



OTTAWA-CARLETON
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD



Consultation Report

May 6, 2025

2024-2025 OCDSB ELEMENTARY **PROGRAM REVIEW**



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The perspectives and opinions outlined in this report reflect the feedback received through the consultation about elementary programming. Please be aware that these views may not accurately represent the actual operations of OCDSB programs and structures nor do they always accurately reflect the nature of the proposed changes.



Consultation Overview


The purpose of the consultation was to receive feedback from the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (OCDSB) community about the revised proposed elementary program model that seeks to improve program quality and accessibility for students. The OCDSB conducted an online survey that was open to the public from April 3, 2025 to April 24, 2025. In total, **2,260 contributions were collected through the online survey**. This survey sought feedback from parents/caregivers, staff, students, and community members on the *revised* proposed elementary program model. The data was analyzed and themed consistently and reiteratively throughout the survey period by the Strategic Business Analyst, with results continuously shared with various OCDSB departments (e.g., Learning Support Services, Planning Department, Program Services) to review, consider, and apply or address feedback.



Methodology

This consultation period relied largely on qualitative data. Relying on qualitative data allowed for a more thorough, in-depth, and complex understanding of the views, beliefs, and opinions of participants (Creswell, 2003). Given the breadth of data, a thematic analysis was undertaken to extrapolate key themes from the survey data. Thematic analysis “is a method for identifying, analyzing, and interpreting patterns of meaning (‘themes’) within qualitative data” (Clarke & Braun, 2017, p. 297; see also Ryan & Bernard, 2003). Thematic analysis was especially useful due to the richness of the data. The aim of thematic analysis is not “simply to summarize the data content, but to identify, and interpret, key, but not necessarily all, features of the data” (p. 297). There are commonly six phases in thematic analysis which are comprised of familiarization with data, generating initial codes, searching for themes among codes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the final report (Braun & Clarke, 2006, pp. 87-93; see also Braun, Clark, Hayfield & Terry, 2018; Patton, 2014). Ultimately, the approach chosen for this report was a thematic identification process that relies on identifying patterns of recurring ideas that are then grouped into broader themes. As such, the themes present are among the most common that emerged in this process.

It was not within the scope of this consultation period to employ interpretive frameworks or theoretical approaches to analyze and interpret the themes themselves. As such, this thematic analysis – as with previous consultation reports for the elementary program review – sought to generate semantic themes. With semantic themes, the data analyst “is not looking for anything beyond what a participant has said or what has been written” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p.84; see also Byrne, 2022). The production of semantic themes is a descriptive analysis of the data, aimed solely at presenting the content of the data as communicated by the respondents. In addition to the themes represented in the report, select quotes are included from respondents to supplement and further ground the themes in the voices of those who participated. These quotes further exemplify the themes that emerged throughout the analysis of the data.

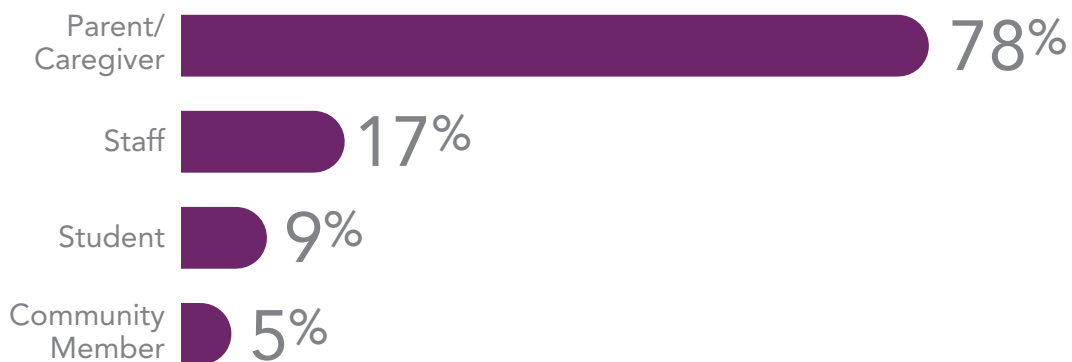


As a final methodological note, given the numerous participant groups involved (e.g., parents/caregivers, staff members, community members, students), it is common that themes from one group may conflict with those of another, and sometimes, even within the demographic group itself. This is common among semantic theming as it presents the content of the data as communicated by the respondent. It is imperative to report on and share these themes for the sake of transparency, regardless of any contradictions that may emerge between and amongst them. Sharing these thematic contradictions also minimizes the potential for any confirmation bias from the thematic analysis as it presents numerous lenses and positions that afford a fulsome view of lived experiences. Bias was further minimized by sharing results with an external ThoughtExchange partner to review the data and thematic analysis. What follows are the thematic categories emergent from the survey data.

