

Aldershot French Immersion Boundary Review Steering Committee Presentation #1

Feb 23, 2024, 3:00 pm

Presentation

1. Administrative Discussions

Review of the objective, purpose, and resolution of the Boundary Review.

Boundary Review Steering Committee agreed in principle that reducing student transitions between schools throughout the French Immersion (FI) program was the most important criteria to consider in the ultimate option, as well as ensuring the FI program remains viable with sufficient student enrolment.

Planning presented the recommendation for Pathway 2: Informing the Community, highlighting reasons for student experience and FI viability at the two schools. The discussion and the decision to elect whether a Pathway #1 or Pathway #2 process should be undertaken as well as confirmation on the schools that should be involved will occur after the presentation

Key dates were reviewed.

2. Option 1 Discussions

Aldershot/Burlington Central Elementary and High Schools enrolments were reviewed. Moving the program to Burlington would create a minor increase in enrolments between 25-50 students. Most growth attributed to schools is a result of development. Ultimately, enrolment impacts are not a significant factor given the small number of students.

3. Community Survey Discussion

The results of the community survey were reviewed. A discussion focused on whether we would be able to have grade 7 students remain at Aldershot for grade 8, as this was highlighted as a priority in some of the survey responses. This would result in an insufficient number of grade 8 students to make a full class. A suggestion was then offered to provide incoming grade 7 French Immersion students an option to attend Aldershot or Burlington Central with the advanced knowledge that grade 8 French Immersion at Aldershot would not be available the following year. This would require the HDSB to fund an additional classroom teacher for one year. As a result, this option was not viable. The Boundary Review Steering Committee acknowledged that the transition of French Immersion to Burlington Central should occur for the 2024-25 school year.

4. Transportation Discussions

2024/2025 statistics reflect the assumption that all current students will elect to attend Burlington Central. It is acknowledged that a number of students will elect to remain at Aldershot as previous trends suggest. This demonstrates that Option 1 will have a minor impact on transportation services.

Concerns around additional travel time to Burlington Central were communicated to the Boundary Review Steering Committee. It was agreed that students who choose to enroll in grade 7 and 8 French Immersion at Burlington Central will have longer travel times, however, it would be no different to their travel times under the current scenario when they progress to Grade 9. Therefore, if they decide to continue in the program, they should expect to experience the same travel times as the high school students in French Immersion.

It was later confirmed by Halton Student Transportation Services (HSTS) that the change in travel time is not considered a significant increase in commute times, and is pretty standard for the FI program (+/-35 minutes).

5. Confirmation of Pathway and Schools

After a detailed review of Option 1 and the implications of implementation, the Boundary Review Steering Committee Presentation confirmed the following:

- The Aldershot FI Boundary Review will proceed as a Pathway #2: Informing the Community process, for the following reasons:
 - Impacts on students are limited, and the number of students impacted is equally minimal (<20)
 - Very few options are available to address the accommodation issue.
 - Pre-consultation in the form of a survey was circulated to existing grade 6 and 7 families, where feedback gathered was used in consideration of the final recommended option.
- The confirmed schools to be included in the boundary review process are Aldershot and Burlington Central. Maplehurst FI students will be included in the notifications as this review impacts their pathway.

6. Final Deliberations and Next Steps

- After careful review, the Boundary Review Steering Committee Presentation agreed unanimously that Option 1 should proceed to the Senior Administrative team for consideration and approval, to be then presented to the Board of Trustees for final approval.
- Staff informed the Boundary Review Steering Committee Presentation members that the Board report will be available on March 1st, in preparation for the March 6th Board meeting.
- Notifications will be sent to the community advising of the above deliberations and pathway directions.
- Trustee members advised staff to ensure Notifications are clear that the boundary changes will only impact grade 7 & 8 French Immersion students, and not Maplehurst's existing students.