

Name: Megan Maloney

Brief summary of issue or topic of discussion:

My submissions relate to: SPECIAL BOARD PUBLIC AGENDA, Wednesday, March 19, 2025 at 6:30 pm, specifically the delegation relating to "Regarding Castor Valley Cluster".

My comments are directly related to the students of Osgood Public School who are being moved to Castor Valley Elementary School

Facts

The proposed changes as a result of the Elementary Program Review (EPR) significantly impact a minor number of children currently enrolled at Osgoode Public School (OPS) ranging from JK-grade 6. As per Appendix A to Report 25-016 - Summary of Proposed Changes by School (the Appendix), a total of 23 students are being proposed to be moved out of the boundary of OPS and into that of Castor Valley Elementary School (CVES). The Appendix also makes it clear that OPS is an under populated school, currently at 93% whereas CVES is over capacity at 161 %. Even after the suggested boundary changes, CVES will remain over capacity at 132%.

OPS is already a dual track French and English school, much like CVES. There are no significant program changes being proposed to OPS in this ERP, as there is no need given the equitable language offerings that are already in place.

Impact of the Proposed OPS Boundary Change

On Tuesday, 4 March 2025 at the OCDSB Committee of the Whole public meeting, Trustee [REDACTED] asked [REDACTED], General Manager of Planning Services pointed questions regarding OPS. Specifically, [REDACTED] asked why students are being moved from OPS to CVES when both are already dual track French and English schools. In her response, [REDACTED] acknowledged that OPS is already a dual track school that is doing well and is very balanced. The only real justification provided for changing the boundary of OPS was to regularize what [REDACTED] noted was not quite a rectangle in shape. In my view, this is far from a compelling argument to move 23 students out of their school and community

Community-based education, equitable language offerings and inclusion are all themes that are being cited by OCDSB as reasons for the EPR. And yet, in the case of OPS, the proposed boundary change runs counter to these objectives. The proposal removes 23 students from their



community where they are already being offered dual track language programming and into a different community's school in order to ensure the boundary is a proper rectangle. [REDACTED] also stated that community is defined in different ways but can be where you shop, play sports, etc. For us, and the other families impacted by this change, that is Osgoode. My children go to camp, play sports, and engage in extra-curricular activities in Osgoode.

Rural communities are distinct from urban centres and the fact that some families live on the outskirts of a small community does not mean they are not a part of that community or that they can easily be shifted to another location for schooling. Greely students are being moved within their community, whereas OPS students are being moved out of their community entirely. I believe that OPS is an outlier in the context of this larger EPR and ought to be treated differently.

[REDACTED] also mentioned how many students will be moving as a cohort. This again is simply not applicable in the context of OPS either as those 23 students are spread across JK-grade 6, resulting in many moving without any peers at all and to a community they are not a part of.

As stated on its website, OCDSB is committed to promoting student mental health. However, a change in boundaries for children, and one without a valid justification does anything but promote student mental health. Removing 23 children from their community where they've made connections and peers is harmful, particularly for children who have had a difficult time transitioning to school to begin with.

Conclusion

The students of OPS should not be impacted by the larger EPR. While it is important to consider the long term health of the school board, there is no compelling reason to impact the children of OPS to fulfill that goal. The objectives of the EPR are not served by moving OPS children from their under-capacity school to a new school that is over capacity and offers the same programming. Thank you for your time.