

# Oxford County French Immersion and City of Woodstock Elementary Panel Attendance Area Review

## Algonquin Public School AARC Subcommittee Report

**June 2, 2021**

### 1. SUB-COMMITTEE MEMBERS & AFFILIATION

Janice Johnson - Chair (primary/junior rep.)

Kelsi Break - Vice-chair (kindergarten rep.)

Leah Baan – Chair of School Council

Stefanie Bloxsidge - President of Home and School Association

### 2. SCHOOL COMMUNITY MEETINGS

A sub-committee meeting was held April 20, 2021 at 6:30pm with a total number of 11 attendees.

### 3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The AARC sub committee of Algonquin Public School (Algonquin P.S.) consisted of four parents and held a meeting with the school community on April 20, 2021 remotely via MS Teams. The meeting included sharing the options put forward by the Thames Valley District School Board (TVDSB) and gathered feedback from the school community.

### 4. BRIEF SCHOOL COMMUNITY PROFILE

Algonquin P.S. currently serves students from grade Junior Kindergarten to grade 8 with an enrollment of 537 students in 2019/2020.<sup>1</sup> The TVDSB predicts Algonquin P.S. will have a continued decline in student enrolment every year over the next five years. The proposed changes in the TVDSB AARC include expanding the Algonquin P.S. catchment area to include the geography east of its current boundary of Spitfire Street (north of Devonshire Avenue). This will increase Algonquin P.S.'s utilization from 81 per cent to 113

---

1

percent in 2022, (approx. 700 students) with a projected decrease to 96 per cent by 2027.

## 5. FEEDBACK REGARDING OPTIONS

While the Algonquin P.S. community will welcome all students redirected to our school from Springbank Public School (Springbank P.S.) as a result of the proposed restructuring of school boundaries as listed in the AARC, there are key considerations that must be considered to ensure the transition is successful.

## 6. RECOMMENDATIONS & CONSIDERATIONS

### **Exemptions**

We support allowing students who would be going into their grade 8 year in 2022 to remain at Springbank P.S., if they choose. Consideration must also be provided for siblings of these students to keep families together at Springbank P.S. should the trustees move forward with that option.

As well, students with special education needs that would be negatively affected by a change in school location should be allowed to stay at their chosen school should their family and medical support team deem it necessary.

### **Construction of portables**

The committee was made aware of the need for three portables to be constructed at Algonquin P.S. to accommodate the additional student population should the boundary changes occur. These portables should be placed in a location that provides minimal impact to the green space currently available for student use. A layout plan should be reviewed by the Administration and Algonquin P.S. School Council before the portables are constructed.

### **Transportation and safety**

Should the boundary changes occur and students be redirected to Algonquin P.S. the community recommends consideration be given to improving the existing flow of traffic around the school. For the past two years the Algonquin P.S. School Council has been in the process of reviewing the current foot and vehicular traffic in the school parking lot and on the street immediately adjacent to the school. Several safety concerns have been raised given the current placement of the street crossings, lack of a crossing guard and large number of vehicles dropping off and picking up students. A formal partnership was started with the Active and Safe Routes to School organization to

improve the current state. This work was paused due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

As mentioned in the question and answers section on the TVDSB AARC web page, only four of the 86 students currently eligible for busing to Springbank P.S. within the boundary change area would remain eligible once they transitioned to Algonquin P.S.

Also important to recognize is that the Good Beginnings daycare that is attached to our school has just undergone construction allowing for an additional 34 child care spaces.<sup>2</sup>

Therefore the number of vehicular and foot traffic at Algonquin P.S. will increase exponentially if the proposed boundary change is approved. Given our already congested space during drop-off and pick-up times, adding an additional 200 students to our school community without the proper improvements and interventions is unacceptable and dangerous for our students.

We recommend a formal review be completed of the drop-off and pick-up area with all necessary organizations (ie. Algonquin P.S. Administration, TVDSB, Algonquin P.S. School Council, the City of Woodstock, Good Beginnings Day etc.) to ensure the construction of a safe and effective parking lot and drop-off/pick-up zones.

In addition to improvements that arise from this review, we ask for the TVDSB to provide the necessary staffing support to assist with traffic flow at the kiss and ride area and to assist in working with the City of Woodstock to facilitate additional crossing guards in the immediate area of the school to ensure the safety of our students given the increased vehicular traffic.

---

2

<http://www.heartfm.ca/news/local-news/algonquin-public-school-child-care-expansion-nearing-completion/>