



ASD-W
Anglophone School District West

DISTRICT
EDUCATION
COUNCIL

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08 August 2024

The Honorable Bill Hogan
Minister – Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD)
Place 2000, P.O. Box 6000
Fredericton, NB
E3B 5H1

Dear Minister Hogan,

Thank you for your initial review of the sustainability study submitted by Anglophone West School District regarding the seven middle and elementary schools in the Oromocto and Burton area. I have reviewed your three questions with the superintendent and can offer the following responses:

Question 1: What would be the impact of busing students that currently attend Burton Elementary School into one of the new schools in Oromocto?

Burton Elementary School is a grade K-2 school and consists of three English prime classrooms, one in each grade level. Forty-one children (1 October 2023 data) attended the school this past year. It is forecasted that there will be forty-two for school year 2024-25. All other students in the Burton area attend school in Oromocto, whether for French Immersion in the K-2 grades, due to daycare, due to parental work commitments, or for any grade level above grade 2. As such, buses are already traveling from Burton to Oromocto with students in the morning, returning after school each day.

The current bus population of students with a Burton address, for all grade levels except the forty-one students who attended Burton Elementary School, is 213. These students travel on five bus runs to and from Oromocto. We do not see the addition of forty-one more students in the busing numbers as having any significant impact on the district's ability to provide this service, nor do we see the need to add additional runs to accommodate the busing needs.

Question 2: Has there been any thoughts on how the individual school cultures will be integrated into new bigger schools? Has there been thoughts on how to incorporate the students and staff of Burton Elementary School into much bigger schools?

There exists a 'community of schools' within the Oromocto school environment. By this we mean that there already exists a flow from the grade K-2 schools to their 'big sister' grade 3-5 schools as well as to the grade 6-8 level with some adjustments based upon the FI requirements / desires of the students and families. The connectivity between the six Oromocto schools is evident in the sharing and coordinating of activities as well as with the 'flow of parents' between

the various PSSC committees. Burton Elementary School already has this same connectivity with their next school level. It is our intention to maintain these connections once the K-8 schools are established, with minor adjustments as necessary when final catchment areas are decided. This of course cannot be fully finalized until the new facilities are in place and student numbers are confirmed.

Given the continuing pressure on recruiting and retaining qualified educators, we are most confident that the Burton staff will find a welcoming home within the new school structures, staffed following the parameters of their collective agreements and with mutual flexibility as available. The same can be said for any support personnel as well as any volunteers. Communication, transparency, and involvement with Burton Elementary parents will be essential.

ASD-W currently has ten schools that are of K-8 configuration of various enrolment sizes. The latest transition of two cohorts of students from Priestman Street Elementary School and George Street Middle School to Hanwell Park Academy went very well due to solid planning, quality communication, and transparency. The scenario most similar to what we anticipate with Burton is when Debec Elementary School closed in June 2013, with a similar number of students beginning September 2013 at Southern Carleton Elementary School before moving as a group to the new grade K-8 Meduxnekeag Consolidated School in January, 2014. This was a successful transition, as well.

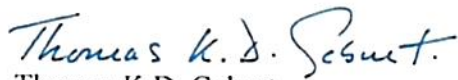
Question 3: Has placing of one of the three new K-8 schools close to or in Burton been considered?

The largest population base for the 'Oromocto / Burton school system' resides in Oromocto. In our deliberations we examined the student in-flow to Oromocto from not only Burton but also from Gaagetown, Fredericton Junction, Waasis, Rusagonis, Lincoln, and Maugeville. We also had discussions with the Town of Oromocto administration. The attached two maps will provide you with a good visualization of the in-out flow of students to the Oromocto schools. It would seem illogical to place a school in the Burton area and bus 351 students, many of whom will be able to walk to a school located within the Town, to a school located in Burton vice continuing to bus a lesser number of students into Oromocto. You will note that the number of students from the other 'feeder areas' also outnumbers the Burton Elementary School population. After our consideration of all the factors, our conclusion was that the best way to continue to provide quality education in modern facilities, noting that the Department has advised that three new schools is the scope of this rationalization process, was to place all three schools within the Town limits and continue the community connectiveness mentioned earlier, also creating a friendly competitiveness between the school communities which would foster a healthy esprit de corps.

Interestingly enough, if we were to consider placing one K-8 school in rural community outside the original Town of Oromocto boundaries, the area of Waasis/Rusagonis, could be considered more suitable with 382 students vs 254 students who reside in Burton. Again, after considerable reflection, the conclusion of all three schools being in Oromocto prevailed.

I hope that this feedback provides you with the information you require to reach a conclusion on the study. Should you have further questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to Superintendent David McTimoney or me.

Respectfully,



Thomas K.D. Geburt,
Chairperson District Education Council
Anglophone School District – West (ASD-W)

cc. Ryan Donaghy, Deputy Minister, EECD
Dr. Tiffany Bastin, Assistant Deputy Minister, EECD
Robert Penney, Assistant Deputy Minister, EECD
David McTimoney, Superintendent, ASD-W

Attachment: 1 - Maps Depicting In-Out Flow of Students to Oromocto Schools

In-Out Flow of Students to Oromocto Schools

Oromocto K-8 School #3 Proposed Catchment



Oromocto K-8 School #1 Proposed Catchment