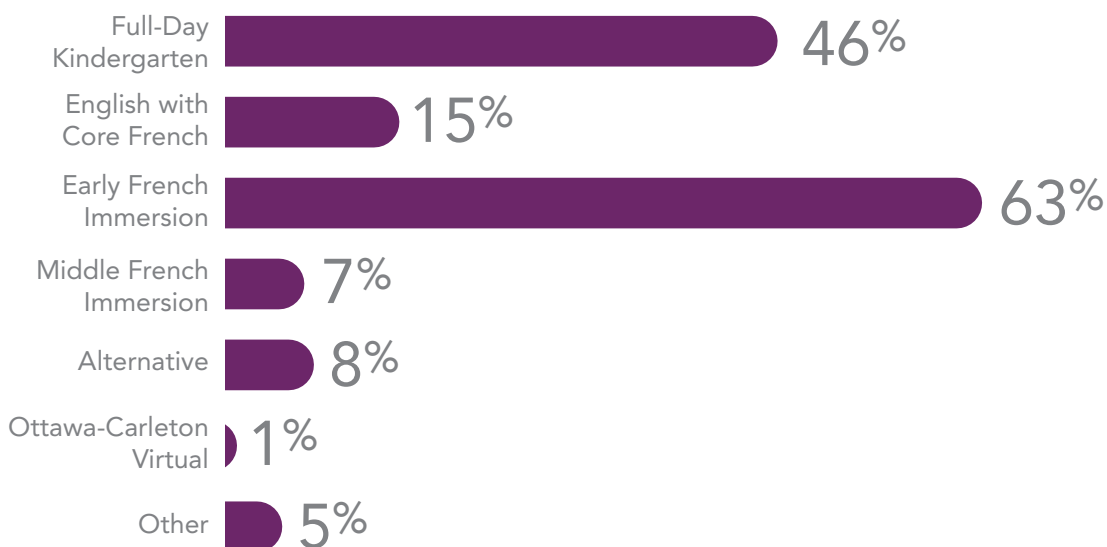
Total Respondent Demographics

The graphs below represent demographic data of respondents to the survey. It is important to note that the numbers may total more than 100% due to respondents being able to select more than one demographic category as applicable. For example, parents/caregivers may also be staff members at the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board, and therefore, offer two differing perspectives.

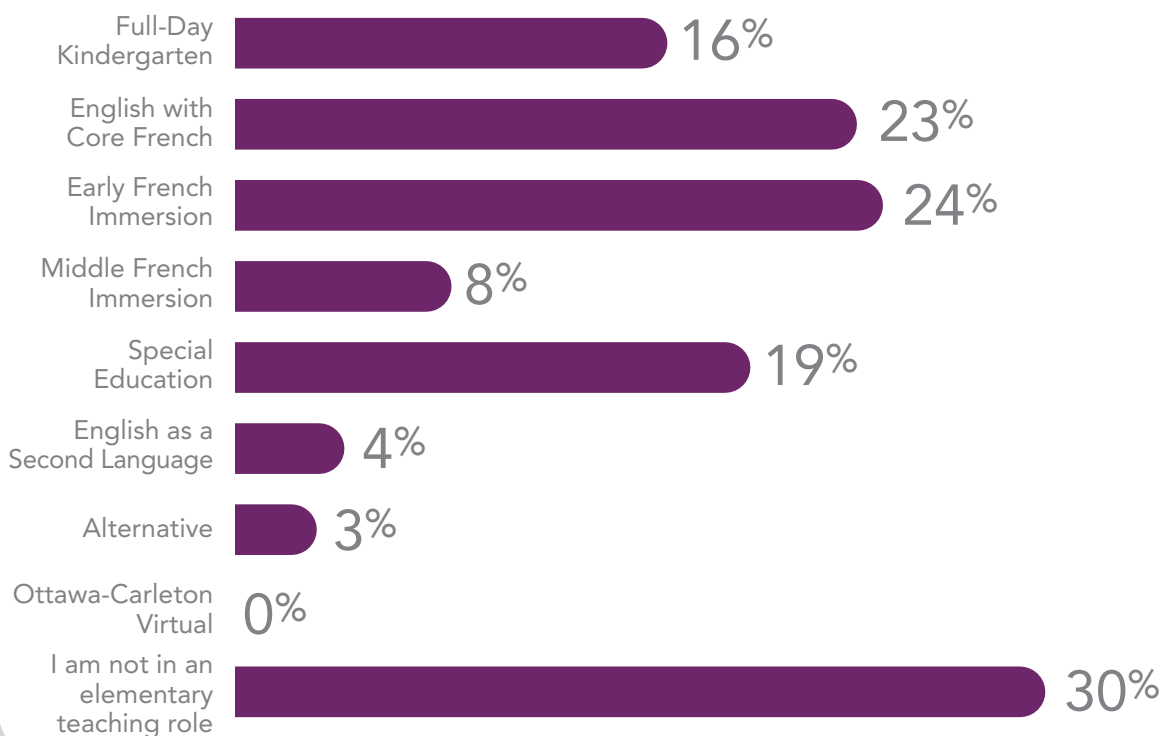
1. How are you connected to the OCDSB? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)



