academic programs. Opportunity to rebuild French Immersion, athletics, etc.
- More opportunities for better programming - better fit for students in a building that suits middle school students - no longer have to walk to ACSS for explorations - better opportunity for extracurricular choices - more choices in terms of electives and specialized courses.
- More opportunities - equal opportunities - safety of students (stuck there - can't leave, can't walk elsewhere at lunch) - extra-curricular opportunities - facility would reflect a true middle school-DWP / ACSS communities coming together to create something new - Middle School students have a "home" and don't have feet in two worlds -More students at the secondary level-increased opportunities for students 9 - 12 (curricular and extra-curricular) – keeps kids younger (not mixing with the secondary students) -all programming is peppered with the middle school philosophy - age appropriate focused supports.

**Question 3:** *When planning for a middle school in the DW Poppy region, what concerns do you have?*

- How are the boundaries going to be re-drawn if Betty Gilbert becomes an elementary school? Will students from schools (i.e. Shortreed) be forced to move to the BGE? How disruptive will the process be if boundaries are changed for students? Will there be a choice involved? Potential impact on family dynamics – if you have students in 3 schools (elementary, middle & secondary). Will there be after school care provided if Poppy becomes middle? Making sure there are busses to accommodate extra-curricular activities? Has this been considered? Concerns includes bussing and climate change impacts. Regional communities - concerns regarding the differences in communities. What happens to staff, how does the transitions of staff occurs, what is the impact to the staff communities? New cultures take time to build into something new and positive as well. Concerns related to Poppy parents being negative, if the change happens that they will ruin the possibilities with their negatives. Concerned with what occurs when students who have been suspended from DW Poppy (and move to ACSS) or vice versa come to one school? Special Education Students - how they will handle another transition, what is the impact? Change is inevitable - how it impacts the parents and the students?
- Mental health (anxiety) of students in transitioning two times (elementary to secondary) and not elementary to middle to secondary. Having fewer transitions are easier for students. Transportation (busing from DW Poppy area to ACSS). Some sports opportunities may negatively impact students.
- Transportation - how do they get home after extracurricular? Is there a late bus? Will there be a charge for bussing a few years down the road? Where would busses pick up? Central location at elementary schools? Would there be a reconfiguration if Betty Gilbert was made into an elem school? How close is the public transit to DW Poppy - so how do people who don't drive and can't afford a taxi get to DW Poppy? Would the outdoor athletic facilities be improved? How does this impact our Aldergrove sense of community?
- If middle school is in Aldergrove and DW Poppy (Plan 1/2): Nothing changes in Aldergrove. Still no programs. If that middle school becomes the middle school for Aldergrove (Plan 3): Losing that community feel.
- Transportation - Will they have to pay for the extra bussing? How do the students who participate in extracurricular activities get home? Single vehicle families will struggle to get their kids to and from school? No current public transportation that goes to DW Poppy? Bullying could happen on the buses if there isn't adequate supervision? Is there adequate cell phone service in the DW Poppy region to get a hold of students after school?
- Transportation (kids can walk to school right now), if a student is sick and a parent doesn't drive (how does student get home)? No public transportation. What happens to students who miss the bus? Students would be K-5 in Aldergrove, busing to school, 6-8, 9-12 in Aldergrove. Some parents will have to shuttle between all three schools. Concerned about Fort Langley.

- The drive would lengthy. If this doesn't go through, what will the District do for us? We didn't know our kids didn't have the same opportunities and now we do. Extra-curriculars: would there be a "late bus" for people who are engaged in extracurricular activities at middle - students from DW Poppy must rely on school buses or parents. All other secondary schools can access public transit. ACSS would be at 1100 students. Is there room for capacity moving forward?

**Question 4:** *Are there any other ideas/needs that should be considered when planning for a middle school in the DW Poppy Region?*

- There are developing areas in Aldergrove - will this create more pressures on the existing 2 elementaries that exist in Aldergrove? Questioning the projections for growth - wondering if these projections are being ignored in both DW Poppy & Aldergrove regions? Will Betty Gilbert become an elementary again? Our kids need to be able to handle and accept change, build resiliency and positively problem solve/how to make things work? Has it been considered - ACSS as the middle school/Poppy as the high school?
- The growth factor is taking off in Aldergrove. What would the population look like in 3-5 years? Will ACSS eventually be overcrowded and students will eventually have to go back to DW Poppy? Where is the money coming from to convert DW Poppy to a middle school? What happens to the current elementary schools if they become K-5?
- Let's not rush this until the concerns are addressed. If DW Poppy goes 6-12, does Coghlan still feed into DW Poppy or do they go to their catchment school at BGMS? Wouldn't DW Poppy be cross-boundary for most students at Coghlan? How do we address the misconceptions of Aldergrove ("rough community", "gangs", etc.)? Aldergrove is diverse. How do we get the voices of families with English as a Second Language?
- Is there a possibility of another elementary school in the DW Poppy region becoming the middle school? Would ACSS have any upgrades to accommodate the higher enrolment? Is there any concern about ACSS running over capacity?
- If BGMS becomes an elementary school will people be able to be grandfathered into their original school? Would a new playground be needed at DW Poppy? What does the transition look like for the grade 11/12's as far as graduating from their home school?
- What would happen to teachers at BGMS? K-7 schools, ACSS & DW Poppy? What happens to specialized programs? What would happen to BGMS? How will this impact senior students? Especially if you are a grade 12 student when you transition to ACSS? If this happens, how will we help students integrate together in a new culture? What transition plans are in place to bring communities together? How many portables would be at DW Poppy if option 2 came to fruition? What would happen to the ISP student populations of ACSS? DW Poppy?

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

- One group shared that they were excited about the facilities and the opportunities for more extracurricular activities.
- One group identified that a major challenge would be that the programmes and traditions important to DW Poppy would not be lost in the transition to Aldergrove.
- One group brought up the idea that there is proposed growth in Aldergrove and consideration is needed on how that will impact the community moving forward.
- One group was excited to see the return of options and opportunities for Aldergrove students after so many years of decline of programme offerings.
- One group saw the challenge of transportation related issues regarding extracurricular activities.
- One group spoke about how to bring together both ACSS and DW Poppy communities together to create something new.
- One group spoke to the benefit of BGMS students no longer having to cross the field to get to their expos class.
- One group inquired about how to maintain a small community feel as the number of students at ACSS increases.

**Closing**

**Summary of Ways to Engage** – Jo Abshire reiterated how people can take part in the consultation. She spoke about the important of explaining positions fully when emailing concerns.

Attend a community meeting, complete the online survey, email [feedback@sd35.bc.ca](mailto:feedback@sd35.bc.ca).

Jo Abshire then showed the Middle School Consultation website page.

- FAQ section
- Community meeting minute summary

Woody Bradford closed the evening by thanking everyone for attending and spoke to the importance of the process. He also asked that people speak with others in their building and make sure to focus the conversation around the facts rather than options. He reiterated that we are all here because we care about kids and he stated that he looked forward to continuing the conversation.