

**Greater Essex County District School Board  
BOUNDARY REVIEW  
BELLE RIVER FAMILY OF SCHOOLS  
COMMUNITY MEETING**

**Wednesday, May 22, 2013 at 7 p.m.**

Report of a meeting held in the cafetorium at Belle River DHS

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At the January 15, 2013, regular meeting of the Board, Trustees approved the following recommendation regarding the Tecumseh Family of Schools:

**THAT THE SUPERINTENDENT RESPONSIBLE FOR ACCOMMODATIONS FACILITATES A BOUNDARY STUDY TO ADDRESS CAPACITY ISSUES WITHIN THE BELLE RIVER FAMILY OF SCHOOLS.**

**Present:** There were approximately 68 persons in the audience including the committee.

**Regrets:** Director of Education, Warren Kennedy

**Facilitator:** Terry Lyons, Superintendent of Education

**Recorder:** Lynne Hornby

**1. Call to Order and Welcome**

The meeting was called to order at 7 p.m. by Superintendent Lyons. He thanked everyone for their attendance.

He explained that this evening, the Boundary committee will be presenting their proposed recommendations and we will be collecting input.

**2. Introductions**

Superintendent Lyons introduced Trustee, Helga Bailey, Connie Buckler, Kim McKinley; Area Superintendent of Education, Sharon Pyke and Public Relations Officer, Scott Scantlebury. The Boundary Committee was recognized.

**3. Presentation**

On behalf of the committee, Mr. Wes Arthurs, a committee member, representing Belle River DHS, shared a powerpoint presentation with the audience.

*Attached*

**4. Questions**

Superintendent Lyons thanked the committee for all their work to date. He noted that we are facing a difficult situation that affects our children. His first priority is our students, From a Board perspective, status quo is not sustainable; Lakeshore Discovery School will expand beyond its means and something had to be done. Currently, the Board has been approved capital funding for an 8 room expansion at Belle River PS. The population growth taking place in our communities is in the over 50 age group, not in the school age student population. We are facing enrolment pressures in the eastern part of the county as the population in the city continues to move east. Tecumseh and Lakeshore are exploding. The Ministry of Education provides the Board approx. \$5 million to address all our renewal needs for 75 schools. A parking lot can cost \$1 million. Our buildings are getting older and we continue to face financial pressures, so we need to be efficient to continue to

offer the programming we do. We have had to make some difficult decisions during the past few years and will have to continue to do so.

It was noted that cards available for questions and comments for those who may not feel comfortable speaking in this forum. As the floor was opened up for questions, Superintendent Lyons requested that the audience be respectful of everyone's opinion and that as the meeting is being recorded, that the microphone is used. He asked that as everyone is here to advocate for their own child, they do so with respect and without being derogatory to other schools.

The Boundary committee has worked very hard for a large amount of hours of their own time on behalf of all out students to deal with this difficult situation. He thanked the committee for their continuing work.

**All questions were answered by Superintendent Lyons unless otherwise noted.**

Belle River PS parent

Is it possible to have the boundary include County Road 31 North from 42 to 22 there is only one side, west side – could you make it both sides of the road?

We will take a look at this.

Belle River PS parent

Could West River Road be included in the Belle River PS boundary?

Lakeshore Discovery parent

My child is going into grade 7 – have you considered grandfathering for grades 7 and 8 to graduate with their friends?

It has been a usual practice of the Board to allow those students currently in grade 7 at the time of a boundary adjustment to remain for the grade 8 year. Transportation may not be provided. This evening we are collecting input, trustees are the only decision makers. This could be a recommendation that we may move forward with.

If you state that projections are accurate within 2-3 years, what happened 10 years ago?

I will try to illustrate this. An example would be that Tecumseh Vista was built for 450 students - we have over 850 students in elementary panel with 97% retention rate so we will be over capacity in the secondary panel. We have to operate as a Board within the Ministry of Education guidelines. In order to secure capital funding monies we are obliged to use actual enrolments – the students actually in the seats in our schools – not anticipated enrolments. I understand your frustration. We have been advised by the Ministry of Education funding is being approved for "growth areas" only. Student experience is important and it is up to the Board to provide this. You've done a major disservice to the students who attend Lakeshore Discovery. When the school was built, the Board chose to plant seed rather than sod, and so the students had no playing field. The soccer field is not regulation size. My children were in the library and music room which were used as classrooms. The Board needs to look in the future how they plan their growth. My children missed a valuable experience.

Lakeshore Discovery parent

My understanding is that nothing will take place until September 2014. Belle River PS is going to get 8 new rooms. The Board dropped the ball, we had portables in the teens at Lakeshore Discovery and Tecumseh Vista. There is a huge safety issue connected with portables.

In 2009 the Board we went through a boundary review when we informed the community that we would be back to adjust the eastern boundary. At that time there was no other space available for the relocation of students. We reduced the portables at Lakeshore to 12 from 17. As we move forward, in a matter of years, we will be applying for a new school in the north shore to assist with the growth.

Moving forward we don't want to see portables with society the way it is today. You had the numbers and you dropped the ball.

Belle River DHS and AC Graham parent

If your children are slated to come to Belle River DHS you need to stand up and let trustees know that you want the enrolment to be maintained. The Board is sucking the life out of Belle River DHS and if we don't show up in front of trustees, we won't be heard. There is significant under-utilization for this school. Why is there not a boundary adjustment being recommended to increase the boundary of this high school? We have lost a significant number of teachers over the past few years. The seats are full at Vista. There will be portables there soon. I drive my children to Belle River DHS so they don't have to go there.

We live in Lakeshore and we would like the children in our community to attend a Lakeshore high school. Parents need to fight to bring the capacity of this high school back up. The trustees who are here need to wake up; the life is being sucked out of this school. Programs will be cut with declining enrolment and the staff dropped along with that. Many really good teachers have left this school. I have asked to have DM Eagle feed into this school and I heard about not splitting an elementary school population. Kids do not keep their elementary friends in high school, they make new friends. We need people to stand up with me and let trustees know that we want the high school to sustain. I am only one voice. All the great programs here will be cut with declining enrolment. Keep this high school strong. Also, Grades 7 and 8 students in a high school is not acceptable to me.

Lakeshore Discovery and Belle River PS parent

I have a child at Belle River who was originally in French Immersion at Lakeshore Discovery but we made the choice to move him to Belle River PS. We live on Rochester town line. Now, under the new proposed boundary he will move to Centennial, that will be four schools while living in the same residence. Parents are becoming intolerant of change. Is there a possibility that children in the senior grades could be grandfathered in and that parents would have a choice to drive to those schools for the remaining years?

You aren't looking at what is better for our children. Everyone here has a different story. Please consider grandfathering for senior students.

The committee will look at all the suggestions collected when we meet again.

The Board is making some tough decisions specifically about the board's ability remain viable. As educators we are making some difficult choices and we would rather take away buildings than cut

programming. This is not about the Board not wanting to do something, it is about the Board's financial ability. We would rather not affect programming in any way at all and make cuts in other ways.

Lakeshore Discovery parent

What consideration was given to the effectiveness of dual track schools? My perspective is that dual track doesn't work well and the French aspect suffers. The atmosphere is of concern. You have two different communities within the schools and they don't mesh. I would rather have seen one school all English and one all French.

We have had that conversation numerous times at different locations on this topic and the empirical evidence does not show that one delivery model is better than the other. There are benefits and challenges for both systems. This option has been discussed fully by the committee. Our dual track schools, Tecumseh Vista, Sandwich West and Kingsville are very effective; Kingsville has a balanced population. A committee member received an e-mail about how good Bellewood is, a single track school, but it isn't our own single track school. School is a lot more than EQAO scores. Again, it is the people in the buildings that make the schools. If you feel there are issues at your own school, then you need to address them with the administration of the school. Lakeshore Discovery now has a balanced population and we are not hearing concerns about the two communities not getting along.

Lakeshore Discovery parent

I was a teacher at Belle River DHS when the kindergarten program was in the school. Did you look at the effect of grade 7 and 8 students in the high school to see how that would even out the population? I believe that once grade 7 and 8 students come into the building and they see what a great school it is, they will stay.

The committee had several conversations about this topic and which students would relocate, however, the population of Belle River DHS will come back and if this is undertaken, we would reach a point where we would not have enough room in the future. There is no doubt that the opening of Tecumseh Vista affected Belle River DHS as it did Essex DHS. Some of the population at Tecumseh Vista came from those schools. The enrolment decrease that was experienced since 2003 in the elementary panel is now hitting secondary; enrolment will decrease by 1,200-1,500 secondary students over the next few years. This is compounding all of our challenges.

Consideration was given to relocating JK and SK to the high school as was done several years ago but now things are different as Full Day Kindergarten (FDK) has specific funding associated with those programs.

Bringing elementary students into the high school is not as scary as you think and a lot of the time, grade 7 and 8 students are ready to go to high school.

Lakeshore Discovery parent – French Immersion

I live in St Joachim so we would be affected by the boundary change. My kids started at Puce and I believe that French Immersion has lost integrity with dual track. At Puce there were more programs going on. Announcements and National Anthem were in French only. The French Immersion program has lost some integrity with dual track. If Belle River PS become dual track there will be a lot less

French Immersion students than English. It is going to be a big job getting those French resources over to Belle River PS. The teachers at Lakeshore Discovery are wonderful.

Is the Board prepared to get the resources and teachers over to Belle River PS to run the program effectively?

2 years ago we had to set up the Giles Campus when Bellewood's boundary was adjusted. As then, resources are allocated based on student enrolment so some would travel with those students to be relocated. The Board is committed to providing the necessary resources for any program.

My son has an IEP; what about those resources and support staff?

Again, this is the same concept, staffing is based on student enrolment and resources on student needs.

How many French Immersion students are affected?

There will be over 200 French Immersions students and an additional 100 English track students at Belle River PS.

Will there be a transition committee struck to assist the students with the relocations?

Yes

Belle River DHS and AC Graham parent – 2<sup>nd</sup> follow up

You have mentioned that Belle River DHS will come back but your data doesn't show it. Can you put the slide back up that shows that? I believe it shows that even in 2025 it is only at 85%.

(The slide was displayed).

When Belle River DHS was fed by the Tecumseh family of schools, the high school had a 70% retention rate. That means that we kept 70% of our students in high school. In the last two years, since Tecumseh Vista opened, we have had retained 120% and 116%. They have retained more students than we had in our system which is positive as we are attracting students from other systems. Retention rates could stabilize or they could climb.

I am going to mention those schools again and the people in that area are particularly sensitive to overcrowding. Your retention rates from that group is not going to be high. You will hear from them - they won't like that environment - you will hear from them.

So, Mrs. Friest, what are you proposing?

I am proposing that the DM Eagle students should direct to this school's boundary.

So, students living on the western boundary of DM Eagle, that is Manning Road, should travel 50 minutes on a bus to Belle River DHS?