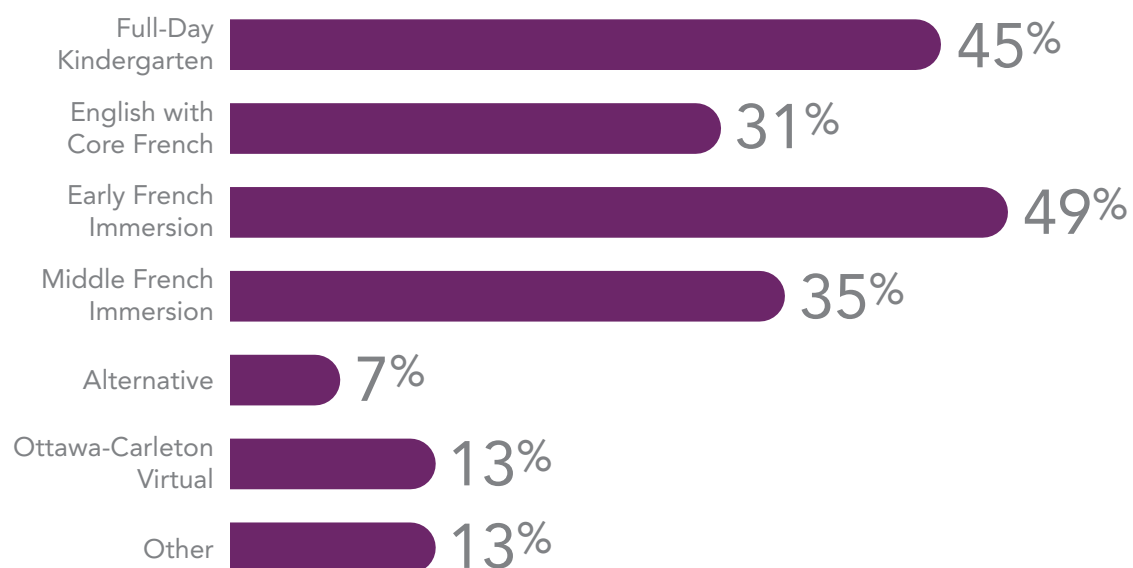
2. Which program(s) does/did your child attend in elementary school? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)



3. Which program(s) do you teach? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)



4. Which program(s) do/did you attend in elementary school? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)





Overall Themes

There were a total of **58 themes across all demographic groups and questions that were asked for each group**. Through further analysis, all of these themes can be grouped into **seven overarching thematic categories** that encompass the feedback for this final phase of the consultation process. Below, the themes are listed along with their descriptions:

1. Community and Stability:

There was strong support for the revised proposed program model that now increasingly allows students to attend schools close to home, enhancing walkability, reducing busing, and building local connections. Participants valued stability for students by minimizing school changes (e.g., phasing out JK-3 and 4-8 models in favour of K-6 or K-8 configurations). Families and communities emphasized the social and emotional benefits of allowing siblings to stay in the same school that the revised proposed program model provides over the original proposal.

2. Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility:

While some saw improved access to French Immersion and specialized programs as equitable, others felt that underserved or less vocal communities were being overlooked. Participants expressed worry that the changes disproportionately benefited affluent or well-organized communities, leaving others behind. However, while there was general favourability toward expanding French Immersion access, though concerns existed about quality and equitable distribution.

3. Special Education and Support Needs:

There was widespread worry that the phasing out or integration of specialized programs without added classroom support would harm both students with special needs and educators. The revised proposed full inclusion model continues to raise concerns due to limited EA staffing and that mainstream classrooms are not well-equipped.



4. Education Quality and Consistency:

Many participants were skeptical that expanding access (especially to French Immersion) would maintain quality without adequate staffing or training. However, the move toward consistent offerings across schools (e.g., dual-track models) was seen as a way to create a more equitable, accessible, and predictable educational experience.

5. Logistical and Practical Considerations:

The revised proposed changes maintained questions and reservations around transportation, longer commutes, and unclear plans for before/after school childcare. Both staff and parents/caregivers expressed concern about growing class sizes, understaffing, and burnout risks—especially in the inclusive model.

6. Emotional and Social Well-Being:

The potential for disrupted friendships, new environments, and altered support systems raised anxiety about the emotional toll on children. Staff, in particular, highlighted the risk of losing school community identity due to reassignments or large-scale structural changes.

7. Implementation and Transparency:

Some participants questioned the transparency and fairness of the consultation process, suggesting that the final decisions disproportionately reflected the interests of the most vocal groups. Across all groups, there was a call for more detailed rollout plans, clarity around supports, and genuine follow-through on feedback received.

► PARENTS/CAREGIVERS



What are your thoughts on the advantages of the proposed program model?

Parents/caregivers highlighted several key advantages of the revised program model, including reduced transitions, community cohesion, accessibility, bilingual programming, special education support, and cost efficiency. These perceived benefits reflect the positive impact that the revised model is expected to have on students, families, and the broader school community. Below, key themes and relevant quotes are presented.

Reductions in Transitions and Stability

Parents and caregivers appreciate the revised proposed program model for reducing the number of transitions their children have to make between schools. This stability is seen as beneficial for the children's emotional well-being and academic continuity. The revised model is perceived to lessen the burden on families by minimizing the need for alternative supportive care and transportation arrangements.

“

“The revised program is a significant improvement upon the previous proposal. The burden on families to find alternative supportive care and transportation for students is reduced.”

“The revised proposed program model is a major improvement over the original model, for our family. Our two children will now attend the same school for JK-8, together, and will be able to walk.”

”

Community and Sibling Cohesion

Parents and caregivers praise the revised proposed program model for keeping siblings together in the same school and maintaining community ties. This cohesion is seen as important for building a strong sense of community and support among families. Parents and caregivers value the ability for their children to grow up together and form lasting friendships within their local community.

“

“Keeping younger and older siblings and friends together is an important element in building community.”

“I am very pleased to see that the concerns raised about the Elmvale Acres area (Pleasant Park Public School and Vincent Massey Public School, in particular) have been heard and that there has been an adjustment back to the K-6 (PPPS) and K-8 (VM) model that there is in place now.”

