

REGION OF OTTAWA CARLETON  
 RÉGION D'OTTAWA CARLETON

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REPORT  
 RAPPORT

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DATE 5 February 1999

TO/DEST. Co-ordinator  
 Planning & Environment Committee

FROM/EXP. Commissioner, Planning & Development Approvals  
 Commissioner, Social Services

SUBJECT/OBJET **AN UPDATE AND REVIEW OF STRATEGIES FOR THE  
 PROTECTION OF SCHOOL SITES**

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### **DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATIONS**

**That the Planning and Environment Committee recommend to Council that:**

- 1. The Minister of Education & Training and the Premier of Ontario be asked to adopt:**
  - a) The Two Zone Model upon which to determine and provide for education needs, by establishing as Zone 1, the older established communities inside the Greenbelt and as Zone 2, the new, expanding communities outside the Greenbelt; and**
  - b) An 80% Utilization Rate for the funding model to allow greater flexibility in operating and planning for schools;**
- 2. An amendment to the Region's Official Plan not be prepared as this would not achieve Council's objective of preventing school closures;**
- 3. That Council direct staff to develop a "Public Use First" property acquisition policy to consider, where appropriate, the joint acquisition or joint use of former school sites with other interested public bodies;**
- 4. That the Province be requested to reimburse the Region for any costs incurred in the relocation of child care operations to new facilities.**

## PURPOSE

Previously, staff reported on this issue at the 3 December 1998 meeting of the Community Services Committee. At the 9 December 1998 Council Meeting, Regional Council adopted a lengthy resolution related to the impact of school closures on regional programs and services. One of the items contained in that resolution stated: "THAT staff be directed to draft an Official Plan Amendment that would protect schools." Staff were also directed to prepare a report on the cost to clients and taxpayers of closing adult education programs.

Since then, a number of events have transpired to suggest an interim review of this multi-faceted issue. In particular, two School Boards have postponed their decisions on any school closures until February and March of this year. More importantly, a Task Force has been formed locally to approach the Education Minister in an attempt to gain some recognition of the unique situation here in Ottawa-Carleton and in turn, obtain some suitable concessions to alleviate potential impacts from large numbers of school closures.

Therefore, the following report will outline staff's review of this broader issue of school closures and specifically the idea of protecting schools. In addition, this report will examine potential impacts on child care and adult education programs. Also, an update will be provided on the School Board's progress to date on resolving their surplus capacity situation.

## BACKGROUND & UPDATE ON SCHOOL BOARD ACTIONS

School Boards across Ontario have been directed by the Province to rationalize their existing school facilities by designing programs to reach a 100% utilization rate. Recently, the Province changed their funding structure for operating grants such that an additional 20% funding 'top-up' will be provided notwithstanding enrolments of less than the desired 100%. For example, a school operating at 75% of capacity would be eligible to receive the full 20% top-up thereby increasing Provincial funding to 95% of that school's operating costs. Prior to this change, only 75% would have been provided.

However, capital grants for new schools will not be provided until School Boards achieve 100% utilization rates. That is, the number of pupil places in a School Board's inventory (as calculated by the Province) has to be fully utilized by enrolled students.

School Boards are now able to deal with their surplus space inventory on an annual basis. The previous deadline of 31 Dec 1998 was dropped and School Boards were given the ability to decide on the disposition of surplus space on an annual basis. But until all surplus space is eliminated, they will not be eligible for any Provincial capital funding for new schools.

Four School Boards operate in the RMOC: the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (OCDSB), the Ottawa-Carleton Catholic School Board (OCCSB), Conseil des écoles catholique de langue française (French Catholic) and the Conseil des écoles publiques de l'est (French Public). Except for the French Public, all other Boards have significant surplus capacity and anticipate closing a corresponding large number of schools.

### Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (OCDSB)

The OCDSB must reduce their total space by approximately 1.7 million square feet to reach a Ministry Rated Capacity (MC) rate of 100% utilization. At the elementary level there is an excess of 7,000 pupil places, which the board estimates may require the closure of up to 14 schools. At the secondary level there are 3,100 extra pupil places which may require the closure of up to 3 schools.

In December, OCDSB staff recommended closing 10 schools (8 elementary and 2 secondary) for the 1999 school year (See Annex A for detailed list). If implemented, this first round of closings will not eliminate all surplus capacity for this Board, and additional closings may be considered at a future date. The OCDSB has postponed any closure decisions until 22 February 1999 allowing more time to review options and consider public input.

