

Bath Sustainability Comments from Website (Effective April 21st, 2015)

David McTimoney • yesterday

Thanks for the conversations on this discussion board. We will close it at the end of the day on Monday, April 20, so that we can print the conversations and add them to the final report. If there a... [more](#)

Thanks for the conversations on this discussion board. We will close it at the end of the day on Monday, April 20, so that we can print the conversations and add them to the final report. If there are inquiries this week, please email the sustainability address or me directly. David McT

Charles McNair • 2 weeks ago

“Enrolment What Ifs”

... (what if) we recognized North Carleton as one catchment area , since all students eventually attend Carleton North High School in Bristol .

... (what if) we recognized that the "catchment" is comprised of three municipalities - Bath , Florenceville-Bristol and Centreville ?

... (what if) we recognized that Centreville implemented a K-8 program several years ago with a \$2 million renovation to their 'community school' ?

... (what if) we recognized that Bath's two schools (together) have the same square area 'foot print' as the Centreville Community School and the Florenceville Middle School .

... (what if) we recognized that a K-8 development in Bath and Florenceville-Bristol, like Centreville, with a redistribution of students for optimum results could actually be accommodated within these existing facilities ?

... (what if) we recognized that spending a couple million dollars for upgrades in Bath schools and at FMS was, by far, the cheapest option ?

David McTimoney • last month

Thanks for you comments, Charles. They will be included in the final report. DMcT

Charles McNair • last month

Perhaps the biggest elephant in the room is the ' collective agreement ' . Removing from the discussion (any) considerations regarding formula driven staffing , is beyond unreasonable, given what's at stake here and that staffing cost at BMS & BES is \$1.4 million (89%) vs. facilities costs at the two schools of \$153,000 (11%) . Even with a capital cost allowance for the two facilities of \$100,000 per year, the facilities would represent less than 20% of the total operating budget !

Policy 409 provides individual school analysis and therefore encourages actions on a school by school basis. In my opinion, this misses the mark. Unless a community, or group of communities comprising a catchment area, has a very proactive group of stakeholders, this approach risks not achieving the best (overall) outcome. Schools make communities. Across this province, where there are schools , there are communities. Which came first ? (Probably a politician .) Be that as it may, as we strive to rationalize schools and other infrastructure, let's be mindful of the communities which have built up around our schools.

Final note : In 2012 , I was approached to run for local council. I accepted and ran on two things - finding a purpose for the NCH property and 'capacity building within our two schools' . When the announcement was made that the Bath Middle School might be closed, the first person to call me was the developer who had recently purchased the NCH property with plans for a multi-million dollar development . Needless to say, I have been on a steep learning curve over the past few months on the challenges facing our two schools . But I will say this, with a multi-million dollar development underway , within sight of the schools and the very real possibility of 40 -50 new jobs and families moving to the area , as well as the possible amalgamation with LSD's into a 'rural community' model , the second largest municipality in the county , I think it would be premature to close either school . Premature, indeed .

[David McTimoney](#) • last month

Yes...will create a fact sheet for Bath Elementary very soon. In the meantime, please be sure to consult the Power Point as most of the information from a parallel fact sheet would be within. DMcT... [more](#)

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[Charles McNair](#) • 2 months ago

Please post a 'fact sheet' for Bath Elementary .

[Charles McNair](#) • 2 months ago

David , let's not ignore the 'elephants in the room' and there are several . The first is that the BMS is actually fully utilized although not recognized by policy 409 . That is , there are some 75 e... [more](#)

David , let's not ignore the 'elephants in the room' and there are several . The first is that the BMS is actually fully utilized although not recognized by policy 409 . That is , there are some 75 early childhood development kids who occupy space and several DEC offices which don't exist under 409 . As I noted previously , they both represent a cost somewhere, going forward . Second, the BES is full and with a windows upgrade done just last year, closing it seems like a ludicrous idea .

Probably the biggest elephant is the future prospect of a new "super" K-8 which would no doubt be built in Florenceville-Bristol and which would potentially be the demise of schools in Bath and Centreville . This outcome would have devastating consequences for these communities . Complicating this further, as I advised earlier, Bath and LSD's are currently studying the feasibility of amalgamating into a rural community , so a decision on schools should recognize this and opt for status quo , for one year .

In conclusion, you have a strong justification for delaying a decision on schools in north Carleton until our rural community study is complete and until you have determined if one new super K-8 is better than a K-8 in each of Centreville, Florenceville-Bristol and Bath communities ... with upgrades to existing infrastructure .

[David McTimoney](#) • 2 months ago

I have scrolled down to see if there are any unanswered questions. I think I found a few that need attention, as well as a few comments.

