



Name: Katie Gibbs

Brief summary of issue or topic of discussion:

I wish to raise concerns with the draft plan under the Elementary Program Review. The proposed changes to Elgin Street Public School and to the zone boundaries are substantial. For the cohorts of kids currently attending Elgin, they will be split up into three schools (Elgin, Centennial and Cambridge), this is going to be incredibly disruptive to these kids and their friend groups. This is especially true for the older grades. My son will be going into grade 5 when this is implemented and it means he will be changing schools and separated from the friends he has been at school with for the past 6 years. He is also in the cohort of kids who had the first two years of school deeply affected by COVID disruptions. Many studies have shown lasting social and academic challenges for this group, so why are we subjecting them to this huge disruption?

The new proposed boundaries themselves, do not in any way line up with the natural boundaries of our community. As staff pointed out at the March 4th Committee of the Whole meeting, Centretown is seeing a dramatic boundary change in this proposal. The new proposed boundaries at Bank and Somerset cut through the heart of our community. Centretown is a well-defined community with clear boundaries and our school boundaries should reflect that.

Like many families in our community, we're willing to accept some change and transition if it means better outcomes for everyone. We support the stated goals of increasing equity and understand the unstated but clear financial concerns the board is facing. However, this proposal does not provide any evidence that this new plan will improve equity or improve the financial situation of the board.

How many more kids are expected to enroll in EFI because of these changes? How will these changes improve the test scores of students at underperforming schools (not the school average but the actual students)? How much money will these changes save? I haven't seen answers to any of these questions. You can understand how it's hard for families to accept this much upheaval without even seeing evidence of the supposed



benefits.

For example, the new proposed boundaries now have Bronson going through the middle of two school zones. At the March 4th COW, staff noted that they would still be taking hazardous routes into consideration when planning bussing. This could very well result in bussing students back and forth across Bronson and could potentially increase bussing costs.

I want to be solution oriented but this is a complex puzzle and it's not fair to expect parents to propose concrete counter proposals off the side of their desk without access to the full data. But an updated proposed should include:

- School boundaries that reflect the Centretown community
- Grandparenting for all students impacted by the changes to keep cohorts together
- A detailed plan showing how this will be implemented (How will current English only school libraries be updated at schools where EFI is being added? How will you ensure there is EDP capacity for increased enrollment? How will bussing be affected? How will the plan actually improve equity for equity seeking students and not just make the numbers look better in aggregate? What will the cost savings be?)