”

Accessibility and Walkability

Parents and caregivers value the revised proposed program model for making schools more accessible and walkable. They indicated that this reduces the need for transportation and allows children to attend schools within their own neighbourhoods. The ability to walk to school is seen as a significant advantage for both children and parents and maintains consistency with the guiding principle of community schools outlined within the elementary program review proposal.

“

“My children can go to the same school together as we with the revised plan the school is staying jk-8! Wonderful news for both of them (and us as parents).”

“I am very happy with the revised proposed program model. The initial revised program was disruptive.”

”

French Immersion and Bilingual Program

The inclusion of French Immersion and bilingual programming in the revised proposed program model is seen by parents and caregivers as a positive step towards providing equitable access to language education. Parents and caregivers appreciate the flexibility and opportunities for their children to learn French, which is regarded as an important skill, particularly in Ottawa.

“

“Accessibility to French immersion at different years throughout grade school.”

“I like the idea of sending kids to their neighbourhood schools and equalizing resources throughout the community.”

”



Special Education and Support Programs

The retention of special education and support programs in the revised proposed program model is highly valued by parents and caregivers. They believe these programs are essential for providing equitable education and support to students with special needs. The preservation of some of these programs is seen as a commitment to meeting the diverse needs of all students and as the District's capacity to respond to feedback in a meaningful way.

"Very pleased to see special education for those with learning disabilities are not being phased out any more than they already have."

"Keeping the PSN and GLP's open will help students with special needs receive a more equitable education and the support that they need."

Cost and Resource Efficiency

Parents and caregivers recognize the revised proposed program model's potential for reducing costs and utilizing resources more efficiently. This includes minimizing transportation expenses and making better use of underused facilities. The efficient use of resources is seen as a practical advantage of the revised proposed program model.

"The reduction in costs for transportation, - utilization of under used facilities - reduction of need for expansion of facilities."

"It makes the programs more streamlined."

Continuity and Reduced Disruption

The revised model is valued by parents/caregivers for ensuring continuity in students' educational experiences by minimizing disruption that might come from multiple school changes. This is regarded as particularly important for the social and emotional well-being of students.

“

“I am extremely relieved and pleased to read that many schools, particularly those in the Alta Vista neighbourhood, have returned to their grade configurations of JK-8 or JK-6.”

“This is significantly better! My children can go to the same school together as we with the revised plan the school is staying jk-8! Wonderful news for both of them (and us as parents).”

”

Community Engagement and Feedback Response

Parents/caregivers recognize the efforts made by the District to listen to community feedback and make revisions accordingly. Parents/caregivers appreciate the incorporation of their concerns into the revised program model and view the consultation process as authentic and intentional.

“

“Thank you for listening to feedback provided during consultations and making amendments to parts of the plan!”

“I am happy that OCDSB is doing the best it can with limited resources, while remaining flexible and responsive to community feedback.”

”



What are your concerns or reservations with the revised proposed program model that should be considered?

Parents and caregivers are concerned about the revised proposed program model due to the disruption to established communities and friendships, the impact on special education and support programs, and logistical challenges related to transportation and childcare. They worry about the quality of education in new programs, the lack of transparency and community input, and the emotional impact on children. Additional concerns include equity and inclusion for underserved communities, sibling separation, and the practical challenges of implementing the new model. These concerns highlight the need for careful consideration and support to ensure student well-being and success. Below, key themes and relevant quotes are presented.



Disruption to Established Communities and Friendships

Some parents and caregivers remain worried that the proposed boundaries will and continue to separate children from their friends and disrupt the sense of community they have built. They explain that such disruptions can affect children's social development and emotional well-being.

“

“Our community is based at Elmdale. The new boundaries mean that our children will be separated from their friends and will have to start over.”

”

“My children will be moved from a school that is below capacity to a school that is over capacity, severely hindering their quality of education.”

Special Education and Support Programs

There is significant concern amongst parents and caregivers about the phasing out of special education programs and the ability of regular classrooms to support students with special education needs. Parents and caregivers remain concerned that these students will not receive the tailored support they require.

“

“The phasing out of certain Special Programs and Classes (SPCs) is deeply concerning. Integrating children with special needs into regular schools may pose significant challenges.”

”

“I have remaining concerns with respect to the proposed cuts to special education and alternative programming while not increasing supports in the classroom.”

Logistical and Practical Challenges

Parents and caregivers are worried about the logistical challenges that come with the new boundaries, including transportation, childcare, and the impact on daily routines. These changes can create significant stress for families. Further, parents and caregivers worry about the lack of detailed plans and support during the transition.

“

“My children currently walk to Devonshire PS... Under the second, its Cambridge. Neither of these are walkable for my children.”

”

“The new school will be further and not within our walking distance. Our kid loves the school and does not want to move.”



Quality of Education

Parents and caregivers raised concerns about the quality of education, particularly in new or untested programs, and the potential dilution of specialized and French programs. Parents and caregivers worry that the new model may not provide the same level of education their children currently receive.

“

“We are also concerned about the quality of a new French program at a school that has not historically taught the program.”

“I think the French education is going to get worse.”

”

Equity and Inclusion Concerns

Parents and caregivers raised concerns about whether the revised proposed program model truly addresses equity and inclusion, particularly for underserved communities. Parents and caregivers worry that the changes may not benefit all students equally.

“

“You completely failed to make things more equitable for underserved communities where parents were unable to advocate for their kids.”