Yes or take half of that boundary, cut it at Brighton.

The committee did look at Brighton but it was difficult as you are dividing right down the middle of sub-division and dividing students who have been together for 10 years in elementary school to go to two different high schools based on the home address, but then, you have voiced that you don't think that is a big deal.

It's not a big deal. Friendships change in secondary school. Kids don't maintain the friendships they had in elementary school. It isn't fair to direct all those resources and energy to one new school while allowing this school to languish and lose teachers.

They are not losing teachers because of declining enrolments.

They are losing teachers because you directed this group of students to another school. Your reasons don't look out for the Board or this school.

The committee has heard about DM Eagle and we will have that conversation.

Lakeshore Discovery parent

Good point made by the previous speaker about Belle River DHS. It seems that when the boundaries were set for Lakeshore Discovery they sucked Belle River PS and now it seems we are reversing those decisions. No one is learning how to set boundaries properly.

Lakeshore Discovery parent – French Immersion

I have been ignorant of this process. I don't even know how trustees get their jobs. Now because we are in the area between Willowood and Rourke, my child will have to move to Belle River PS. When you did the thing with Bellewood what was the attitude of those parents when you wanted them to move. I understood that if you wanted your kid to go to a school it was okay if you transported them yourself. Were those students who wished to stay at Bellewood, if the parents drove them, allowed to stay?

No they could not stay. When it comes to capacity issues in a school, we cannot allow some to stay, it doesn't help ease the overcrowding.

You are taking choices away. How do we voice our displeasure at this point and how do I vote for a new trustee?

You are voicing your displeasure now. You can email us your opinions and attend the board meeting.

I get the impression that the decision has been made. Voicing my displeasure and getting something done are two different things so I will vote against all the trustees who vote for boundaries to change. I don't believe that your most important consideration is our children. Do your projections actually include kids like mine who will be going to another Board?

No, we wouldn't know that ahead of time.

Put a survey on your website about who will do this. I encourage people to pull their kids and take them to other Boards.

Belle River PS parent

We live on County Road 31 and so we would be going to Centennial. Looking at the proposed French Immersion boundary, east is the Kent line. The Board has money for an addition at Belle River PS. Centennial isn't near capacity and has room for extra students. Lakeshore Discovery and Belle River PS are a few kilometres separate and would both have French Immersion programs. It doesn't make sense. Did anyone think about Centennial Central becoming French Immersion? How long will the students from the eastern part of the boundary be on the bus to go to Belle River PS?

They would be on the bus less time than travelling to Lakeshore Discovery.

Why not do something with French Immersion at Centennial? Increase their capacity.

Centennial doesn't have the capacity to accommodate the student population that needs to relocate from Lakeshore Discovery to provide relief.

Belle River DHS parent

We chose to come to this high school, we are west of Wallace. My kids didn't want to go to a new school so we chose not to go to Vista, they didn't want St Anne's so we made a decision to drive them to Belle



River DHS every day even though we are a block away from the bus stop but they can't get on the bus. Now you are saying that the new proposed busing boundary is Brighton?

There is no proposed change for Belle River DHS. That was suggestion from someone in the audience.

Why are we leaving Tecumseh Vista over capacity and this school under capacity when they could come here? There are about 30 kids from Orchard Park that would come here. A lot of them are not part of your projected numbers because they went to St. William's.

Every school has boundaries; the committee has heard the suggestions to look at the Belle River DHS boundaries. Before Tecumseh Vista opened the students from the area in question did not want to travel all the way to Belle River and chose to go to other schools in other boards. When Belle River DHS was fed by the Tecumseh family of schools, the high school had a 70% retention rate. That means that we kept 70% of our students in high schools. In the last two years we have had retained 120% and 116%. We have retained more students that we had in our system which is positive. It means we are attracting students from other systems. There is no doubt that determining a boundary is difficult and there will always be associated challenges. Tecumseh Vista has plans for an addition already in the works.

If those kids had the option of transportation here you would not have surplus issues at other school.

Lakeshore Discovery parent

I am very happy with the English program here, the teachers are exceptional but we would be moving to Belle River PS. Will the level of technology be maintained at Belle River PS? Will my child have the same opportunities for technology?

Everything is based at enrolment. Resource allocation is based on enrolment. I'm glad she has a smartboard so long as the teacher uses it.

How will the teachers be trained to use the technology?

All teachers have the same opportunity to take advantage of technology training.

What is done in these processes to assist with transition to make it positive? I want to ensure this is a positive experience for my child.

A transition committee will be set up. There are usually activities and visits set up to ease the transition but it is up to each committee to determine what is appropriate for their particular needs.

Could she be in the same class as some of the children moving?

Great idea.

I am a strong advocate for single track schools.

Lakeshore Discovery parent

When will decisions be made?

Decisions will be made by trustees at a Special Meeting of the Board on June 19

If we are going to be forced to relocate to Belle River PS I'd like to have the option to switch for this September. Can I do that? Even without transportation it would make it easier.

Centennial Central parent

Our school is part of the Belle River family and I understand that change is difficult. When this all started, I was scared that our school would close. It is a great school, changing boundaries to make all

the schools viable is the only way this family of schools will sustain. This will assist Belle River DHS. If we don't do something, sooner or later Centennial Central will close and all the other schools will have portables. Many in this room seem to be against that option. It is a win-win for everyone as programs won't be affected. In the future Belle River PS will be over capacity with portables. Could we not alleviate enrolment by moving some students to Centennial?

The committee looked at this option and when reviewing the distribution of students you would have to draw the boundary quite far to the east, all the way into the town of Belle River, at Myer. The committee felt this was not a viable option moving forward.

Lakeshore Discovery French Immersion parent

The French Immersion boundary was extremely large and now you are reducing it. Is that going to be enough students to sustain Lakeshore Discovery's French Immersion program?

The population of the areas remaining at Lakeshore is dense and there is a great deal of building coming on-line that is anticipated to yield large amounts of students. The phenomenon of French Immersion students is difficult to predict and as a Board we continue to try and find ways to be inclusive and allow French Immersion choices. We are currently undergoing a board wide French Immersion study as well as a Tecumseh family of schools PARC. Other boards such as York region have 250 French Immersion spots and the first 250 registrants get them. This has not been our philosophy. We could cap French Immersion and then it would be easy to predict growth. When you provide choices you create challenges. Lakeshore Discovery will continue to grow and the programming will be sustained.

I am sad my kids will have to move, they have never been bused. Is latchkey available at Belle River PS?

It is, and also at Centennial Central.

Belle River PS parent

Belle River is a wonderful school but we will have to relocate to Centennial. It is an aging school, is there funding to fix it?

Centennial is not an aging school. All our schools have some renewal needs. We want to be proactive not reactive. Once you attain 85% capacity as a whole you receive maximum funding. We are trying to be proactive.

Our board is one of the few boards that has boundary meetings and collects input for boundary adjustments. The majority of boards send home letters advising of a change and telling parents their students must move. It is difficult for me to stand here and have people say that the decisions have not been made. This suggestion is premature. A lot of people have looked at a lot of data and are listening to your concerns this evening. There are three important things to remember:

- The committee is not decision making body
- Nothing will be effective until September 2014
- Trustees are the only persons making decisions

All the feedback collected will be reviewed at the next committee meeting. Trustees will receive copies.

Centennial seems to be a forgotten school and I want to ensure this doesn't continue.

Lakeshore Discovery parent



I understand that the addition to Belle River PS is 8 rooms and possibly 303 students moving; potentially could there be portables.

There will be. The capacity issues will be shared by the whole family of schools. There is no solution to this problem. The challenges of capacity are there. Belle River PS and Lakeshore Discovery will have a few portables but it will not be one school with 17 portables.

One of my children has been in portables for 4 years. I understand the issues, but don't want to see him move and then be in a portable again. The Board should add a few more rooms at Belle River PS to alleviate the necessity to have portables.

Ministry of Education funding is based on actual students in the school. Until you are over 100% capacity you will not get funding for additions or new schools. Using portables is the only way we can access the necessary funding. We get buildings as close to capacity as possible. Portables are a temporary solution. If we can show the Ministry of Education that Belle River PS, Centennial and Lakeshore Discovery are all full, then we can ask the Ministry of Education to look at providing the necessary funding for an additional school in the area.

How many portables do you need to get funding?

There is no answer. It is all based on demand versus need and not just in our Board; all the boards across the province are trying to access the funding.

Lakeshore Discovery parent

My daughter is mad, she will be entering grade 7 when this takes place. She already did this once. She was at Puce PS, a beautiful school and we had to move the Lakeshore Discovery. Once again we are faced with moving. I see that when other school boards do this there is a phasing out period. How much attention is paid to the emotions of the students? It is disappointing. We haven't moved house but my child has moved. You will run out of room at Belle River PS. I don't know what the answer is but in the past you have had kindergarten students in the high school, why can't you do that again? It allows for co-op opportunities for the students. I didn't see that proposal; you have overlooked it.

This idea was considered as I mentioned earlier this evening but FDK dictates specific space for the programs, funding is specific and has to be a permanent space structure so it would create problems when the secondary enrolment starts to increase. The permanent structural changes would have to be made at the high school and then when the high school begins to fill up again where will the JK and SK students relocate? Relocating grade 7 and 8 students to a high school does work well.

It was suggested that grade 8 students be allowed to finish their year without moving. Transportation won't be provided. I won't be able to drive her.

Lakeshore Discovery parent

We are not affected by the change. My concern is before and after school care? How many spaces are allotted?

I don't have that information but if you check with the administration of the school they will be able to help you.

Belle River DHS parent and teacher

Some schools fundraise for technology but at Talbot Trail the Board provided every room with a smartboard.

Not true.

If students move will some of the technology move too?

Yes, allocation of technology is based on student enrolment.

My children were in the kindergarten program housed at Belle River DHS and it was a very positive experience for them.

This will be the last question for this evening.

Lakeshore Discovery parent

There has been a lot of talk about costs and the Board has only so much money for funding. What are the extra costs from dual track at both schools rather than keeping all the resources at one school?

Single track is beneficial.

This was discussed by the committee. Resources travel with students and are allocated based on enrolment.

So resources will be split? When the students are split, then the resources will be split too. They won't have the access to as many resources as if all the students stayed in one location.

No, there are some one-time costs associated in setting up a new dual track program.

Lakeshore Discovery parent

Now we are being switched back to Belle River PS. The Lakeshore Discovery teachers are great. Please look at leaving the boundary at Willowood, as it is in Emeryville. The children won't make friends and we keep bouncing them. They can't ride their bikes to school in Belle River. I didn't particularly care for Belle River PS when my child went there so please look at leaving the boundary at Willowood. It is only two busloads of students. I can drive my son to a bus stop. You are changing my son's life forever.

I am looking for the data. I see that two schools are still overcrowded in the future. This is your proposal A; can you show us plan B and provide the data? The trustees are only 8 people and we didn't have all the information that the committee had. Can we have this information so we can provide some suggestions to you? We might be able to come up with a better plan than the committee.

