

Facility Planning Strategy - Dundalk and Area Schools

Background

As part of Bluewater District School Board's (BWDSB) facility planning, staff have identified enrolment growth in the Dundalk area schools. Staff have examined the future projected enrolment in the Dundalk area in order to plan appropriately and ensure sufficient pupil spaces exist in the area. Dundalk & Proton Community School programs for JK to grade 2 and Highpoint Community School programs for grades 3 to 8. Other schools in the immediate area are Macphail Memorial Elementary School that programs JK to grade 8 for English and French Immersion, and Grey Highlands Secondary School that programs for grade 9 to 12 for English and French Immersion.

The business case for a JK-8 replacement school was submitted to the Ministry of Education for both the 2021-22 and 2022-23 Capital Funding Programs but were denied. Staff followed up the Ministry of Education to determine the best strategy to get approval for future business cases to meet the growing need for student spaces in Dundalk and Area. Staff plan to submit updated business cases to the ministry.

Current Status

The current September enrolment at the two Dundalk schools is at 131% utilization: 122% at Dundalk & Proton Community School and 139% at Highpoint Community School. Portables and other temporary spaces within the schools are being used to accommodate the over utilization:

- Dundalk & Proton Community School currently has three portables on site, and another interior space that has been converted to a classroom
- Highpoint Community School currently has six portables on site

Individual school details are in Table 1.

Table 1 - Dundalk Area Schools 2022-23 Current Enrolment (as of September 13, 2022)

	Dundalk & Proton Community School (JK-2)	Highpoint Community School (3-8)
Capacity (OTG)	265	322
Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)	322	448
Utilization	122%	139%
Surplus Space/Space Shortage (-)	(57)	(126)
2022-23 Temporary Accommodation	92	138

Projected Status

Enrolment in the Dundalk area is expected to increase in the coming years due to a high level of new construction. For 2023-24, the utilization of the two Dundalk schools is expected to increase to 142%.

Individual school details are in Table 2.

Table 2 - Dundalk Area Schools 2023-24 Enrolment Projections (ADE) with expected growth

	Dundalk & Proton Community School (JK-2)	Highpoint Community School (3-8)
Capacity (OTG)	265	322
Average Daily Enrolment (ADE)	343	493
Utilization	129%	153%
Potential Surplus Space/Space Shortage (-)	(78)	(171)
2022-23 Temporary Accommodation	92	138

In the short term, BWDSB believes that the schools can meet the need of projected student enrolment with the placement of portables and the option of converting additional space within the school to temporary classroom space.

BWDSB will be submitting two new business cases for larger replacement schools for Dundalk & Proton Community School and Highpoint Community School. Further communication with the municipality will reaffirm municipality endorsement for future plans.

Looking past the next several years, alternate accommodation strategies may need to be considered to accommodate enrolment in the area. A temporary grade revision could be considered to create:

- a JK–Grade 1 program at Dundalk & Proton Community School
- a Grades 2–6 program at Highpoint Community School
- a JK- Grade 6 program at Macphail Memorial Elementary School (English and French Immersion)
- a Grades 7-12 program at Grey Highlands Secondary School (English and French Immersion)

The movement of the grade 7-8 students from Highpoint Community School and Macphail Memorial Elementary School could be accommodated at Grey Highlands Secondary School with internal room renovations and the placement of portables, if needed.

Individual school details are in Table 3.

Table 3 - Dundalk Area Schools 2026-27 Enrolment Projections (ADE) with expected growth

	Dundalk & Proton Community School (JK-2)	Highpoint Community School (3-8)
Capacity (OTG)	265	322
Average Daily Enrolment (ADE)	360	646
Utilization	136%	201%
Potential Surplus Space/Space Shortage (-)	(95)	(324)
2022-23 Temporary Accommodation	92	138

Recommendation:

That the Business Committee of the Whole receive the 'Facility Planning Strategy - Dundalk and Area Schools' report for information.

Submitted to
Bluewater District School Board
Business Committee of the Whole
October 4, 2022

For further information, please contact
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