“The revised boundaries have only served rich white communities, and not communities of colour or of lower income.”

”

Socioemotional Impact on Children

Parents and caregivers flagged the potential social, emotional, and psychological impact on children who have to adapt to new environments and lose their established support systems. Parents worry about the stress and anxiety these changes may cause.

“

“It’s emotionally hard for children to have to move schools when they love the one they are at.”

“My children are already facing unnecessary stress due to these proposed changes as they are terrified about having to change schools.”

”

Exemptions and Transition Flexibility

Parents and caregivers advocated for exemption provisions to allow current students to stay at their existing schools until they transition naturally, helping to minimize disruption. They request clear, predefined guidelines for exceptions and grandparenting rules while also expressing concerns about splitting up siblings.

“

“Our community voice was again ignored or drowned out, in favor of ideas of community, walkability, and equity that are not at all grounded in the reality of how our community functions.”

“All students should be grandfathered to their current schools and given an opportunity to finish at their school with their friends.”

”

Program Viability and Resource Allocation

Parents and caregivers raised concerns regarding whether new or dual-track programs will have sufficient resources and numbers to be viable and effective. In particular, they questioned the availability and allocation of qualified teachers, especially for French Immersion. They also flagged concerns about overcrowding or underutilization of schools.

“

“How are French resources going to be allocated to D Roy now that it is an EE and FI school?”

“I have doubts about the viability of the proposed dual-track model given the logistical challenges and the potential for inadequate resources.”


”

► STAFF



What are your thoughts on the advantages of the revised proposed program model?

Staff appreciate the revised proposed program model for its focus on community schools, reducing busing, and fostering stronger community ties. They value the increased equity and access to French Immersion programs, which provide more opportunities for diverse students. The retention and potential expansion



of specialized programs are seen as crucial for supporting students with special needs. The model's reduction in school transitions offers greater stability, and staff commend the board for listening to feedback and making adjustments. The move towards dual-track schools and consistent program offerings is viewed as beneficial for creating a more uniform and inclusive educational experience. Below, key themes and relevant quotes are presented.

Community Schools and Reduced Busing

Many staff members appreciate the focus on community schools and the reduction in busing, which they believe will foster a stronger sense of community and reduce transportation costs.

“

“I am glad the OCDSB is encouraging students to go to the school closest to where they live.”

“I love that children are expected to attend their home school. It is ridiculous that students bus to far away schools based on preference.”

”

Equity and Access to Programs

There is a strong emphasis by staff on the increased equity and access to French Immersion programs, which staff believe will provide more opportunities for students across different socio-economic backgrounds.

“

“Increased access to FI programs allows for equity in obtaining an additional skill that can benefit many later in life.”

“I think that the new model offers a more equitable educational experience to many students in terms of access to programs, transit time, and community.”

”

Specialized Program and Support

Staff members appreciate the retention and potential expansion of specialized programs, which they believe are crucial for supporting students with special education needs.

“

“I am happy to hear that some additional SPC classes will remain in place and not be phased out.”

“Keeping PSN and GLP programs allow for students with learning challenges to receive instruction and gain life skills in a smaller classroom environment.”

”



Reduced Transitions and Increased Stability

The revised proposed program model is seen by staff as providing more stability for students by reducing the number of transitions between schools. Staff view the decrease in K-3 and 4-8 school configurations as a significant positive in the revised proposed program model.

“

“There are fewer transitions for students.”

“I am very happy that schools will remain k-6 and k-8 to avoid all the student and educator movement.”

”

Listening to Feedback

Staff appreciate that the District has listened and responded to feedback by making adjustments based on the community concerns raised during the previous consultation process. They believe that the revised proposed program model demonstrates authentic consultation and intention from the District to respond meaningfully to feedback, where possible.

“

“I think it is wonderful that you took the time to really listen and evaluate and validate the concerns of parents and staff.”

“I think it’s good that you revise some of the decisions. It made the consultation process seem more authentic.”

“YES! This is a much better proposal and am very thankful that you listened and amended the first proposal.”

”

Program Consistency and Dual-Track Schools

The move towards dual-track schools and consistency in program offerings is seen by staff as beneficial for providing a more uniform educational experience.

“

“I think offering French Immersion and English programming at all schools is a good long game.”

“I think it is overdue to offer dual-track programming at every school.”

”



What are your concerns or reservations with the proposed program model that should be considered?

Staff concerns and reservations about the revised proposed program model include reduced support for special needs students, large class sizes, and insufficient staffing. They highlight issues of equity and fairness in program distribution, stress from school changes, and childcare needs. Additionally, there are worries about the dilution of French Immersion and language programs. Below, key themes and relevant quotes are presented.

Special Education and Support

Many staff expressed concerns about the reduction of specialized programs and the lack of support for students with special education needs. Staff believe this lack of support will further marginalize students with special education needs and burnout staff in mainstream classrooms.

“

“Students with special needs being re-integrated are not going to have significant support.”

“You are cutting so many Specialized Programs, further marginalizing our most vulnerable students.”

”

Class Sizes and Staffing

Staff expressed concerns about large class sizes and inadequate staffing to support the proposed changes. As a result of large class sizes, staff pointed to the likelihood of burnout increasing among staff.

“

“Classes are maxed with kids who require so much additional support.”

“Burnouts will go up as class sizes and the class behaviors will increase stress.”