Minutes of all the meetings are posted on the Board website under the "Student Accommodations" icon.

I had challenges with trying to make the links work. Where do we send our suggestions?

To my office and it will be shared with the committee.

## **7. Closing Comments and Adjournment**

Superintendent Lyons reminded the audience that the committee is not a decision making body. The committee can only make recommendations; trustees will make the final decision on June 19, when Administration will present its report to Trustees at a special meeting of the Board.

There being no further questions, the meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.



## Boundary Study Public Meeting Comments:

for: Lake Shore Discovery School...

☒ Parent ☐ Teacher  
☒ Community Member

I was just wondering if any thought was given to the number of students who graduate from Lakeshore Discovery and go to the New High School? The #'s purposed or projected are under the assumption that all students (public) will go to Belle River. Most of my daughters friends live around the New High School and will be going there...

Name: Nina Marshall

Address: ~~###~~



## Boundary Study Public Meeting Comments:

for: Trustees

☒ Parent ☐ Teacher  
☐ Community Member

Please consider that when this change happens and my children move from LDS to Belle River Public that I hope you take into consideration that there won't be many 1/2 and 1/2 classes. I don't believe the quality of teaching is as valueable to our children's education when in a split class.

Name: Pam Bellemore LeDuca

Address:



## Boundary Study Public Meeting Comments:

☒ Parent ☐ Teacher  
☐ Community Member

for: Belle River Public

→ adding onto.

- 1) - expanding Lakeshore instead of BRP  
+ leaving boundaries. - people are moving out to country so  
will populate all 3 schools.
- 2) - having boundary for B.R.P. expanded to include  
English Rd. in St. Joachim.
- 3) - letting parents have option of driving their  
children to school of choice meaning grandfathering  
in the current children of the school & allowing  
them to have a  
finish their education there.  
Name: Jodi Brown  
Address: ~~1000 River Rd.~~  
- This will be the 4th school for my daughter.  
enough, is enough..



## Boundary Study Public Meeting Comments:

☒ Parent ☐ Teacher  
☐ Community Member

for:

WANT TO HAVE E. RUSCOM RIVER RD  
INCLUDED WITHIN BRPS BOUNDARY.  
PROPOSED BOUNDARY DOES NOT INCLUDE  
E. RUSCOM RIVER RD. FOR ENGLISH BOUNDARY


Name: CHRIS BROWN

Address: 999 E. RUSCOM RIVER RD.  
ST JOACHIM






**BELLE RIVER FAMILY OF SCHOOLS**  
BOUNDARY STUDY – PUBLIC MEETING  
MAY 22<sup>ND</sup>, 2013



Centennial Central



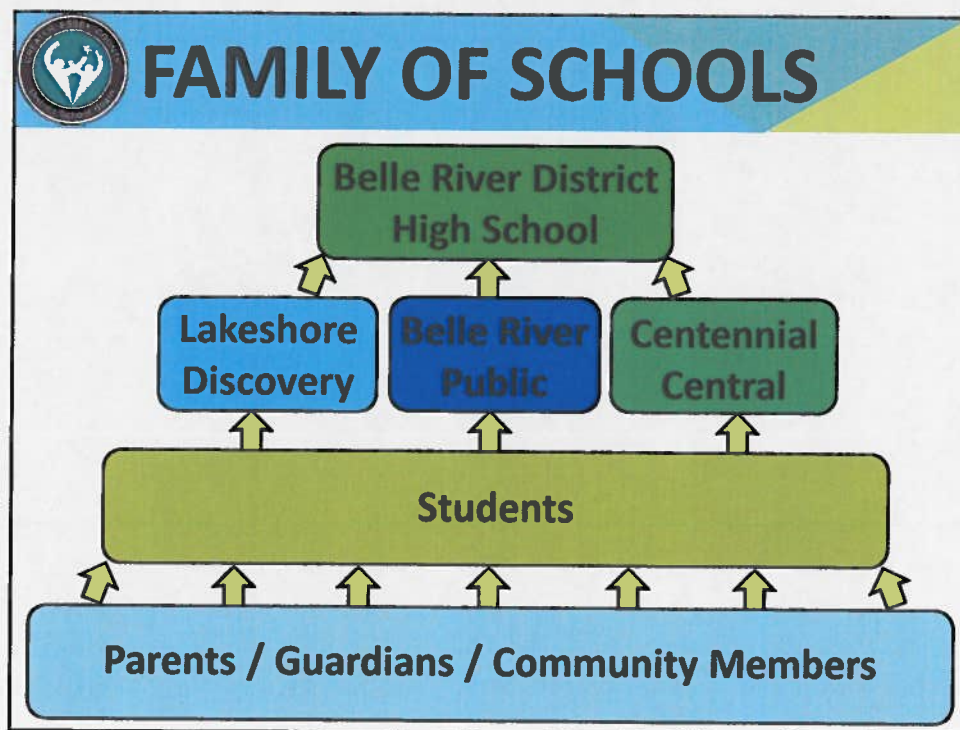
Belle River Public



Belle River District High School



Lakeshore Discovery





## AGENDA

- **Rationale**
- **Roles and Responsibilities of the Boundary Committee**
- **Decision Making Process and Results**
- **Description and Analysis of Recommendation**
- **Discussion Period (Superintendent Lyons)**



## BACKGROUND

### **In recent years:**

- Lakeshore Discovery has been operating above capacity
- Belle River Public has been operating near capacity
- Centennial Central has been operating below capacity

### **Influencing Factors:**

- Tecumseh Vista has helped to alleviate capacity pressures on the Belle River Family of Schools
- French Immersion is an area of growth within GECD SB
- Implementation of Full Day Kindergarten (FDK) continues at schools throughout the board





## DIRECTIVE

- At the January 15, 2013, regular meeting of the Board, Trustees approved the following recommendation regarding the Belle River Family of Schools:

**“THAT THE SUPERINTENDENT RESPONSIBLE FOR ACCOMMODATIONS FACILITATES A BOUNDARY STUDY TO ADDRESS CAPACITY ISSUES WITHIN THE BELLE RIVER FAMILY OF SCHOOLS.”**



## BOUNDARY COMMITTEE

**Purpose:** To analyze capacity constraints, generate potential solutions and advise trustees as to the most appropriate course of action.

**Facilitator:** Terry Lyons, Superintendent

**Recording Secretary:** Lynne Hornby

COMMITTEE MEMBERS			
	Principals	Parents	Teachers
BRPS	1	2	1
CCPS	1	2	1
LDS	1	2	1
BRDHS	1	2	1
	4	8	4



## GENERAL PROCESS

**The committee commenced on March 26, 2013 in effort to:**

- Review any and all existing information
- Establish guiding principles
- Generate a list of potential solutions
- Evaluate the feasibility of generated solutions
- Make recommendations for consideration by Administration and the Trustees



## CONSIDERATIONS

### Lakeshore Discovery School

- FDK expected in 2014 will increase enrolment pressures
- Growth in LDS French Immersion continues to intensify (50% of enrolment)
- Relief from Tecumseh Vista has helped to reduced the number of portables from 17 to 12
- Lakeshore leads county towns for new residential permits





## CONSIDERATIONS

### Belle River Public School



- Current utilization is 96%
- Full Day Kindergarten (FDK) already in place
- An 8-room expansion has been approved for 2014-2015 school year that can accommodate approx 196 students
- New construction in Belle River urban ward is not expected to significantly increase enrolment



## CONSIDERATIONS

### Centennial Central Public School



- FDK in 2014 will increase enrolment
- Building renewal costs increasing due to age
- Many other schools with enrolments of less than 200 have been closed/merged
- While smaller and under-utilized, CCPS serves a distinct purpose in its community



## CONSIDERATIONS

### Belle River High School



- The opening of Tecumseh Vista has:
  - led to a temporary decline in enrolment
  - improved retention rates (i.e., from feeder schools)
- Population demographics suggest that enrolment is likely to increase in the future
- Empty student spaces may allow for grade restructuring as a means to relieve pressure



## CURRENT CAPACITIES

Current Capacities					
2012 - 2013	BRPS	CCPS	LDS	Total	BRDHS
<b>Capacity</b>					
Building	455	351	687	1,493	1,176
Portables			276	276	
<b>Total Capacity</b>	<b>455</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>963</b>	<b>1,769</b>	<b>1,176</b>
<b>Enrolment</b>	<b>435</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>906</b>	<b>1,540</b>	<b>915</b>
<b>Utilization</b>					
% Building Capacity Used	95.6%	56.7%	131.9%	103.1%	77.8%
% Total Capacity Used	95.6%	56.7%	94.1%	87.1%	77.8%





## PROJECTED CAPACITIES

Projected Capacities (with BRPS Building Expansion)					
2014 - 2015	BRPS	CCPS	LDS	Total	BRDHS
<b>Capacity</b>					
Building	455	351	687	1,493	1,176
Portables			276	276	
Building Expansion (2014)	196			196	
<b>Total Capacity</b>	<b>651</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>963</b>	<b>1,965</b>	<b>1,176</b>
<b>Enrolment</b>					
Current Enrolment	435	199	906	1,540	915
Anticipated Change	24	(13)	54	65	(153)
<b>Projected Enrolment</b>	<b>459</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>960</b>	<b>1,605</b>	<b>762</b>
<b>Utilization</b>					
% Building Capacity Used	70.5%	53.0%	139.7%	95.0%	64.8%
% Total Capacity Used	70.5%	53.0%	99.7%	81.7%	64.8%



## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

To help facilitate the equitable evaluation of potential solutions, guiding principles were established:

- Improve utilization rates
- Minimize student transitions
- Maintain or decrease busing times
- Recognize the importance of community schools
- Maintain a high school in Belle River
- Preserve, and where possible improve, the overall educational experience of all affected students



## POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS

The committee generated a number of potential solutions:

### **A: DUAL-TRACK SCHOOL**

- 1. Belle River PS and Lakeshore Discovery become dual track**
  - Adjust Lakeshore Discovery eastern boundary at Renaud Line
  - Adjust Belle River PS eastern boundary to French Line
  - Adjust Belle River PS southern boundary to 401 as a natural boundary
- 2. Lakeshore Discovery, Belle River PS and Centennial Central become dual track**



## POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS

### **A: DUAL-TRACK SCHOOL, CONTINUED**

- 3. Belle River PS becomes dual track**
  - Adjust Belle River PS western boundary to Rourke Line
  - Adjust Belle River PS eastern boundary to French Line
  - Relocate grades 7 and 8 students from Lakeshore Discovery to Belle River DHS
- 4. Lakeshore Discovery and Centennial Central become dual track; Belle River PS remains English**





## POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS

### **B: GRADE RESTRUCTURING**

5. **Grade 7 and 8 students from Belle River PS and Lakeshore Discovery relocate to the BRDHS (French and English)**
6. **Relocate all Grade 7 and 8 students to Belle River DHS**



## POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS

### **B: GRADE RESTRUCTURING, CONTINUED**

7. **Relocate all Grade 8 students (Belle River PS, Lakeshore Discovery and Centennial Central) to Belle River DHS**
8. **Relocate Grades 6, 7 and 8 of Lakeshore Discovery (English and French) to Belle River DHS**



## POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS

### C: OTHER

#### **9. Modify the boundaries of Belle River Public School**

- Adjust Lakeshore Discovery eastern boundary to Renaud Line (English only)
- Adjust Centennial Central western boundary - North of 401 and French Line

#### **10. Lakeshore Discovery becomes a French Immersion school only; Belle River PS remains an English track school**



## POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS

### C: OTHER, CONTINUED

#### **11. Lakeshore Discovery becomes English track only; Belle River PS becomes French Immersion track only**

#### **12. Use Portapaks at Lakeshore Discovery rather than portables**



## FEASIBILITY ANALYSIS

- **Qualitative** discussion around advantages and disadvantages
- **Quantitative** analysis of impacts to enrolment at each of the schools
- **Feasibility analysis of each solution:**
  - Elimination (i.e., not viable)
  - Modification (i.e., not a solution on its own)
  - Further Discussion/Information is required
- **Analysis process repeated until consensus reached**



## RECOMMENDATION

**On basis of analysis, two possible solutions emerged:**

### ENGLISH ONLY

- English students move to BRPS; LDS remains the only dual-track Elementary school in Lakeshore
- Boundaries are adjusted to distribute enrolment as necessary

### DUAL-TRACK

- Belle River PS becomes dual-track; both English and French students move to Belle River PS
- Eastern boundary of BRPS is adjusted to alleviate enrolment pressures at BRPS and to increase enrolment at CCS

- **Further analysis and discussion focused on identifying the best solution**



## RECOMMENDATION

**Parents on the committee voted 6 to 2 in favour of designating BRPS as a dual-track school.**

### Rationale

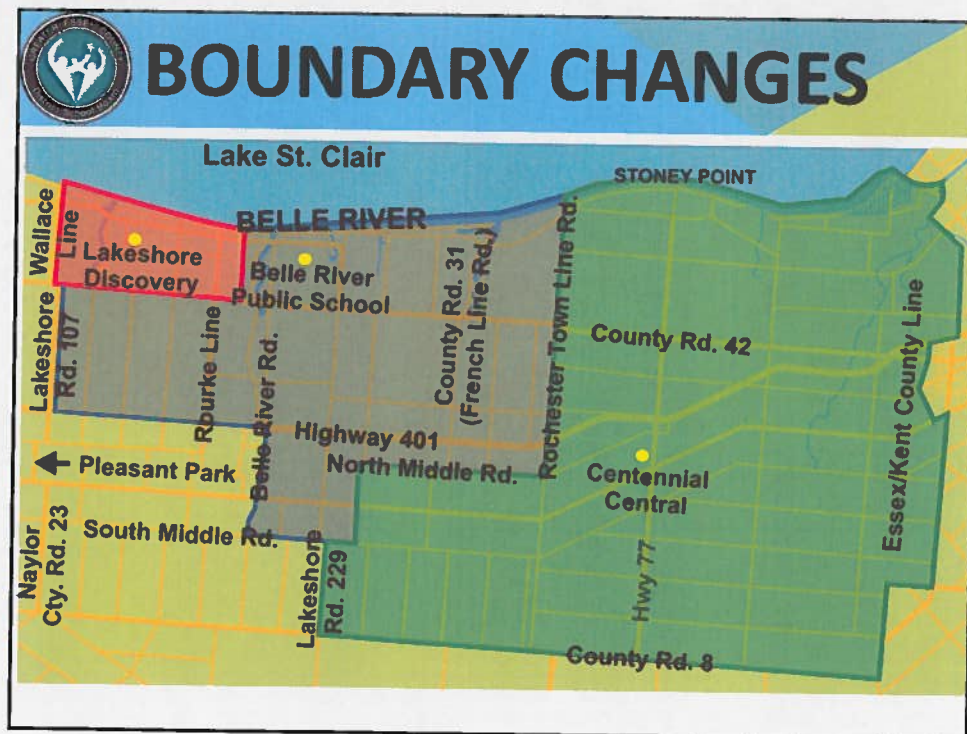
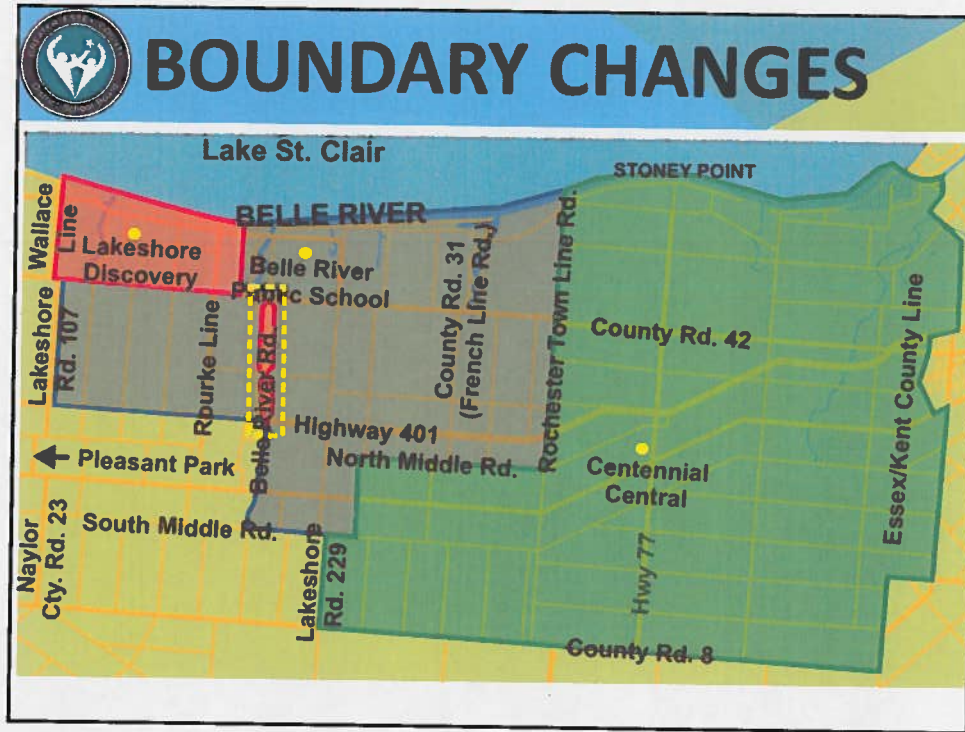
- French Immersion continues to be an area of growth
- Belle River is a traditionally French community
- Reduces travel time to students at the eastern boundary of Lakeshore Discovery
- Spreads building capacity pressures more equitably
- Potential for increased enrolment at Centennial Central
- The enrolment projections supported this solution

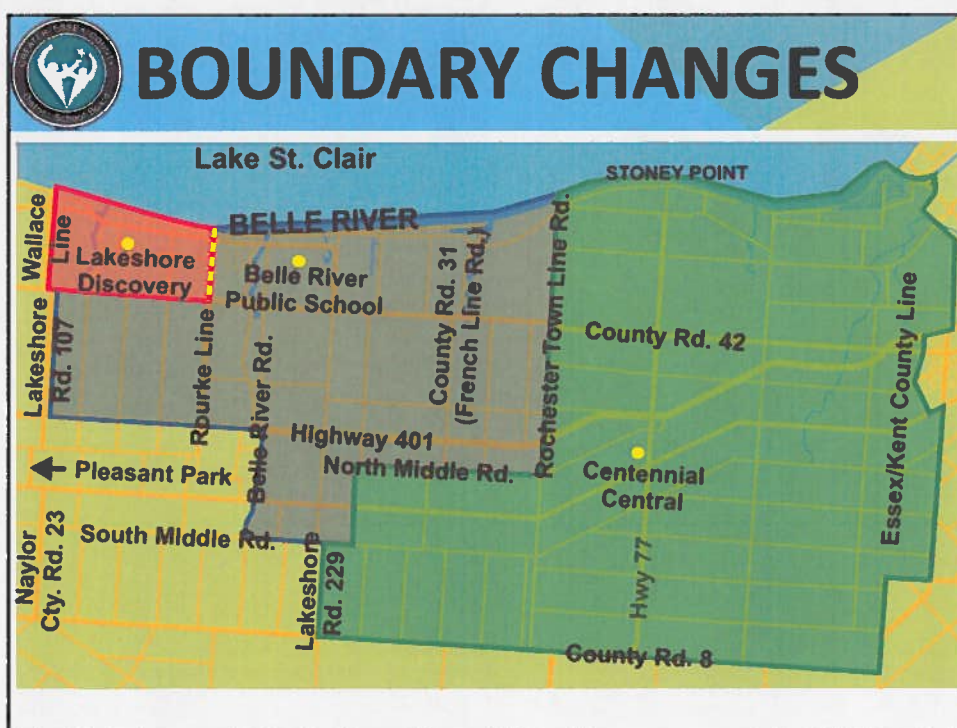
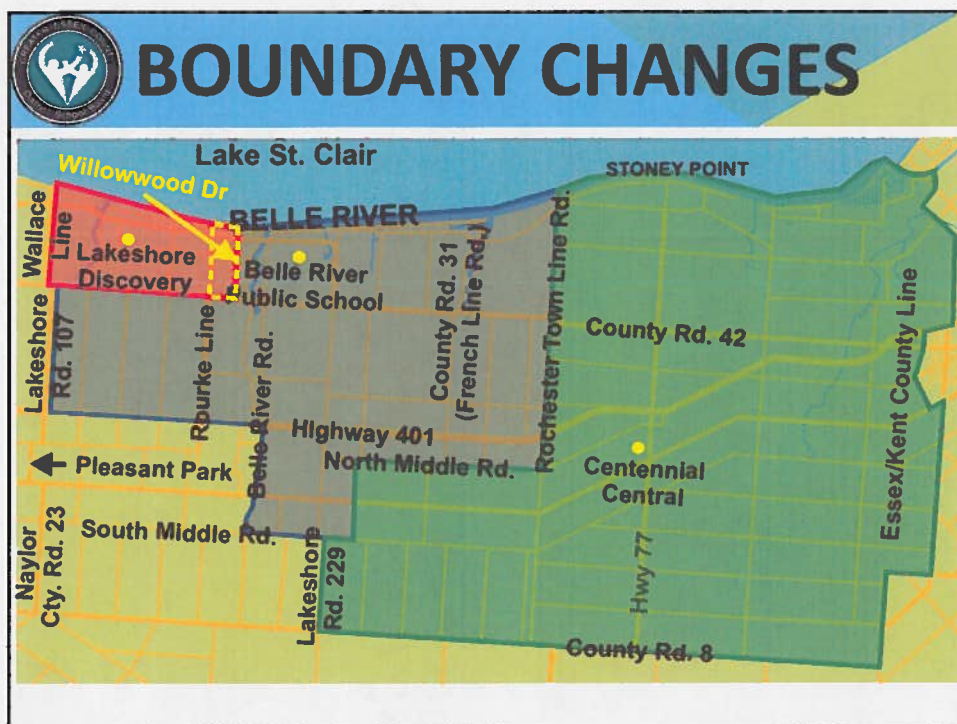


