

Good evening. My name is Christine Brown and I'm a parent of two children who attend Alliance French Immersion Public School. If my children continue in the French immersion program, both will attend Chippewa Intermediate in September 2017 and September 2020 respectively. I'm speaking on behalf of myself and a group of concerned parents whose children currently attend school at either Alliance or Vincent Massey.

Tonight I'd like to remark on two issues below.

Issue & Questions – Facility Management

Should the proposed concept of one “super school” proceed, what is the Board's plan to ensure the only public high school in the city won't fall into the same state of disrepair as the current schools?

Will the Board implement and address a Preventive Maintenance schedule for mechanical systems used in the new facility?

Has the board considered a contingency plan should the only high school suffer an emergency of some kind? Where would the displaced 2247 students go? There would not a facility large enough to house these students to continue their education.

Does the Board have an approved utilities management policy in place? A school as large as the proposed “super school” will have large costs associated with heating, cooling and electrical. What options has the board explored in order to reduce or mitigate these costs?

If there is an issue with funding, why does the board continue to maintain the head office on a 3 acre parcel of land located in a highly taxed area of the city? Should the Board consider selling a valuable piece of land and move the Head Office to a more central and accessible location?

Issue & Questions – Curriculum Programming

In the ISR (Initial Staff Recommendation) the identified “magnet” programs for each high school will transfer over to the “super school”. As a parent, I have read the SIPs (School Information Profile) which outlines curriculum programs offered at the various high schools. Our family has noted some high schools are able to offer many more programs to its students by implementing a 5 period or 5 class day. Has the board considered what the day will look like at this new school? As a family will we have as many choices available for our children as we do presently? Has the Board been transparent in terms of what other curriculum programs will be lost if we move into one high school? Trying to meet the needs of a student population of 2,247 is an almost insurmountable task. I'm not prepared to lose my choices in Public Education by housing all our students in one space that also doesn't offer a variety of courses. As a parent, the other Boards are looking inviting which leads to another topic of declining enrollment in our Board while other Boards are not seeing the same trend.... I digress

Proposed Alternative

One (1) single JK-Grade 6 School located on the current Fricker site

Two (2) Grade 7-12 schools – one on the Chippewa site and one at the existing West Ferris site which would share the 2,247 intermediate and secondary students.

Benefits of the two secondary schools include:

-choice within the Public Board – 57% of secondary school students in the area are enrolled within the NNDSB – the remaining are spread between the three remaining boards

- West Ferris remains open, providing accessibility for students and staff with the recent addition of an elevator and provides a critical resource for families in the West Ferris, Callender, Astorville areas.

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It is our hope the ARC committee and Trustees will consider the issues raised tonight. We look forward to this committee giving serious attention to the alternative suggested above.

Thank you,
Christine Brown