”



Equity and Fairness

Staff highlighted issues related to equity, particularly the unequal distribution of programs and resources among schools. Staff believe that underserved communities who have less resources are not being treated equitably as a result of the revised proposed program model.

“

“Unequitable for schools such as Arch Street that already have very little money and parent involvement.”

“Making Hawthorne and Arch street only English is absolutely wrong. What happened to offering schools the opportunity to access both programs?”

”

Program Changes and Implementation

Staff raised concerns about the implementation of the revised proposed program model, including the removal of specialized classes and the introduction of new programs.

“

“The new program is removing specialized classes that are essential for students at risk.”

“Combining groups for LA and Math is going to be a lot.”

”

Impact on Students and Families

Staff are worried about the negative impact of the revised proposed program model on students and families, including the stress of changing schools and the lack of childcare support.

“

“My children are happy at the school they are at and are thriving. Having to change schools would mean they would lose most of their friends.”

“Many students will have to change schools. Many families buy a home so they are close to a neighbourhood school so the children can walk and bike to school.”

”

French Immersion and Language Programs

Staff expressed concerns about the changes to French Immersion programs and the impact on language learning. There is concern amongst staff that having access to French programming does not result in access to quality French programming.

“

“Having French Immersion in more schools is not going to have the desired results until the program itself changes.”

“I have serious concerns about the continued watering down of the French immersion program.”

”



If you are an educator, what are the potential impacts of the proposed model on teachers and staff?

The revised proposed program model has raised concerns among staff about increased stress, burnout, and inadequate support, especially for students with special needs. Job security and potential movement of teachers are also major worries. Equity and inclusion issues, along with the availability of French teachers, are critical. Effective professional development and structural changes are necessary. Comprehensive support and thoughtful implementation are essential for the well-being of staff and students. Below, key themes and relevant quotes are presented.

Increased Staff Burnout

Staff expressed concerns about the increased stress and burnout among teachers due to the proposed changes. They highlighted the additional workload, larger class sizes, and the challenge of meeting diverse student needs without adequate support.

“

“Teachers are already burnt out from behaviour and the current demands of our boards inclusion model. This will add to the workload and stress causing more absences and stress leave.”

“Expectations of teachers are becoming hard for teachers to work full-time and not burn out.”

”

Concerns about Adequate Support

Staff are worried about the lack of support for teachers, especially with the inclusion of students with special education needs in mainstream classrooms. They emphasized the need for more support staff, resources, and training to meaningfully accommodate the diverse needs of students.

“

“The lack of support for special education needs. We already do not have the capabilities to support all the needs and will have increased needs.”

“Reducing specialized programs and having students with higher needs join the ‘regular’ classroom with less EA and ESL support should be an obvious red flag.”

”

Job Security and Movement

Staff are worried about job security and the potential movement of teachers due to changes in school boundaries and program offerings. Some staff are also worried about losing their positions or being forced to move to different schools as a result of the proposed program model.

“

“There will likely be increased staff movement, however I don’t think that is a bad thing.”

“Many staff members would be impacted with the large change. Staff being surplusd in some locations; staff forced to move to new schools to keep their positions.”

”

Impact on School Communities

Staff highlight the potential negative impact on school communities, including the disruption of established relationships and the loss of school culture. They are concerned about the impact on student-teacher relationships and the overall school environment.

“

“It takes a long time to build a positive school culture. It takes very little time to lose it.”

“School based staff give significantly to their school communities outside their contractual obligations. Forced displacement of staff will crater moral and as a result impact voluntary programming and students overall experience in school.”

”



Equity and Inclusion

Staff expressed concerns about equity and inclusion, particularly regarding the support for students with special education needs and the availability of French teachers. They emphasized the need for a more inclusive and supportive environment for all students.

“

“Inclusivity can’t just be something we do for students; it must be embedded in who we are as a system.”

“Bringing in more students with special needs without bringing in additional staff puts everyone at risk.”

”

Professional Development and Training

Staff emphasize the need for effective professional development and training to support teachers in adapting to the proposed changes. They highlight that professional development alone is not enough and that structural shifts are necessary.

“

“PD - is not the answer. I’ve heard the superintendents speak at COW this is their go-to answer. More PD alone isn’t going to make teachers better special education teachers.”

“We need more EAs, more support and more PD, not less.”

”

Logistical and Operational Concerns

Staff emphasized their worries about the logistical execution of the plan, including transportation, the adequacy of school facilities, and the overall administrative burden. They pondered about supporting French educators through the process of accepting students through numerous entry points.

“

“Will there be information nights and transition plans for students who have to change schools?”

“It will be a challenge for immersion teachers to manage language learning with different entry points.”

”

► STUDENTS



What are your thoughts on the advantages of the proposed program model?

Students identified several advantages of the revised program model, including a community-based approach that fosters local connections, the introduction of bilingualism and dual track schools, and the option to attend schools closer to home. They also appreciate the concept of group transitions for maintaining peer continuity and believe that early French immersion enhances understanding and success in French classes. These themes highlight the benefits in terms of community engagement, language education, and logistical convenience. Below, key themes and relevant quotes are presented.

Community-Based Approach

Students largely appreciate the community-based approach of the revised proposed program model, which emphasizes local schooling and community connections. Further, the opportunity for students to study at schools closer to their home addresses is viewed as an advantage and is viewed as an opportunity for great local community-building.



