

The recommendation that North Bay be reduced to only one public high school and one 7/8 school for the entire city has to be rejected. This proposed solution is a response to a funding formula, an economic decision to reduce the number of “surplus” spaces. It has nothing to do with pedagogy. If it did this option would never have been proposed. The average secondary school size in Ontario is 847 students. Average elementary school size in Ontario is 340 students. This proposal is suggesting twice those numbers in one building. With all of the space that we have in North Bay, why is ***one school with a population greater than the town of Mattawa*** being proposed?

A new build would need to be twice the size of CSS. Existing total acreage for the three high schools is **66.13 acres** but the total size of the proposed site is **20.57 acres**. *In New York the recommended minimum is 10 acres plus 1 acre for every 100 students (at least 30 acres) and other states recommend more.* Twenty acres is small for a population this large and the green space that it would require. To solve this problem, a three story building has been proposed even though they are considered a liability by many architects. “Kids can fall on stairs.” Adults too.

There would be no “Plan B” with only one school. If a student is not happy they will have to go to a school in another board and funding will go too. If parents want their children in a smaller school they will have to enroll their child with another board. In 1980 there was a fire at CSS. All secondary students went to WFSS on a split shift. What happens if the city has only one 7-12 school and it can’t be occupied for some reason?

CSS has no capacity issue but it has the highest renewal costs because, from 2006-2015, no money was allotted to this school for capital expenditures. During this time period the school was recommended for closure and enrollment plummeted. It is a credit to CSS that they were able to survive these obstacles and rebuild their population yet this school with a triple gym, a full service cafeteria, two courtyards and beautiful green space is slated for demolition. WFSS and WSS will be emptied of their contents and the buildings and their fields will sit empty until they are sold or demolished as well. It would cost **\$101,021,524** to replace the three existing high schools and that does not include the contents. As one parent stated “They have bins in the cafeteria, and yet they were planning to cart the whole school off to the landfill.”

Yes, renewal is expensive but so are the costs of closure. Can the cost of renewal be reduced? Was a second opinion obtained? How do the costs for renovation compare to *all* of the costs of closure? Construction costs of \$63-68 million do not include the demolition costs, nor the relocation costs for Chippewa and Fricker students and staff in 2019 or the relocation costs for all six schools in 2020. Will the new build be on the footprint of the old school or will it destroy the green space at Chippewa? No mention is made of how CSS and Fricker students would be accommodated during the demolition of their old school and the construction period of the new builds, or of how the other schools would be impacted by this. Construction delays are common and could stretch well over the 18 month timeline. The impact of the closed schools on their neighborhood could last much longer.

The “Soft” costs of consultants, architects, permits, appraisals, construction insurance, legal, surveys, environmental reports, disbursements, general overhead, and taxes are not included in construction costs.

Neither are the site costs such as servicing, signage, parking lots, roadwork, landscaping, storm and sanitary sewers. Then there are the substantial interior costs of the lighting, fixtures, furniture and equipment.

There will be costs for maintaining the empty schools until they are sold or demolished. Smaller schools create funding challenges but they are minor in relation to the social, environmental and educational costs that would be created by placing 2247 students from grades 7 to 12 under one roof.

High density schools create a decreased sense of connectedness since people seek relationships first. There will be fewer quiet spaces. Halls, cafeteria will be noisier and crowded. There will be a decreased sense of safety (how do you spot strangers?)

Increased incidents of violence, vandalism are reported in high density schools.

There is a lack of opportunity for most students to be on school teams or take on leadership roles such as Students Council. Only the elite will fill the reduced spots. A broader cross section of students get to participate with more schools.

There will be less competition and school spirit. Large schools can't meet as a whole - space restrictions mean staggered lunch periods and assemblies. Supervision requirements will triple and increased staff time will be spent monitoring traffic.

Educational Costs: One of the benefits of a large school is programming but studies show increased drop out rates, lower achievement and lower graduation rates in larger schools

Environmental Costs: Even though WSS is less than two kilometers from CSS "as the crow flies" all three schools serve widespread populations that use city roads, not wings, for travel. Traffic problems alone are reason enough to abandon this proposal. Costs for additional bussing and transportation are mind boggling. 671 students attend WSS and most would have to be bussed to the new site. All 586 WFSS students would have to be bussed, Fricker 7/8 students add 132, plus 523 already bussed to CSS = **1800 to 1900 students!** How many busses would this mean going to one school? And fuel costs are rising! *This is not calculating in the extra K-6 transportation costs.* Loading zones and parking spaces would need to triple. Traffic congestion, air pollution, and traffic overflow on neighboring streets would be routine. Traffic gridlock would happen twice every school day as these students are transported to and from the only 7-12 school. There would be extra expense and stress from longer travel times for students and the caregivers who drive them. The loss of health and environmental benefits for the 600+ grade 7-12 students that will no longer be able to walk or bike to school is also too huge a price to pay.

These decisions are critical as generations of students will be affected by them. The board needs to look at other options, including those raised in the staff report. One 7-12 school for the entire board will not work and would be detrimental for everyone.

