

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
Report No. 23-002

17 January 2023

**New Riverside South Secondary School – Approval of Study
Consultation Plan and Timeline**

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PURPOSE:

1. To seek Board approval of a consultation process and timeline to establish the opening grade structure, program offering and attendance boundary for a new secondary school located in the Riverside South community in Gloucester.

CONTEXT:

2. In the fall of 2020, the Board received notice of capital priority funding for the construction of a secondary school in Riverside South.

A predecessor of the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (OCDSB) took ownership of the school site on 21 July 1965. The 8 ha (19.75 acre) site is located at the southeast intersection of Spratt Road and Earl Armstrong Road. Please refer to the general location map attached as Appendix A.

3. In October 2020, funding for the construction of a grade 7 to 12 secondary school in the Riverside South area was granted from the Ministry of Education based on the September 2019 Capital Priorities submission. The OCDSB was allocated \$42,319,111 in capital funding for the new 1516 pupil place, Grade 7-12 school.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

4. The proposed study will examine the attendance boundary, program, and opening grade structure options for the new secondary school. These options will take into consideration updated student enrolment and school-age population trends, residential development patterns, and student distribution data.

As part of the study process, current local attendance boundaries and school feeding patterns will be reviewed in an effort to ensure that logical alignments are put in place, and a balancing of school enrolments is achieved. The location of future residential development and planned new school openings will be taken into consideration.

To help facilitate the implementation of the new Riverside South Secondary School (SS), a preliminary boundary has been created (attached as Appendix D).

The preliminary boundary was created to stimulate discussion on an appropriate final boundary during the advisory group meetings, and to determine which community and school stakeholders should be invited to participate in this process. The final boundary of the new Riverside South SS will take into consideration the feedback of all impacted stakeholders and may or may not look anything like the initial proposal.

Riverside South is part of the City of Ottawa's South Urban Community located on the east side of the Rideau River and mirroring Barrhaven. Still a relatively new urban expansion, the Riverside South community was originally expected to contain in excess of 20,500 units at full build-out. To date, approximately 7,800 units have been built. It should be noted that despite prior planning, the new bill (*Bill 23 - More Homes Built Faster*), may influence the capacity of the new Riverside South SS.

The OCDSB does not have a secondary school in Riverside South. In fact, even at the elementary panel, not all students who reside in Riverside South are accommodated in the community. One of the goals of this exercise will be to establish in-community boundaries for resident students in kindergarten through secondary school, so they may attend school in the community in which they live.

The preliminary boundary that staff has put out for discussion is envisioned to serve the existing and future residents of Riverside South and Findlay Creek. The Findlay Creek neighborhood is a rapidly growing area located to the east of Riverside South, and bordered by planned greenfield development. Findlay Creek has approximately 5,500 homes, and is anticipated to accommodate 2,500 additional units at full build-out. The inclusion of the Findlay Creek area within the preliminary Riverside South SS boundary is one that staff carefully considered. This area is subject to feedback and discussions regarding sustainability and may be revised out of the final catchment.

One of the key considerations of the consultation process will surround implementation of the boundary; the opening grades that will be considered and the potential for grand parenting students/siblings at existing schools. For this report that focuses on consultation and the communities included, staff have not made assumptions about these matters, rather, will wait for feedback from stakeholders.

Impact to Secondary Schools:

5. There are approximately 2,065 secondary students in Riverside South and Findlay Creek. Most of the secondary students in Riverside South currently have the option to attend either Merivale High School or South Carleton High School, both of which are located a significant distance outside of the local area. A small portion of secondary students in Riverside South choose to attend South Carleton High School, while the majority of the secondary students in this area attend Merivale High School. The secondary students in Findlay Creek are directed to Ridgemont High School. Due to the lack of a public high-school in the Riverside South and Findlay Creek neighborhoods, the OCDSB has a secondary student yield of approximately 31%. In comparison, Longfields-Davidson Heights

Secondary School in Barrhaven has a secondary student yield of approximately 46%. It can be anticipated that the new Riverside South SS will attract a higher student yield than we currently experience.