"In general, I do appreciate the changes it will bring especially: The community based."

"We are enjoying our connection with Agincourt public school community because we can walk to and from school out of winter and snow season, connect with children and friends of our family within 2 km walk."



Bilingualism and Dual-Track Schools

Students see the introduction of bilingualism or dual-track schools (English and French Immersion) as a positive change. This is viewed as an opportunity for improved accessibility for students.

“

"In general, I do appreciate the changes it will bring especially: Bilingualism or dual track schools (EE & FI)."

”

"Changing the early French immersion in the English program are my only good things about the proposed elementary program review."

Early French Immersion

Students believe that starting French education at a young age is beneficial for better understanding and success in French classes.

“

"It is important that students are able to do french at a young age especially in JK and SK. In that way they learn french earlier and it is easier for them to learn."

"It is important that students are able to do french at a young age especially in JK and SK. In that way they learn french earlier and it is easier for them to learn. I did JK and SK in french and have a much easier time in french class and am able to better understand the concepts that are taught as well as have much more success in Classes that are in french like History and Civics and Careers."

”



What are your concerns or reservations with the proposed program model that should be considered?

Students are concerned about the revised proposed program model due to potential disruptions to friendships and social connections, the quality of education, and logistical challenges such as transportation. They worry about overcrowding or underpopulation in specific schools and the adequacy of facilities. Additionally, the impact on mental health and well-being is significant, with disruptions to routines and support systems causing distress. Below, key themes and relevant quotes are presented.



Impact on Friendships and Social Connections

Many students are concerned about how the changes will affect their friendships and social connections. They worry about being separated from their friends and the difficulty of making new ones.

“

“We are the Kenson Park residence... we would be separated from our long time relationship if it will be final decision.”

“Moving students disrupts friendships, routines, and learning.”

”

Quality of Education and Learning Environment

There are concerns among students about the quality of education, particularly with the introduction of new students and changes in the language of instruction. Some worry that the changes will negatively impact the learning environment and the progress of students.

“

“With the new french immersion program... the quality of the french that is spoken in the classroom will go down.”

“Combining classes makes classes bigger which takes away teachers focus from individual students that need help.”

”

Logistical Challenges and Impacts on Schools

Students are worried about the logistical challenges that come with changing schools, including transportation issues and the impact on their daily routines. In addition, there are specific concerns about how the changes will affect certain schools, including the adequacy of facilities and the potential for overcrowding or underpopulation.

“

“Students who walked to school may now need buses, adding costs and stress.”

“Some schools are overcrowded while others are underpopulated.”

”



Mental Health and Well-Being

The impact on students' mental health and well-being is a significant concern among students, particularly with the disruption of established routines and support systems.

“

“We have had experience of challenged mental health issue within our family in the Covid years when we had to keep our children home studying with virtual school.”

“These would destroy the relations between many friends around the age they would need friends most.”

”

Phasing Out of Specialized Program Classes

Students raised concerns about the removal of special education needs programs and the perceived negative impact on both teachers and students as a result of the phasing out of these programs.

“

“I think removal of special needs programs is really stupid and you need to reconsider whether we need to run our school board like a business or an organization that actually helps kids.”

“All you are doing is setting these kids up for failure by taking away the tools, materials, and resources that help them.”

”

► COMMUNITY MEMBERS



What are your thoughts on the advantages of the proposed program model?

Community members appreciate the revised proposed program model for reducing school transitions, keeping siblings together, and minimizing disruption for families. Community-based schooling and more equitable boundary decisions are valued, along with financial benefits like reduced transportation costs. The model's efforts to promote equity and retain specialized programs are also supported, making it a significant improvement that addresses community concerns. Below, key themes and relevant quotes are presented.

Reduction of School Transitions

Several community members note their appreciation for the reduction of transitions between schools, particularly the elimination of the JK-3 and 4-8 school model, which was viewed as detrimental to student success and learning.

“

“Appreciate the reduction of jk-3 and 4-8 schools.”

“Keeping the K-6 grade configurations when possible was a much better choice than splitting up school and staff communities.”

”

Keeping Families Together

Community members value the revisions that allow siblings to stay together in the same school for a longer period of time. This is also seen as addressing equity and pragmatic concerns.

“

“I appreciate the fact that some revisions will allow more siblings to remain at the same school for more of their learning career.”

“It substantially reduces the separation of siblings.”

”

Community-Based Education

Community members acknowledge and favour the focus on community-based schooling in the revised proposed program mode, which keeps students in schools closer to their homes.

“

Agree with the community schools concept.”

“I continue to appreciate the focus on community-based schooling and I support the standardization of program offerings across the board.”

”

Improved Boundary Decisions

Community members believe the revised boundaries make more sense and are more equitable. In particular, they view the removal of the K-3 and 4-8 model as a logical step.

“

“They drew boundaries that made more sense and removed the k-3 / 4-8 roll out.”

“While there will be some people who have to move schools- the boundaries - on the whole - seem to make more sense across the entire city than the first proposal.”

”

Equity and Accessibility

Community members appreciate the efforts to make programs more equitable and accessible to all students through the revised proposed program model, while balancing addressing the feedback for the previously proposed model.

“

“Excellent opportunity for equity for ALL students, students attending school in their communities.”

“French Immersion offered to broader scope of students - equity.”

”

Less Disruption

Community members view the revised proposed program model revised as less disruptive to families compared to the original proposal.