Please note that there have been some recent postings to the collection of documents at the right.

The point about "minutes" is well-taken. In fact, this document would best be described as notes as opposed to formal minutes. Formal minutes are taken at the regular public DEC meetings and are reviewed and approved before being posted. The notes taken here are helpful for the DEC as they reflect on what was said and they will also have their presentation document open, as well. We recorded the meeting and the audio is available...I listened to the first couple of minutes and it sounds ok (after the introductions of the DEC members in the back row). Please find the link above.

The \$10 000 is an estimate based on an immediate move, if that was the decision. It includes putting up some walls in certain areas, mostly. Readers will note that it is made clear the estimate is not an official amount and it is noted that it could go higher. We don't see any immediate changes needed to FMS, as a structure, if the BMS students were to go to school there.

My understanding of provincial achievement data results is that everyone is included. So if a student is "exempt" due to an SEP, then they are classified as "not successful" in the scoring. Having said that, in recent years, the data on the number of exemptions is also provided.

DMcT

[Charles McNair](#) • 2 months ago

The recent financial comparisons leads to some interesting considerations . On the operating side, the most significant cost difference appears to be staffing and a spread of approximately \$40,000 between the two options. If this was a variance in heating cost between two facilities, one might have reason for concern but this is a technical question related to staffing and the collective agreement. Next to this, the (total) annual savings between " scenerio A & B " from your facilities budget is \$30,000 and if transportation savings from scenerio B is added back, the difference is only \$24,000 . These are significant but not unmanageable costs . (Keep in mind , the 75 'Step Ahead' kids and DEC offices represent a future cost , somewhere)

On the 'capital improvements avoidance' side , we are given some numbers : \$525,000 for BMS & \$1,080,630 for BES are stated to be " improvements currently on a list " . It is pertinent to point out that a (significant) improvement including a complete windows upgrade was done at the Bath Elementary school , last August . Since no building permit was ever obtained, the municipality is not aware of the exact cost for renovations but I would estimate it to be several hundred thousand dollars . I assume the million dollars slated for BES does not include the renos done last year. While it is troubling that we do not have a facilities management office more in tune with operational realities than to spend these kind of dollars on a facility , one year before closing it, in fairness, the original focus was to possibly close the Bath Middle School but since the terms for the sustainability study now include BES, closing it and consolidating a K-8 in the BMS is now a very real possibility . This leads me to my final point and one which I have commented on previously .

Bath, Centreville and Florenceville-Bristol are seperate municipalities, and more importantly, they are communities with schools and other supporting infrastructure serving residents and neighboring local service districts . Certainly, even within municipal budgets we support one another in a multitude of ways. That said, some services are funded broadly from the tax base of the respective community; the recreation program and swimming pool in Bath is a good example. So , while we must respond to

declining enrollment in a fiscally responsible manner , there may be unintended consequences in not looking at the bigger picture .

The best option from a community and even a costs perspective could well be a K-8 in each of the three municipalities, using existing facilities, a redistribution of students and optimizing busing routes and student / teacher ratios , etc. between the three K-8's . The 'Step Ahead' (early childhood development program) would stay in Bath, the french immersion program would stay in Florenceville-Bristol and we would strive to maintain optimal enrollment levels between the three K-8 programs , all feeding into the Carleton North High School located in Florenceville-Bristol .

As this scenerio obviously needs further analysis, it may require more time (and debate) and therefore 'the status quo option' may be the best outcome (for this year) . Nevertheless, if we approach the schools challenge cooperatively, in the face of declining enrollments , we will (all) be stronger, going forward.

PS. The \$10,000 estimated for upgrades to BMS is not credible , nor is the "no cost" option if students are moved to Florenceville . As a point of reference, Centreville's renos exceeded \$2 million to upgrade their middle school for K-8 .

[Charles McNair](#) • 2 months ago

I have reviewed the Minutes of the December 11th meeting . As a point of order, these are technically not "Minutes" but if they were, they would be approved before posting. In this format, the accuracy of the comments is in question. A better option would be to record the session and post an audio link to your site .

[David McTimoney](#) • 2 months ago

I am currently working on a costs document and will post it to this site in the days ahead; costs are just one part of the considerations that the DEC will need to look at when making their decisions.
DMcT

[Charles McNair](#) • 2 months ago

The K-8 option for Bath is a logical conclusion but should not preclude the use of both schools . First there should be a fair assessment of cost and as noted in my earlier comments, Bath's two schools comprise approximately the same square area as the Centreville Community School (K-8) . Then too there is the matter of space used by the Step Ahead 'early childhood' pilot program (75 children) and the DEC offices , which underscores the need for a holistic approach within the catchment area , which 'policy 409' clearly does not do well .