The preliminary boundary for the new Riverside South SS creates a local catchment that would eliminate the optional boundary for Merivale HS and South Carleton HS. If the Findlay Creek students are included in this catchment, then their current direction to Ridgemont HS will be reevaluated. It is therefore anticipated that the schools should have ongoing participation in this process. Additionally, there is a small portion of the Riverside South catchment (near the corner of Hunt Club Road and Riverside Drive) that is directed to Brookfield HS. Likewise, small portions of the existing Findlay Creek catchment are directed to either Gloucester HS or Osgoode Township HS. It is therefore anticipated that those schools will be involved in an initial discussion of boundaries, however, impacts are minimal to these schools and therefore ongoing participation in the process is not anticipated to be required.

Staff has provided a chart below that outlines the inclusion of schools in the boundary discussion and a high-level summary of potential impact:

School	Impact	Consultation Required
Merivale High School	- Removal of option area redirecting secondary students to the new Riverside South Secondary School	Yes
South Carleton High School	- Removal of option area redirecting secondary students to the new Riverside South Secondary School. - New Stitsville Secondary School reducing enrolment at South Carleton High School	Yes
Ridgemont High School	- Redirection of Findlay Creek Secondary Students to new Riverside South Secondary School	Yes
Osgoode Township High School	- Redirection of a small portion of the option area to the new Riverside South Secondary School	Initial consultation required, subsequent consultation not required
Gloucester High School	- Redirection of a small portion of the option area to the new Riverside South Secondary School	Initial consultation required, subsequent consultation not required
Brookfield High School	- Redirection of a small portion of the boundary to the new Riverside South Secondary School	Initial consultation required, subsequent consultation not required

Table 1. General Impact to Secondary Schools.

Impact to Elementary Schools:

6. Grade 6, 7, and 8 students residing in the Riverside South and Findlay Creek area are currently directed to Steve MacLean PS, Vimy Ridge PS, Kars on the Rideau PS, Farley Mowat PS, and Blossom Park PS, depending on the home address and program.

This report provides an opportunity to discuss a more logical geographic boundary for Farley Mowat PS. Farley Mowat PS's boundary is currently divided by the Rideau River. To streamline the high school feeding patterns, it is suggested in the initial boundary proposal that Farley Mowat PS's boundary be modified to leave students west of the river (Barrhaven) to Farley Mowat PS, and students east of the river (Riverside South) to Steve MacLean PS.

One of the reasons that the Farley Mowat PS Boundary can be reevaluated is that the new secondary school in Riverside South is to be a 7-12 format. Removing 7-8 from Steve MacLean PS allows us the capacity to reexamine the Summerhill neighborhood being directed across the river; something that has long been contentious.

Likewise, Vimy Ridge PS in Findlay Creek is experiencing significant enrolment pressure which has justified the building of the second elementary school in the area. While this expansion of pupil places is welcome, we are aware of an additional urban expansion area that has been added to the community. If the area can be directed to the Riverside South secondary school it will result in an alleviation of intermediate student pressure in the community, and therefore the two Findlay Creek schools can better accommodate the growing population.

Like the existing secondary boundaries, there are areas of peripheral impact within Riverside South and Findlay Creek. Kars on the Rideau PS would be impacted by a small redirection if the proposed boundary is similar to the one that will ultimately be reviewed. The current Middle French Immersion boundary for some of the area is Blossom Park PS. Accordingly, that school community will be invited to initial discussions to participate.

As with the secondary panel, staff has created the following chart that outlines the schools that should be involved in the initial discussion, and the potential impact experienced with the creation of a Riverside South SS boundary:

School	Impact	Consultation Required
Steve MacLean Public School	- Redirection of Grade 7 and 8 to new Riverside South Secondary School - Redirection of Grade a portion of Farley Mowat Public School's boundary to Steve MacLean Public School	Yes
Vimy Ridge Public School	- Redirection of Grade 7 and 8 to new Riverside South Secondary School	Yes
Kars on the Rideau Public School	- Redirection of a portion of the Grade 7 and 8 to new Riverside South Secondary School	Yes
Farley Mowat Public School	- Redirection of a portion of Grades JK-6 from Farley Mowat Public School's boundary to Steve MacLean Public School	Yes
Blossom Park Public School	- Redirection of a portion of the MFI Grade 7 and 8 students to new Riverside South Secondary School	Yes

Table 2. General Impact to Elementary Schools.