## CURRENT BOUNDARIES

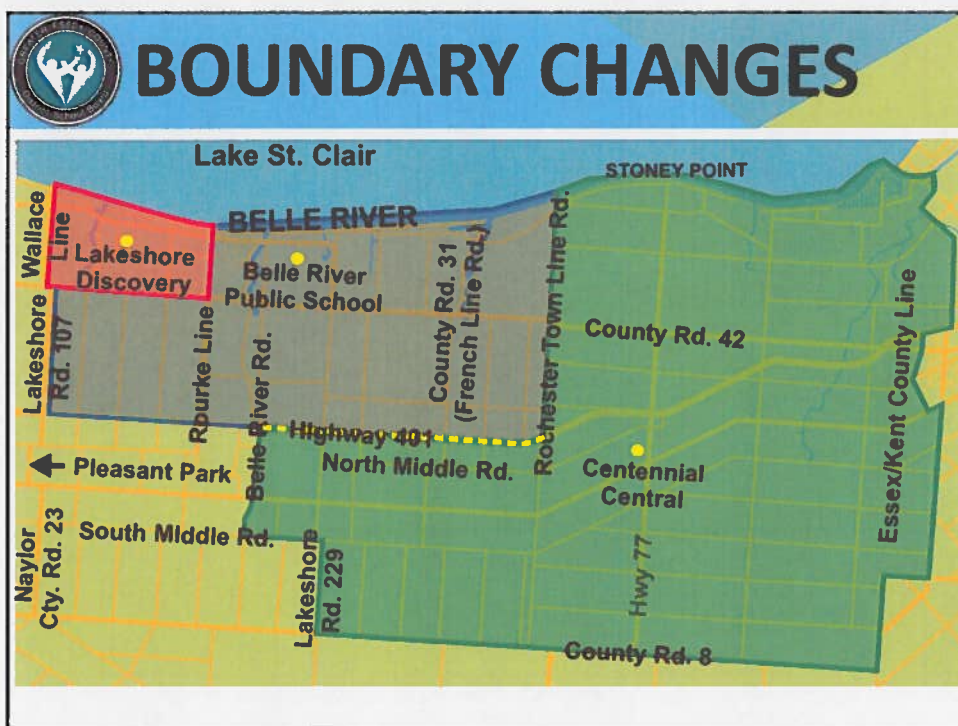
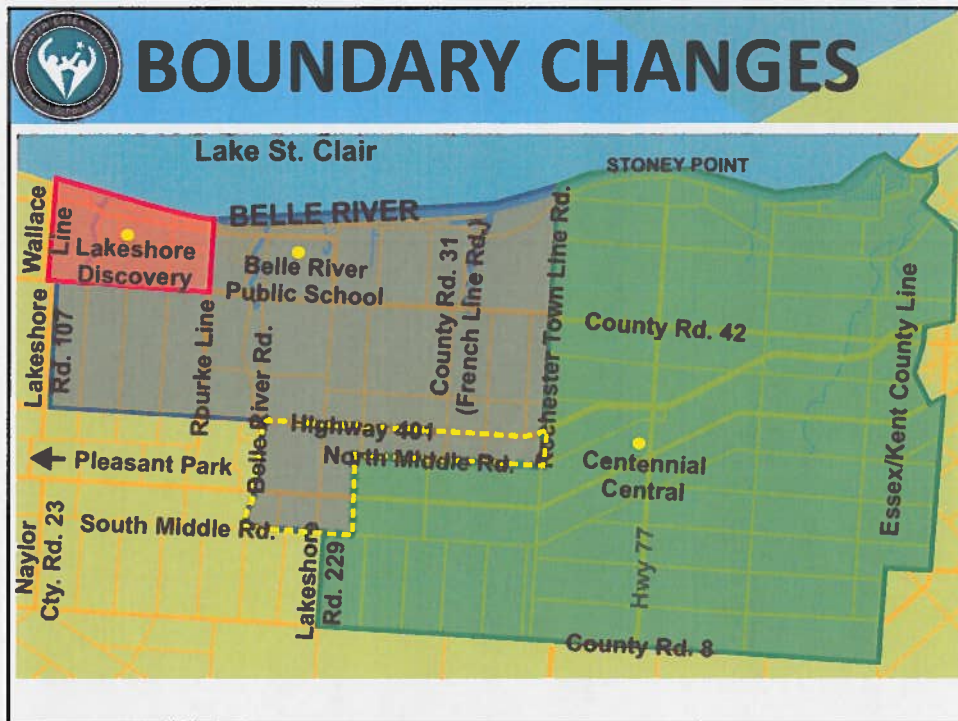


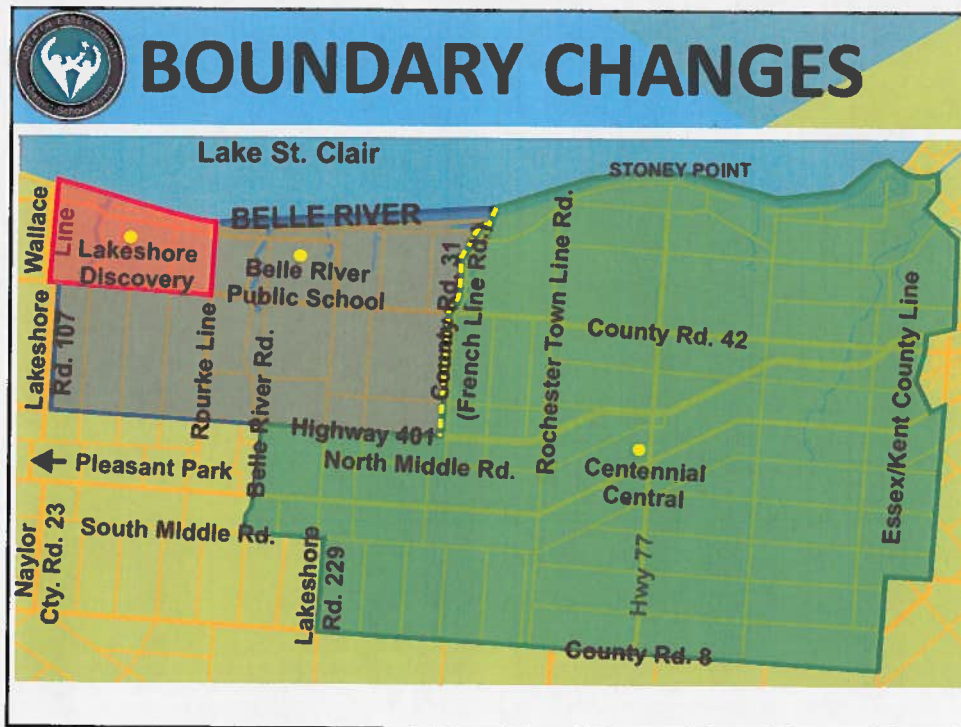
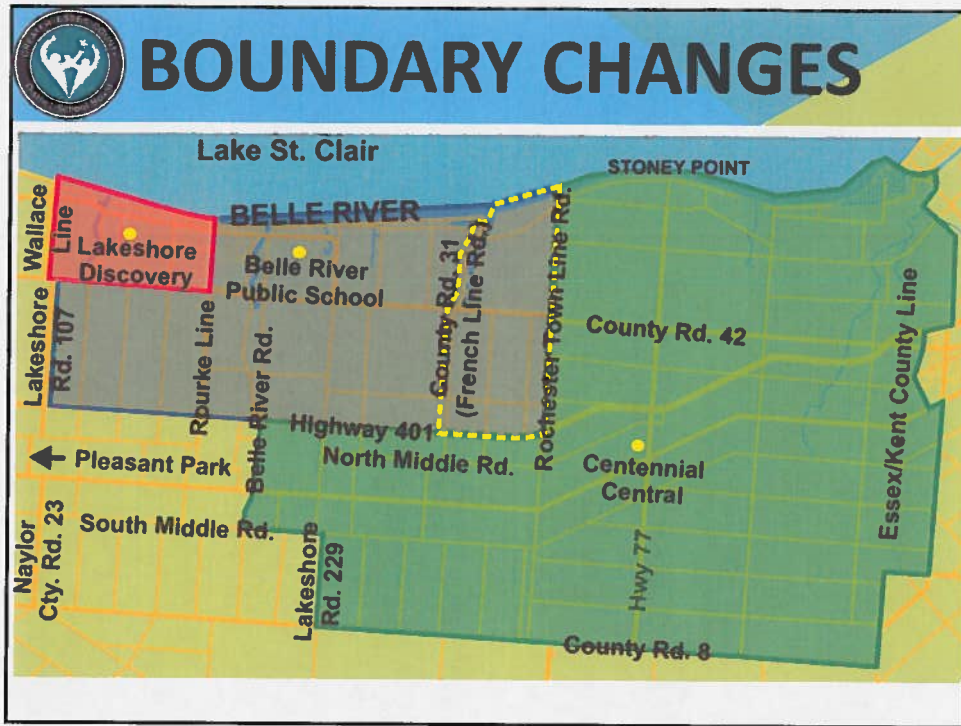