“

“The revised proposed program model seems much less disruptive to families than the original proposed program model.”

“It seems to be an improvement, with less students requiring a move.”

”

Specialized Program Classes

Community members are happy that certain specialized classes and programs are being retained in the revised proposed program model.

“

“I’m very happy that PSN and GLP are staying but I think we still need more specialized classes.”

“I am delighted with the revised proposed program for Pleasant Park Public School.”

”



What are your concerns or reservations with the proposed program model that should be considered?

Community members raise concerns about the revised program model focus on support for special needs students, boundary changes, class sizes, French Immersion, alternative schools, equity, and logistics. Key worries include inadequate support for special needs students, longer commutes, split siblings, large class sizes, and the feasibility of the inclusion model. Mixed opinions on French Immersion, potential closure of alternative schools, and logistical issues like childcare and transportation are also significant. Below, key themes and relevant quotes are presented.

Support for Students with Special Education Needs

Community members are concerned about the impact of the revised proposed program model on students with special education needs. They worry that these students might lose the additional support they currently receive.

“

“My only concerns is to ensure that students who would currently be in specialized programs do not fall through the cracks and lose the additional support they are currently receiving.”

“lack of appropriate and adequate support for students with special needs resulting in poorer outcomes for those students as well as their classmates in an integrated classroom”

”

Boundary Changes and Commute

Community members are concerned about the proposed boundary changes, which could lead to longer commutes and split siblings between different schools in certain areas of the city.

“

“The proposed boundary change at Connaught PS undermines the principles of the EPR and demonstrates how the principles are being applied unevenly.”

“Severn avenue public school boundaries should include D Roy Kennedy as the grade 7-8 school, not Pinecrest.”

”



Class Sizes and Inclusion Model

Community members raise concerns about large class sizes and the inclusion model, which might overwhelm both students and teachers.

“

“I am very concerned as a teacher and parent that there are large class sizes with an inclusion model. This is NOT conducive to a good learning environment.”

“The inclusion model should remain mixed and allow for time out of the standard classroom too.”

”

French Immersion and Language Programs

Community members have mixed feelings about the French Immersion program, with some community members advocating for its expansion and others questioning its feasibility and equity. Community members also raised concerns about the practicality of implementing the revised French Immersion model with concerns about teacher shortages and standards of education.

“

“Why were some schools not given French Immersion? This is in direct opposition to your supposed claims of equity.”

“It is not realistic to provide the same standard of French immersion instruction to children under the revised program model.”

”

Impact on Alternative Schools

Community members are worried about the potential closure or changes to alternative schools and the impact on students who benefit from these programs.

“

“Alternative schools must be kept and cared for with utmost respect and modernization.”

“I stand in full support of the alternative program and do not agree with its planned extermination.”

”



Equity and Fairness

Community members emphasize questions about equity and fairness, with some community members feeling that the revised proposed program model might favour certain groups over others.

“

“The revised proposed program panders to most vocal parents, and undermines the principles that were supposedly underlying the initial EPR.”

“Keeping some schools EE only in order to appease a loud, entitled minority is a massive disappointment.”

”

Logistics and Implementation

Community members are concerned about the practical aspects of implementing the revised proposed program model, including childcare, transportation, and the transition process. Community members also expressed concern regarding selective exemptions, which is perceived to favour certain privileged groups.

“

“Childcare access - 73% of affected families need childcare at Connaught. The proposal provides no clarity on before/after care availability at Devonshire.”

“There is also no information about busing impacts.”

”

Stress and Emotional Well-Being of Students

Community members flagged concerns regarding the potential emotional stress and well-being of students due to the proposed changes, particularly regarding frequent transitions.

“

“My children are already facing unnecessary stress due to these proposed changes as they are terrified about having to change schools.”

“Negative emotional stress placed upon students.”

”



Conclusion

Based on the consultation feedback, there are seven common themes that emerged across the various groups: (1) Community and Stability, (2) Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility, (3) Special Education and Support Needs, (4) Education Quality and Consistency, (5) Logistical and Practical Considerations, (6) EMotional and Social Well-Being, and (7) Implementation and Transparency.

There was broad support for the revised proposed program model in the following areas:

- Increased access to French Immersion programs
- Flexibility in French Immersion entry
- The potential for reduced busing
- Equitable access to programs
- Support for early literacy development; and
- The concept of community-based schooling.

However, there were also consistent concerns and reservations about the proposed program model. These included:

- The disruption to children's established school communities
- The potential negative impact on student well-being
- Safety issues related to increased busing and walking distances
- Logistical challenges for families, especially those with children in different schools and impact on childcare (i.e., Extended Day Programs)
- The impact on special education programs and students with special needs
- A perceived lack of transparency and rushed decision-making
- The availability of qualified French teachers and the reduction of quality in French Immersion; and
- Financial feasibility of the proposed program changes



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Land Acknowledgement

The District acknowledges that this consultation and those prior, related to the Elementary Program Review, took place on the traditional, unceded homelands of the Algonquin nation. In acknowledging these ancestral lands, the District also recognizes its responsibility to the Algonquin people and to understand and honour the Algonquin cultural protocols as well as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action for education. In doing so, the District has partnered with an external Indigenous scholar to support a review of the proposed model and engage in meaningful consultation that supports its understanding of the current and revised model's impact on and reception by its Indigenous communities.



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