



**Name: Hilary Jensen**

**Brief summary of issue or topic of discussion:**

On behalf of a group of concerned parents, I would like to speak to agenda item 10.2 at the March 4 meeting regarding the proposed boundary revisions for the elementary program.

Delegation to OCDSB Trustee Meeting March 4, 2025

Subject: Agenda item 10.2 Elementary Program Review (boundary changes)

- I am appearing today on behalf of concerned parents in the Carlingwood neighbourhood.
- We are concerned about the impacts of the proposed boundary changes on our community.
- Under the proposed changes, children in JK-Gr3 in the Carlingwood neighbourhood (between Sherbourne Rd and Woodroffe Ave) would:
  - not be eligible to attend their closest school (Woodroffe Ave PS),
  - nor would they be eligible to attend their second closest school (Broadview PS),
  - nor would they be eligible to attend their third closest school (D Roy Kennedy PS),
  - nor would they be eligible to attend their fourth closest school (Churchill Ave PS).
- Children would be required to attend the school that is the fifth furthest school from their home (Regina St PS), separated by three major arteries (Woodroffe Ave, Richmond Rd, parkway/LRT), and with no walkable connection.
  - This poses safety concerns.

- The proposal is completely antithetical to the OCDSB's purported focus on community education and is not an acceptable solution for the families in our neighbourhood.
- We are counting on school board trustees to reverse this proposal and truly support our neighbourhood school.

Special Board Meeting: March 19, 2025 Hilary Jensen

### Elementary Program Review: Impacts on Woodroffe Ave Public School Community

**Summary:** The Elementary Program Review (EPR) is failing to meet its stated objectives. Proposed boundaries would severely harm the Woodroffe Ave Public School community and must be revised.

<b>What the OCDSB says:</b>	<b>What families are experiencing:</b>
<p>We want to ensure that every school serves as a central hub for its community, offering localized programs and services.<sup>1</sup></p>	<p>Under proposed changes, kids who currently walk to school would be bussed to sites further away. No data has been presented on how proposed boundaries would impact commutes and walkability across the District. <b>At Woodroffe Ave Public School, many students in JK to Grade 3 would travel up to 3kms to attend Regina School in a separate part of the city. This is unsafe, as the commute crosses major arterial roads and construction sites. It is also completely illogical, as many families have three or four other OCDSB schools in closer proximity to their homes.<sup>2</sup> Families have begun registering children in other school boards so that they are not removed from their community.</b></p>
<p>It is estimated that approx. 11,000 students may experience a change in schools for the 2026-27 school year.</p>	<p>The EPR affects nearly every one of the 50,000 elementary students in the OCDSB due to far-reaching changes to school boundaries, programs and grade configurations. The Board has proposed to minimize student movement in specific years to avoid a more detailed impact assessment and consultation process.<sup>3</sup> <b>Well over half of the student population at Woodroffe Ave Public School would ultimately be displaced as a result of eliminating JK to Grade 3 and redirecting some Grade 4 to 8 students to other schools. This would separate siblings and friends. The impacts of this upheaval have not been assessed.</b></p>



## Delegation 6.6.c

<p>Exploring implementation details would be putting the cart before the horse.</p>	<p>The OCDSB has not explained if/how required investments in learning resources and site renovations could be accommodated given the Board's severe financial challenges, nor have they addressed impacts on staffing levels, student transportation and childcare in any meaningful way. <b>Woodroffe Ave Public School has a dedicated kindergarten wing and yard. How would retrofitting this facility for older children while bussing younger children outside the neighbourhood save costs?</b></p>
<p>Staff will ensure that ... all voices are heard to the greatest extent possible.</p>	<p>There are 18 working days between the release of the proposed boundaries and the close of the consultations, five of which are over March break. This is insufficient given the serious impacts of these changes. <b>The Woodroffe Ave Public School community has proposals for improving school boundaries and needs time to engage with Trustees, Board staff and other school groups. Our school council will only meet with our Trustee after the consultation period is over.</b></p>
<p>Families support the principles of the review but don't want it to affect their area.</p>	<p>Families are willing to accept some level of change and inconvenience to ensure the future success of the OCDSB. <b>But it is also reasonable for Woodroffe Ave Public School families to expect their children to attend one of the many schools in proximity to their homes, within their community. The current proposal makes this impossible.</b></p>

**Action Needed:** Trustees should immediately (i) explore all options to **keep Woodroffe a JK to Grade 8 school and ensure students can learn in their community**, including by revisiting configurations of other Zone 4 schools facing similar challenges; (ii) conduct substantive engagement with impacted communities so we can work together on better solutions; (iii) delay any decision on the EPR until OCDSB staff have provided more fulsome analysis of how the plan could be implemented.

<sup>1</sup> All statements from meeting materials and oral interventions at Committee of the Whole on March 4, 2025. <sup>2</sup> Woodroffe, Broadview, D Roy Kennedy and Churchill schools are all closer than Regina. <sup>3</sup> The Ministry mandates a Pupil Accommodation Review (PAR) when a certain percentage of students move schools.