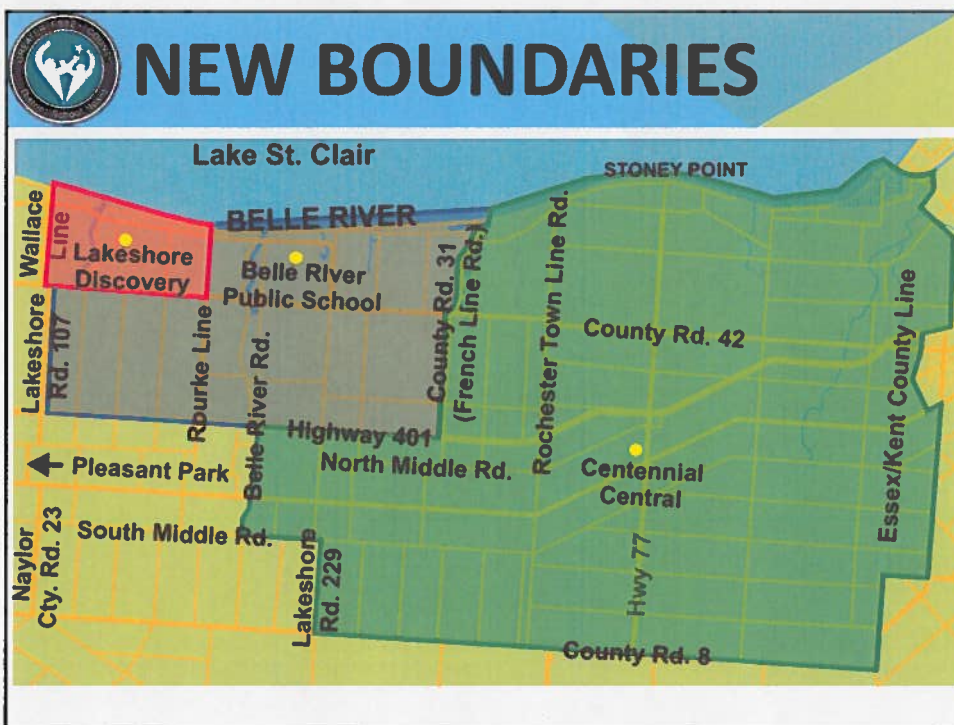
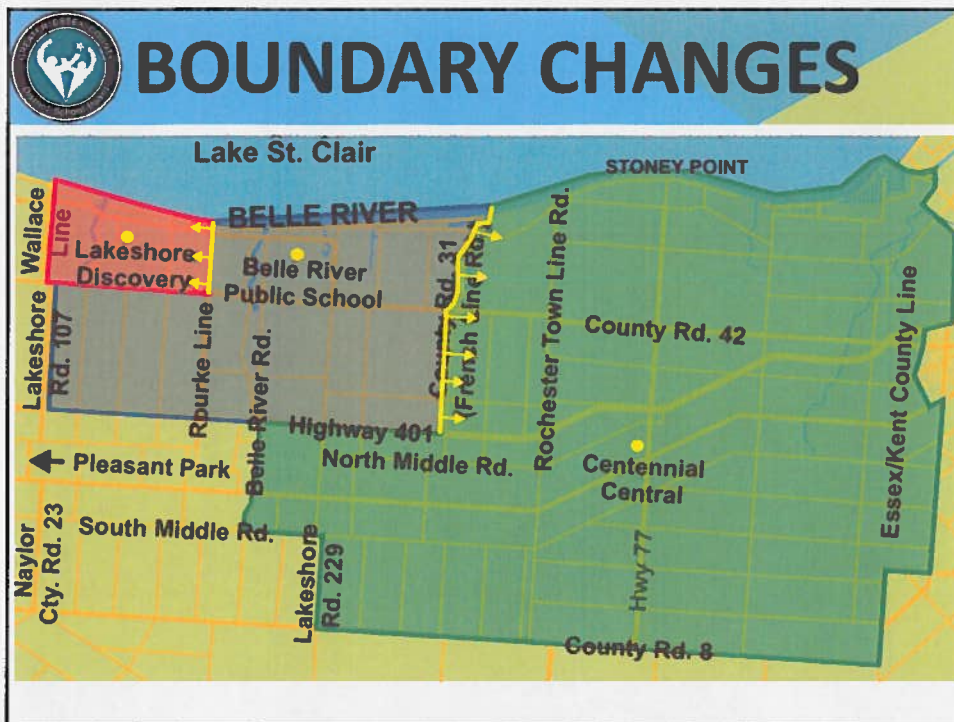


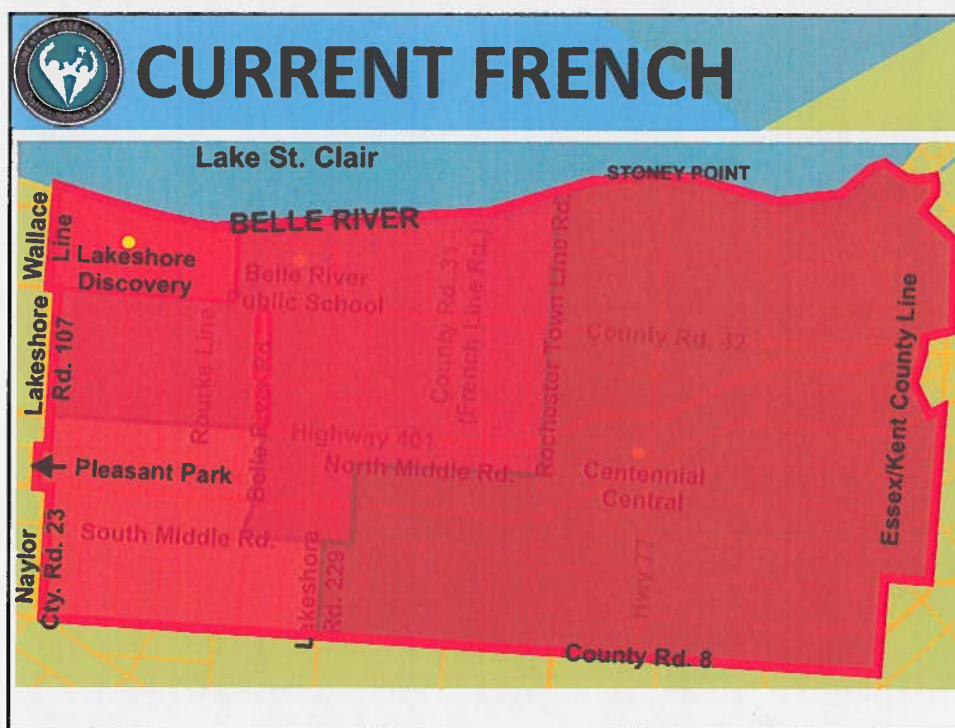
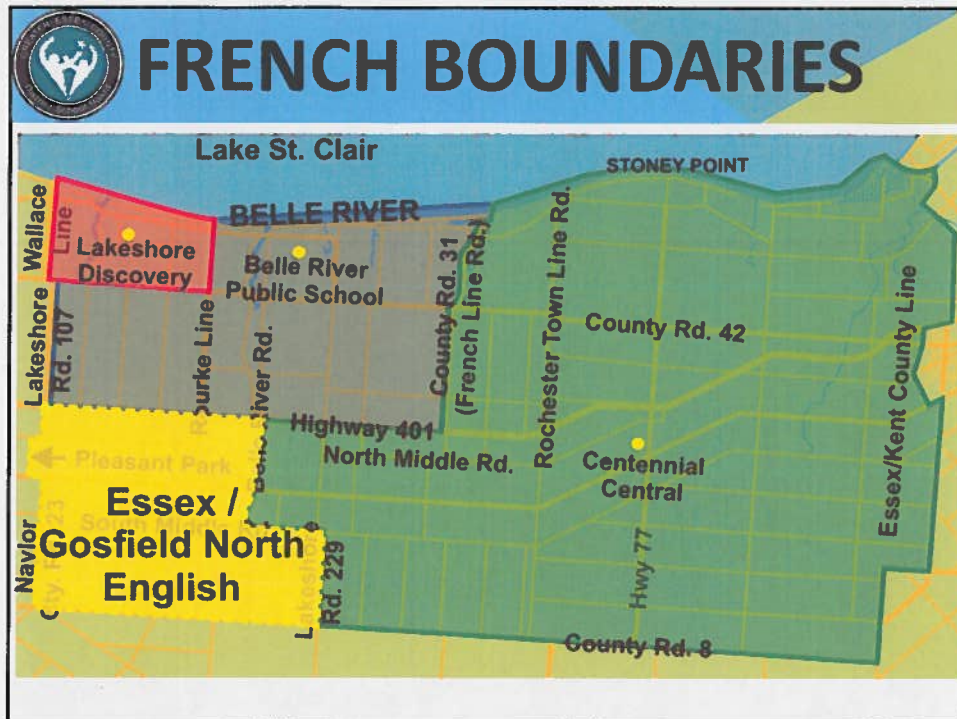









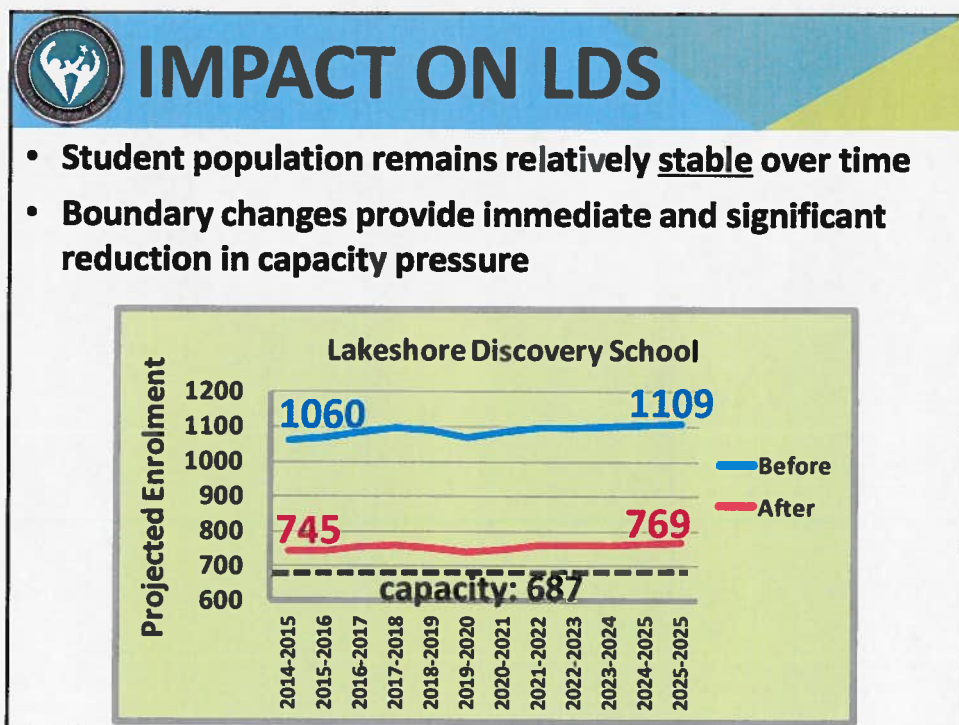
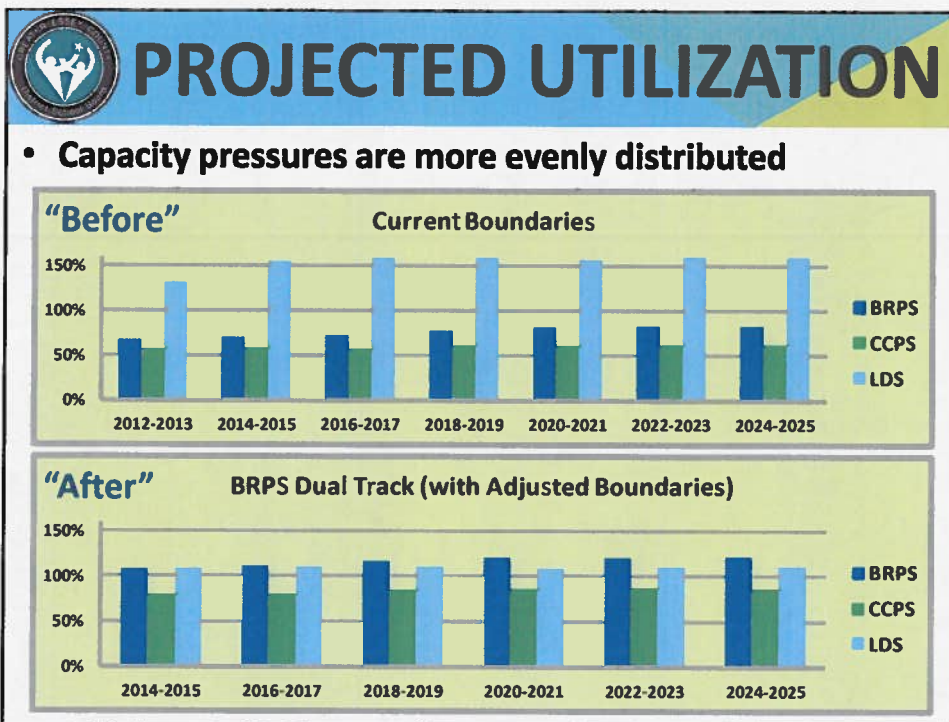








