

Good evening!

My name is Candace Clowe. I am a resident of Burton, and my son is a grade 2 student at Burton Elementary.

I would like to start by reading highlights of a letter of support written by Megan Kilbride. Megan Kilbride was a high school teacher who holds a B.Sc. (honours), B.Ed., and an M.Ed. She currently holds a teaching license in NS, Que and Ontario. And is currently a member of the armed forces.

---

I have included the entirety of Megan Kilbride's letter as well as my presentation to the DEC for future review and reference

---

As you can tell, being a mother of a son who has just started his schooling career, I am concerned. My son will not be attending Burton Elementary next year, as he will graduate Grade 2 and move on to Hubbard.

As a mother, and community member I am worried over the affects closing Burton will have on such young children and their development.

ADHD affects approx. 5% of school aged children. And these children often require increased professional attention to succeed. Children with ADHD typically have poor performance in school. For this reason, children often require special attention from parents, teachers, and school systems. ADHD is linked with a variety of sleep problems.

Sleep problems and disorders are prevalent at this age. Poor or inadequate sleep can lead to mood swings, behavioral problems such as ADHD and cognitive problems that impact on their ability to learn in school.

The closing of Burton Elementary will require children to be bussed at an even earlier timing than what is current. These children will be starting out their school careers at a direct disadvantage over children within the Oromocto town limits due to having to be bussed at a minimum of a ½ hour earlier. Not only do studies show that average children are at a direct disadvantage due to early start times, children who require extra help are even more at a disadvantage. The closing of Burton and earlier bussing/start times will put children at an increased risk for sleep disorders and poor performance in school.

I currently drive from Burton to Oromocto for my place of work @ 0710. As many of you know, currently 0710 in the morning, it is dark. Very dark. There are limited street lights in Burton, and with the snow falls and roads being typically unkept, the highway (or main road) can often be dangerous. It is bad enough that we see the highschool

students standing at the side of the roads, who are often not visible, the closing of Burton will put our children at risk, at the most vulnerable times, out in the dark, and some at the side of the highway as well.

This is a community that still expanding and beginning to thrive. Co-located with CFB Gagetown, a training base. This area will always bring in appeal for new and expecting families. I being one of them in 2007. When I ask why people buy in Oromocto vs Burton, I hear because of close approximation to amenities. Closing Burton Elementary will take away the amenities that are important for families. I for one, would not have considered Burton Community if there was no school for my young son to attend. As stated by local realtor Judy Cheevers when I purchased my home in Burton "Realtors don't sell houses, we sell communities".

Lastly, I would like to address the DEC with my concerns of the "triggers" that caused this Sustainability Study of Burton Elementary.

"Less than 30% capacity or less than 100 students"

I urge the DEC to take a real look at the information provided today. Burton Elementary is well over 30% capacity. And we are unable to accommodate 100 students. Burton is a K-2 school. That's it!! K-2. 3 grades. Behind me you will see a list of activities that Burton school provides. Most notably all students participation in the yearly Christmas concert, local field trips and all student participation in skating as the opposed grade only.

Burton is at 70% capacity and is only a k-2 school. And at just under half of the required amount of students required to not be triggered. And we are only a k-2 school that does not house all eligible Burton students due to catchment lines and Oromocto day cares.

A K-2 school that has a before and after school day care pending.

A school that has had increased student enrollment resulting in additional teachers being hired to accommodate in recent years.

And has also had to bus children out to Oromocto when filled over capacity once in the past 10 years.

I ask the DEC, where is the benefit. As per your 8 criteria to consider prior to closure:

1. Low/declining Enrollment: At 97% capacity, that is not the case. And the unpredictable enrollment of the future does not show a decrease that will fall below 30%
2. Health and Safety: Only 1 Pri 1 project, that is not costly. Our school is structurally sound

3. Quality of Education: I think we can all agree is not in question
4. Transportation: timings on the bus increased with earlier start times putting the children of Burton at a known disadvantage at such vulnerable years. Not to mention no real concrete plan provided, or improvements that have been able to be made for the students who are currently bussed out to Hubbard despite many inquires in the past.
5. Finance: Minor increase.
6. Impact on local Community: not positive. Potential to decrease home values and decrease interest of potential family buyers
7. Impact on other schools: Increased students and decreased ability for participation in school activities (concerts and skating programs)
8. Economic Development: Stop the before/after school daycare. A program that has gained much interest in the community that will lead to increased employment and in turn make Burton Elementary profitable

In closing, my personal experience with the school of Burton.

1. My son went to a week long pre-Kindergarten in Oromocto the March prior to starting Kindergarten in Burton. At this time, my son expressed every day that he found the school loud and did not like it. When I spoke with the teachers, they assured me that this was normal behaviour for a child and that my son was easily distracted in class and was not always attentive to the teacher. He appeared overly shy and quiet. When my son started Kindergarten in Burton, Mrs Appleyard informed me in week 3, that she felt my son was having difficulties hearing. My son was tested shortly after and had found to have hearing impairment. A fact that might have later been found in Oromocto, but a fact that was found in Burton.
2. Every teacher has been aware and have been mindful of his issue and he is currently producing above average results thorough out his time in Burton.
3. Also, my Job has kept me away from home for most of my sons time in Burton School. The teachers have gone above and beyond to support my son and my family throughout his schooling year. Even going as far as Mrs Moore sending weekly reports via email to myself to keep me up to date as well as to home to facilitate a better understanding of my son's progress and ensure that in a house with 2 deployed parents, that there was nothing that would be missed.
4. During a family crisis earlier this year, Mrs Doucet called me personally at home to offer condolences and was able to provide my son with homework for a week as so he would not fall behind while we were away with only a few hours notice.
5. My son has been given advanced spelling tests and homework throughout his years at Burton. The teaching staff have recognized the need to challenge my

son appropriately, all the while keeping him grounded and involved with daily activities

6. Arrive safe program. As most of you know, having an ill child does not always give you the time to call the school to inform them on his absence in the morning. On the occasions where this has happened, the school has called to ensure that I am aware that my son is not at school and that he is safe.

My son loves his school and the staff at Burton Elementary. My son is a shy and quiet child, who has drastically improved and become an average, active child that participates when he would normally shed away when he was younger. I believe this is from the support and amazing experience he has had in Burton. For that, I thank the staff whole heartedly

I thank you for the opportunity to voice my concerns. I once again urge the DEC to vote in favor of keeping this K-2 school open, as it belongs to a expanding community that is thriving, along with the school itself having steady enrollment and continued success. Closing Burton School is in no way beneficial to the community, DEC, and especially the children.

Thank you