Amy • 3 months ago

I am a parent from Coles Island and would like to point out that we also end up with skewed results due to our smaller class sizes and SEP students. The current reports are inaccurate and unfair to rural, small schools as they paint a picture that our students fall below provincial levels when that is seldom the case. This system needs many improvements to accurately reflect the true state of our education system. This is unfortunate and unfair that our children are being reflected upon in this manner.

Charles McNair • 3 months ago

I note wide year to year swings in data , especially with BMS and CCS. For example , the math result at BMS in 2013 was 33.3% , in 2014 the score was 61.1% . Similarly, in 2012 the math result at CCS was 23.3% and the next year 53.1% . Along with there being a smaller sample size at these schools, I understand that the number of SEP students can also skew the results . Perhaps you can explain how SEP students are "included" , even in the performance review for a school .

David McTimoney • 3 months ago

The provincial assessment scores for all schools in the Province are available publically and online. If you go to the EECD website, click on "publications and statistics", then click on "Report on Achievement" then click on "Anglophone District West", you will see all our school. Here is the direct link...I hope it works. <http://www.gnb.ca/0000/results...>
DMcT

Charles McNair • 3 Months ago

In regard to student performance, it was noted at the first public meeting that comparing Bath with district and provincial results might be skewed because of Bath's small sample size . Please post Florenceville-Bristol and Centreville results, for comparison with Bath .

Charles McNair • 3 months ago

In my comments at the public meeting, I stated that there are three municipalities in North Carleton and it is in this context that I note the following : The municipality of Bath has a population 530 with a tax base of \$22 million and two schools . Florenceville-Bristol has just 3x the population with 10x the tax base (McCain Foods) and four schools, including Carleton North High School . Centreville, with essentially the same population as Bath has 2x the tax base (Metalfab, HSF Foods, BWS Mfg) and one K-8 school.

Charles McNair • 3 months ago

Thanks for the data. Clearly, in the past couple of years, student enrollment in french immersion from the Bath schools is lower than for the first three years of data . This should change with developments now underway in Bath .

David McTimoney •

Data on French Immersion entry from the four elementary schools has been posted to this site. The document contains a five-year history. DMcT

[Charles McNair • 3 months ago](#)

Thanks for your reply , David . Of course, status quo in Bath with two schools on the same property (with similar operating costs to Centreville) while also hosting Early Childhood Development / Step Ahead and

[Anglophone West School Distric • 4 months ago](#)

Thanks for your comments, Kelly. The numbers at Bristol in grades 3, 4 and 5 are currently 18, 16 and 26. This idea (as will all of the comments on this discussion board) will become a part of the correspondence section of the report that will trigger further conversations among staff and the Council.

DMcT

[Anglophone West School Distric • 4 months ago](#)

All great comments, Charles. For a K-8 to be considered, we would still need to go through this process. There are two options that seem most reasonable if the DEC choose to vote that the school be closed...either move the kids to Florenceville or create a K-8 school in Bath. In either case, the study would be required. I also note your statement about consideration of the greater community as a whole...I know this will be a topic of discussion in the deliberations by the DEC. Finally, I am going to prepare a document that outlines the FI numbers.

DMcT

[Charles McNair • 4 months ago](#)

At the first sustainability meeting for Bath Middle School , it was pointed out that student enrollment in Bath and Centreville is essentially identical . However, Centreville made the move to close their elementary school and establish a K-8 several years ago, in what was formerly the Centreville Middle School . It is interesting to note, that the square area of the two facilities in Bath is also essentially the same as the (one) facility in Centreville. Therefore , one would assume combined facility operating costs in Bath to be similar to Centreville . Further, if Bath schools had been measured as one K-8 (by policy 409) and given the proximity of the middle school and elementary to one another, this would be a reasonable proposition, we might not be having this discussion .

Bath's "catchment area" is arguably the largest of the three municipalities in North Carleton and as was noted at the recent meeting , the french immersion program (in Florenceville-Bristol) is largely supported by students from Bath . Therefore , reinforcing the K-8 model established in Centreville and recognizing that in order to make that viable, students are bused from Wicklow - "the river" , to Centreville , if middle school numbers need to be higher in Bath, for example, then there is lots of precedent for busing .

Finally, as Bath with representatives from the parishes of Kent and Aberdeen has requested a feasibility study for amalgamation into a 'rural community' , this too becomes an important consideration , in terms of catchment area and existing and future school infrastructure in Bath .

Regards,
Charles McNair

Kelly • 4 months ago

I wonder if Bath Middle could receive the grade fives from Bristol elementary.. Would be the same distance as sending them to Florenceville.. And in three years time we double our student population