 <b>PROJECTED UTILIZATION</b>					
Recommendation: BRPS Dual-Track with Boundary Changes					
2014 - 2015	BRPS	CCPS	LDS	Total	BRDHS
<b>Capacity</b>					
Building	455	351	687	1,493	1,176
Portables			276	276	
Building Expansion 2014	196			196	
<b>Total Capacity</b>	<b>651</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>963</b>	<b>1,965</b>	<b>1,176</b>
<b>Expected Enrollment</b>	<b>459</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>1,059</b>	<b>1,722</b>	<b>762</b>
<b>Boundary Changes (BRPS)</b>					
With respect to LDS	308		(308)	0	0
With respect to CCPS	(80)	80		0	0
<b>Adjusted Enrollment</b>	<b>687</b>	<b>284</b>	<b>751</b>	<b>1,722</b>	<b>762</b>
<b>Utilization</b>					
% Building Capacity Used	105.5%	80.9%	109.3%	102.0%	64.8%

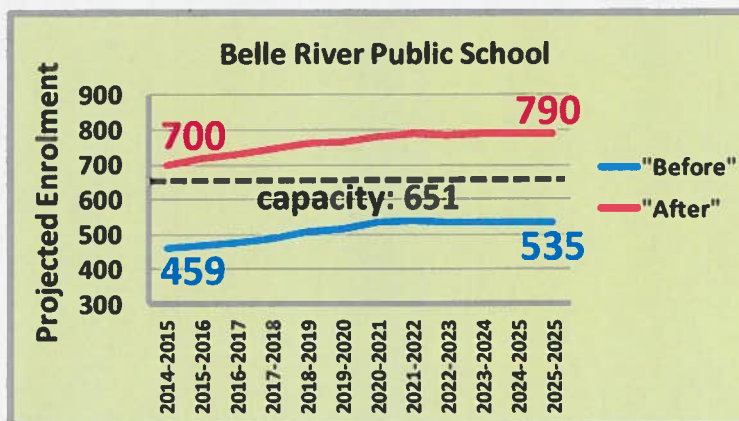






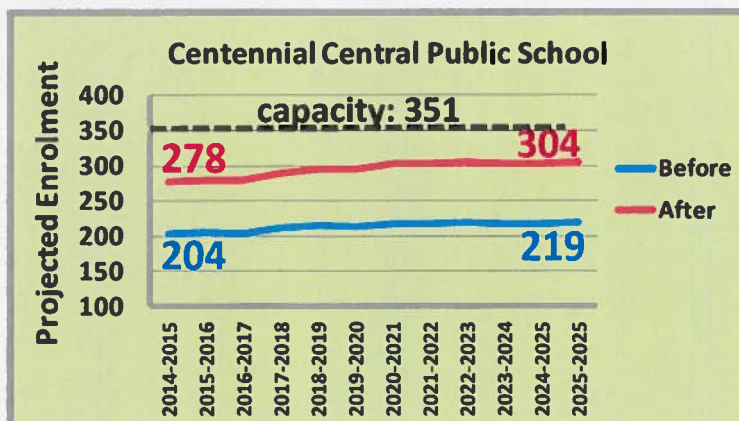
## IMPACT ON BRPS

- Student population slowly increases over the next decade
- Increased enrolment could lead to the addition of portables



## IMPACT ON CCPS

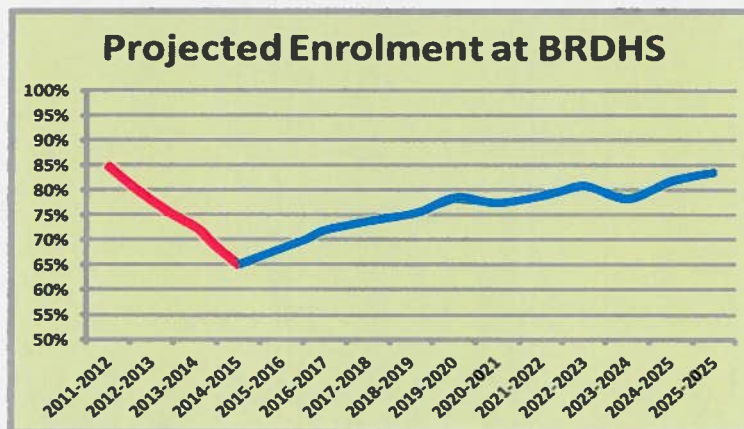
- With boundary changes, the enrolment approaches capacity over time
- Addresses and promotes the viability CCPS





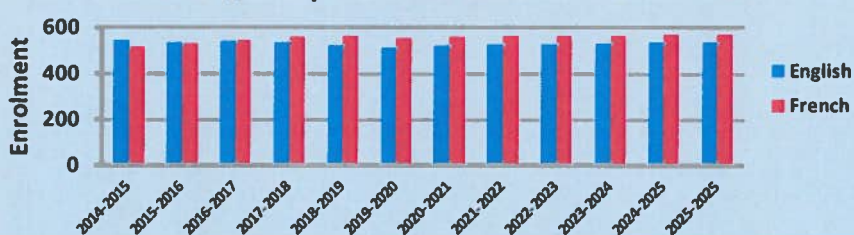
## IMPACT ON BRDHS

- 'Phased-in' grades at Tecumseh Vista Academy HS has led to a short-term decline in enrolment at BRDHS
- Student population should recover naturally over time

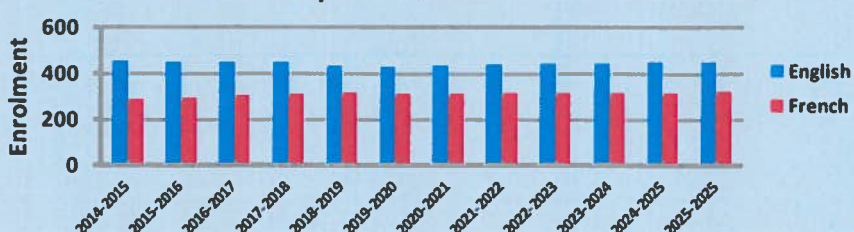


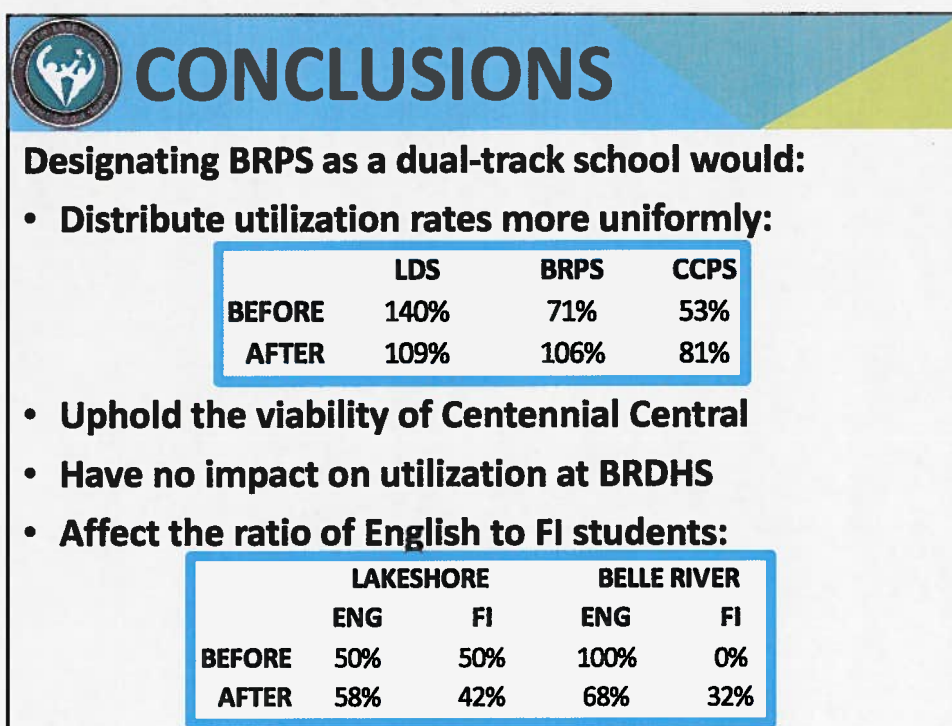
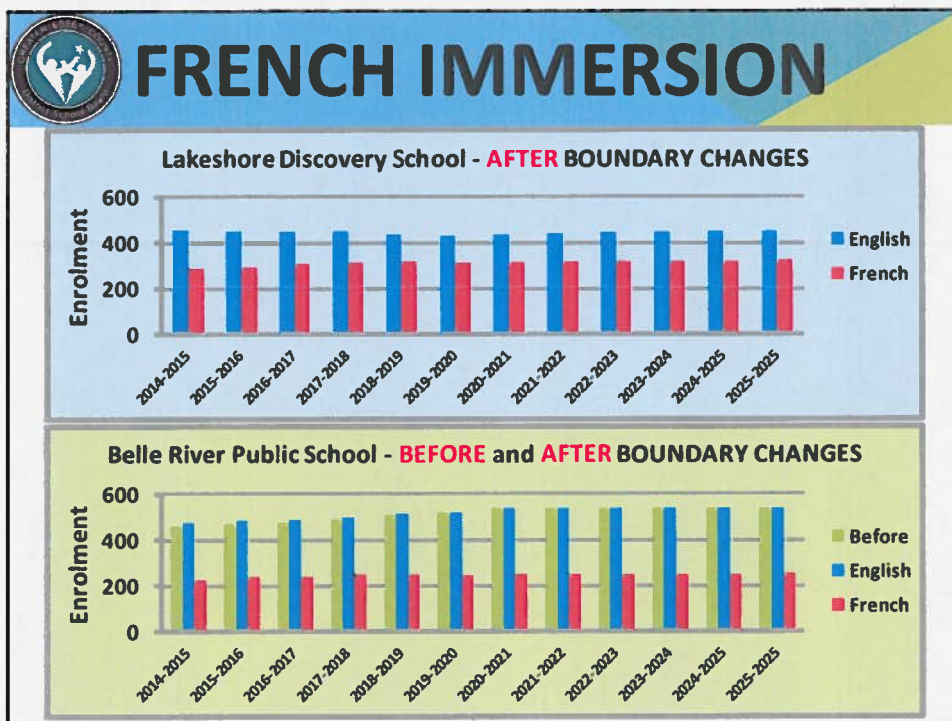
## FRENCH IMMERSION