In summary, the preliminary Riverside South SS boundary proposed for discussion is anticipated to affect six secondary schools. The preliminary boundary proposes to:

- Eliminate the option area for Merivale High School and South Carleton High School;
- Direct secondary students located in the Findlay Creek area that attend Ridgemont High School to the new Riverside South SS and;
- Eliminate a small portion of the option area associated with Osgoode Township High School and Gloucester High School; and
- Redirect a small portion of secondary students away from Brookfield High School.
- In addition to these impacts, the preliminary Riverside South SS boundary is anticipated to affect five elementary schools. The preliminary boundary proposes to:
 - Direct grade 7 and 8 students from Steve MacLean Public, Vimy Ridge PS, Blossom Park PS (MFI), and Kars on the Rideau PS to the new Riverside South SS, and;
 - Modify Farley Mowat PS's current boundary.

The impacts described above are not expected to result in unsustainable enrolment numbers for the schools mentioned above.

In this consultation, regardless of outcome, the OCDSB does not envision moving more than 50% of a school's population in order to establish boundaries. A statement is required in all accommodation exercises that addresses our Pupil Accommodation Review Policy. A formal Pupil Accommodation Review (PAR) under Board Policy P.118PLG, Pupil Accommodation Reviews (currently

suspended under a provincial moratorium) is not required, as the new school will not accommodate more than 50% of the enrolment of any impacted schools. The calculation is based on the enrolment at the time of the relocation.

In accordance with Board policy, affected schools and communities are to be informed about the proposed study before a decision is made by the Board of Trustees to exempt a school from a PAR.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

7. The cost of conducting the review will be managed within existing departmental budgets.

COMMUNICATION/CONSULTATION ISSUES:

8. A general location map of the location of the new Riverside South Secondary High School is attached as Appendix A to this report.

The recommended timeline and consultation plan for the study are attached as Appendix B and C to this report.

An information flyer and a weblink to this report will be sent to those schools affected by the review, and their respective communities, in advance of the Committee of the Whole meeting on 17 January 2023.

Once a decision has been made to proceed with the consultation process as an exemption from a PAR, notice in accordance with the policy will be provided to the City of Ottawa, coterminous school boards, the Ministry of Education and community partners that have expressed an interest.

Given the focused scope of the proposed review, two or more information meetings, including affected principals and school council representatives, are proposed to be held in February and March of 2023, and prior to a broader public consultation meeting.

Potentially affected schools include:

- Merivale High School;
- South Carleton High School;
- Osgoode Township High School;
- Gloucester High School;
- Ridgemont High School; and
- Brookfield High School.
- Potentially affected elementary schools include:
 - Steve MacLean Public School;
 - Vimy Ridge Public School;
 - Blossom Park Public School;
 - Kars on the Rideau Public School; and
 - Farley Mowat Public School.

As always, there is the possibility through consultation that additional communities will be brought into the discussion. If this occurs, it has been our practice to inform the Zone Trustee and to reflect this expansion of consultation in the final report to the Board.

A public consultation meeting, to be held virtually, is tentatively planned for April 2023. Final Board decisions regarding the review are scheduled to take place in June 2023.

STRATEGIC LINKS:

9. The opening of a secondary school within the developing Riverside South area will provide the District with the ability to serve Riverside South area students locally.
10. The addition of a school within its own caring community is consistent with the objectives of the PCDSB Strategic Plan by improving equity of access to a choice of high quality programs in an environment which fosters innovation and creativity. The provision of additional new school facilities within a growth area of the District provides opportunity for each of the Strategic Plan's three key priority areas to be addressed; creating a culture of innovation, caring and social responsibility.

RECOMMENDATION:

- A. THAT the timeline and consultation plan attached as Appendix B and C to Report 23-022, be approved in order to consult with local school communities and the public; and,
- B. THAT the Board affirm that a Pupil Accommodation Review (PAR) under Board Policy P.118.PLG is not required for this study.

Randall Gerrior
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Michèle Giroux
Director of Education and
Secretary of the Board

APPENDICES

- Appendix A General Location Map
- Appendix B Timeline
- Appendix C Consultation Plan
- Appendix D Preliminary Boundary for Riverside South Secondary School
- Appendix E Preliminary Boundary for Farley Mowat Public School
- Appendix F Preliminary Boundary for Steve MacLean Public School