Lakeshore Discovery School - **BEFORE** BOUNDARY CHANGES



Lakeshore Discovery School - **AFTER** BOUNDARY CHANGES









## SUMMARY

- **A boundary committee was created to address capacity issues in the Belle River Family of Schools**
- **The committee generated, discussed, and evaluated several possible solutions.**
- **Based on analysis, changing BRPS to a dual-track school was deemed to be the most proactive solution.**
- **This recommendation serves a three-fold purpose:**
  - i) reduces enrolment strains on LDS**
  - ii) makes use of the expansion plans at BRPS**
  - iii) helps to maintain the viability of CCS**



## NEXT STEPS

- **Boundary Committee members to receive and review input from school community stakeholders**
- **Administration to submit a report on findings and recommendations to the Trustees on June 19<sup>th</sup>, 2013**
- **Trustees to make final decisions with respect to the Belle River Family of Schools**
- **Changes to be implemented no sooner than September 2014**



Belle River Family of Schools  
Boundary Review  
Public input collected up May 30, 2013

Dear members,

As a parent of a child with special needs who has been shuffled from school to school since he was 5 years old, the possibility of having to change schools again is disconcerting. I truly hope that you strongly take into consideration that environmental change and re-adjustment is NOT an easy thing for a child who has a disability. I am hoping that I can advocate on behalf of all parents with special needs, by saying that children with such difficulties need to remain in a stable environment where change is not constantly introduced.

In my particular situation, I re-located my family more than 1100 km from here in order to have peace of mind and to have my child attend a school where such changes would not occur. I therefore ask that in the event of boundary changes, that you strongly consider that learning disabled children who often present anxiety and social adaptation issues, not be relocated to another school.

I thank you in advance.

Mother of William Bastouli (grade 3) at Lakeshore Discovery.

---

Crystal Sylvestre <crysquinsyl@hotmail.com> writes:

Hello,

RE: BRPS Boundaries

1. When will these new boundary guidelines be implemented?  
Any changes will not take place before September 2014

2. Will existing students be forced to switch schools?

Trustees will make final decisions at a Special Meeting of the Board on June 19, 2013

Thank you

Crystal Sylvestre

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To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to you in response to the letter I received last week describing the recommendations for boundary changes for the Lakeshore Discovery, Belle River Public, and Centennial Central schools.

Two years ago my husband and I, after years of deliberating the pro's and con's to my son staying at the over crowded Lakeshore Discovery School, decided to forfeit his education in the French Immersion, and pull him out of the program to switch him over to a smaller Belle River Public School. My son had a difficult time tolerating the overcrowding and chaos that went with being at Lakeshore Discovery, especially after already spending the beginning of his young school years at a much smaller Puce Public School before being made to re-locate to the newly built Lakeshore Discovery. The change to Belle River Public School was a successful move and it was definitely the right decision to getting him back on track with his educational needs.

Now we have a boundary study in front of us that will FORCE my son to another school, Centennial Central. The reason we left Lakeshore Discovery School in the first place was because of the overcrowding, and now just a few years later adjustments have finally been proposed and the school will accommodate what it was initially built for. If all of this had been done sooner my son could have stayed in the French Immersion without switching schools at all. The newly proposed boundary changes in front of me today would have allowed my son to stay at LDS in the French Immersion. How sad and disappointing for us as parents.

I am happy to see that work is finally being done with the issue for LDS, and it is difficult to accommodate and make everyone happy, but what I have a problem with is how it seems that we are forgetting how difficult and trying it is for most kids to be forced from one school to another to accommodate the mistakes that have been made in the past with estimating school enrollment in the area. As a parent I am most annoyed with the fact that if these proposed boundary changes are enforced students that already attend these schools will not be

grandfathered in and will not even have a choice to be driven to the school they attend now in order to stay and graduate during their final years of elementary school. Where are our choices as parents who pay taxes to this school board and fund it? It is not the fault of our children that any of this needs to happen, but they are the one's in the long run that suffer and have to re-adjust once again.

After speaking with many parents in the school community that these boundary changes will affect it is likely that the Greater Essex County District School Board will lose some of their students to the other school boards. The parents are fed up with the decisions that have been made in the past and want some stability for their children and their education.

If you agree to these boundary changes that will mean that my son will have attended FOUR schools during his elementary education without even having moved from his home address! What I am asking you to reconsider in these changes is that parents will have a choice that if they want their child(ren) to remain at the school they already attend to finish out their education(s) before high school that they be allowed to do that even if it means providing their own transportation to and from school. We need to have choices for our children.

If you have any further questions please feel free to contact me at your convenience at 519-728-0549.

Respectfully Yours,

Sherri Cazabon

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Nancy Witt <n.witt@hotmail.com> writes:

Hello,

My name is Nancy Witt. My daughter currently attends the french immersion program at Lakeshore Discovery. I was unable to attend the meeting tonight yet I am wondering, when would this boundary change take effect if approved?

I am concerned about Latch Key arrangements if it is to take effect in September 2013.

Nothing will be effective before September 2014

---

Good Morning,

I did attend the meeting that was at Belle River District High School on Wednesday and would like to add a separate suggestion.

I would like to ask the board to consider grandfathering the students that are currently at Lakeshore Discovery (regardless of the grade they are in) – French Immersion program if parents are willing to provide the transportation to school. I currently find my situation at Lakeshore Discovery to be amazing and would like to keep my children in this school as the daycare attached provides me with the help I need every day (including the Summer Program) to care for my children as my husband and I work full time.

If the board chooses to change the boundaries for September 2014, new students enrolling as of that year should be affected. Giving parents that currently have children attending Lakeshore Discovery the choice as to what they would like to do, would be beneficial for everyone's family and situation.

I thank-you for your time and consideration.

Melissa Henwood

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Good Morning,

I apologize for not being able to attend the Community Meeting town hall meeting on the May 22 but I understand that a couple of parents proposed two single track schools instead of two dual track schools. I would like to voice my support for the committee's recommendation of two dual track schools. If the proposal of single track schools is adopted I, like many other families, would have a child at each school. A single track school system would split up my children where a dual track school system would ensure a community environment where individual families are not separated. While I am empathetic to those with children who will have to switch schools, I feel the importance of not separating families is a much greater concern.

Sincerely,

Jason Zittlau

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I forgot to mention or write down the suggestion of having the french immersion students from Lakeshore from maybe Belle River Rd then east go to Centennial to use up the space they have. That would then allow for a french immersion school in the county. That would not be too long a bus ride for them. No money would have to be used to build onto Belle River Public. Maybe the money could be used to fix up Centennial if needed. The english boundaries could stay the same therefore allowing not as many kids to have to move schools.

Thank you

Jodi Brown

Sent from Samsung Mobile

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Dear Mr. Lyons, Trustees, and Committee Members,

This is my second email to you regarding the proposed boundary study for the Belle River Public, Lakeshore Discovery, and Centennial Central Schools. I attended the May 22, 2013 meeting and also had the opportunity to speak that evening. Since that time some further concerns and questions have come to mind.

My son Noah attends Belle River Public School and is currently in grade 5. He originally attended Puce Public in the French Immersion program and then later was moved to Lakeshore Discovery when it opened. He had a very difficult time tolerating the overcrowding and chaos that went along with being at an over populated school. My husband and I decided after months and months of consideration to forfeit his education in the French Immersion and move him to a much less crowded Belle River Public School last year. Noah is a student that does not tolerate change very well. Since attending B.R.P.S., after a duration of anxiety, time settling in, and adjusting to another school environment change he is thriving and extremely content with his new school.

We reside on the west side of the Rochester Townline and I was told by your Board two years ago that we were on the border for B.R.P.S., not Centennial Central. If I had lived across the street Noah would have been able to attend Centennial Central. Never in my wildest dreams when we took this leap of faith and made that change would I have imagined just a short time later the possibility of having to move AGAIN to another school that he could have attended in the first place. FOUR school changes from kindergarten to grade seven and we haven't even moved residences.

Clearly with the proposed boundary changes Noah would be forced to change schools once again to Centennial Central. As resilient as children can be with change my son is not one of those children. My husband and I need to look out for what is best for our son and changing schools again is absolutely not in his best interest. With much consideration we have decided that if we are made to move schools again it is highly likely that I will put my own future continuing education on hold and remove Noah from your education system for his remaining grade 7 and 8 years and will be home schooled. This is not a term I use loosely and it is not meant to sound like an ultimatum or threat. I realize these remaining elementary school years are critical before high school but socially he will be starting all over again. With the proposed change Noah will be leaving ALL of his friends behind at B.R.P.S. and ironically all of the French Immersion friends he left behind at L.D.S. will also be moved to B.R.P.S.. How sad. I am simply sharing our story and hope that it will influence all of you to re-consider possibilities for parents and students.

I'm not sure if you are aware but there are parents who are already putting alternative addresses into place so that their children can stay at their existing schools if you force them to go. I have heard of four children in just the past few days since the meeting that will be doing this. Two of these are B.R.P.S. students who do not wish to attend Centennial Central. So far the projected 80 students you estimate that will move to Centennial Central are now already down three to 77, including my own son and I'm sure there are many more to come. From the four stories I have heard all of these students will be in the grade 7 and 8 years of their education if the proposed boundary recommendations are passed. Parents simply want their children to finish out their senior years and graduate at the schools they attend now.

As I said at the meeting last Wednesday I realize that change needs to happen to address the overcrowding but from what I have heard at the meeting the only parents that seem happy with this proposal are the one's at Centennial Central. I also realize you can't make everyone happy, but how about making SOME of us happy? It is obvious that if parents are prepared to go to such great lengths as to lie to keep a child at a school that you need to look at some alternatives. My son asked me on Friday how it is fair that those who will lie will win and get to stay but those of us that just want choices and are fighting will probably end up losing. As a parent I could not give him an answer to his question.

---

I plead with you and respectfully ask once again that you reconsider grandfathering the grade 7 and 8's so that they can graduate with their existing classes. Or, at least re-consider allowing those parents, such as myself who feel passionately about this issue, to at least provide their own transportation for their child's remaining years of school before graduation.

Sincerely,  
Sherri Cazabon

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