### Ottawa-Carleton Catholic School Board (OCCSB)

At the elementary level, this Board has a net total of 3,856 surplus pupil places (active schools and non-day schools). However, this number belies a great disparity between inside and outside the Greenbelt, a situation that also applies to the OCDSB. Outside there is a shortfall of 3,132 pupil places, whereas inside there is a large surplus of 6,988 pupil places. At the secondary level there is an MC utilization of 120%, which means there are 1,896 more pupils than pupil places.

Staff at the OCCSB have recommended the initial closing of ten elementary schools, seven of which are identified for disposal (see Annex A). In addition, 8 non-day schools (schools previously closed but still owned by Board and leased for other, mostly educational, purposes) are to be closed and disposed of. Like the OCDSB, this first round will not eliminate all surplus capacity so additional closures may follow. The OCCSB has delayed any decisions on school closures until March 1999. Further public consultation will follow this meeting.

### Conseil des écoles catholique de langue française (CECLF)

With 7,200 excess pupil spaces, this Board will have to close schools to attain a MC rate of 100%. Most of the excess space is within the Greenbelt. However, new construction is required in Ottawa-Carleton outside the Greenbelt and in the other communities served by this Board.

At a meeting in mid-December, this Board decided to close 6 schools in Ottawa-Carleton by next September. Included on this list are 2 secondary schools and 4 elementary schools (see Annex A). There may be an additional 10 schools closed by this Board over the next five years.

### Conseil des écoles publiques de l'est (CEPE)

No change for this School Board since it does not have to close any schools.

## PLANNING FOR SCHOOLS AND THEIR ROLE IN THE COMMUNITY

Provincial planning policy issued under Section 3 of the Planning Act is outlined in the Provincial Policy Statement. This Policy Statement's intent is to ensure strong communities through efficient cost-effective development and land use patterns. The promotion of residential intensification is one objective that seeks to make efficient use of existing municipal services through encouraging residential infill and redevelopment in built-up areas. The Policy Statement also requires municipalities to have regard to supporting long term economic prosperity by making provisions such that *public service facilities* (ie, schools) will be available to accommodate projected growth. Similarly, the Planning Act [s51(24)] states that when considering subdivision plans for approval, municipal councils shall have regard to the adequacy of school sites.

In practice, when considering new subdivisions for approval, municipalities reserve school sites in response to the needs of each School Board. However, some sites are never developed for school purposes for a variety of reasons including funding shortfalls or lower than anticipated school enrolments. Such sites either revert to residential uses or alternative institutional uses like seniors housing or churches.

### The Regional Official Plan

The development strategy articulated in the Regional Official Plan is to increase the amount of residential development on lands inside the NCC Greenbelt. The Regional Plan also emphasizes the importance of developing communities, with residents having "a sense of belonging and responsibility, and where children have the opportunity to walk to a neighbourhood school." Strong communities also entail easy access to community services, open spaces, shopping and the work place. In other words, the Regional Plan envisages much more than just subdivisions; rather, fully integrated communities developed with a full range of services that provide improved quality of life.

Excess school capacity is almost entirely situated in older neighbourhoods inside the NCC Greenbelt. In contrast, schools in the urban centres outside the Greenbelt often exceed their capacity through extensive use of portables. Clearly, decisions to close schools as outlined above will most affect older neighbourhoods within the Greenbelt.

The Regional Plan also supports growth in the rural area which will continue to account for 10% of all growth in Ottawa-Carleton. Although much less than the urban areas, some excess capacity has been identified in the rural parts of the Region. Given the dispersed location of rural schools, there is less ability to provide substitute school space to replace any closed schools. In this sense, school closings could also significantly impact certain rural communities.

### Demographic Trends

Demographic projections suggest that from 1996 through 2006, the school age population (**SAP**), comprised of ages 5 to 14, will gradually increase (7.2% over ten years) across the Region as a whole. From 2006 to 2016 it is expected the SAP will gradually decrease by -3.4%, after which

the numbers will again increase (3.5%)<sup>2021</sup>, slightly exceeding the totals experienced in 2006. After 2001, overall SAP numbers remain relatively constant, hovering around the 100,000 level.

A more revealing trend appears in distinguishing between inside and outside the Greenbelt as shown in Table 1 below. For areas within the Greenbelt, the SAP is predicted to slightly increase (3%) to 2001, decreasing thereafter by -19% to the year 2011, and a further -14% by 2021. In contrast, for urban areas outside the Greenbelt, the SAP is expected to increase by 47% to the year 2011, increasing an additional 20% thereafter to 2021. For the rural area, a 5% increase is expected to the year 2011, followed by an additional 7% increase to the year 2021.

	1996		2001		2006		2011		2016		2021	
	No.	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
	Ages 5-14		Change	Change		Change		Change		Change		
Inside Greenbelt	54975	56650	3%	54000	-5%	46100	-15%	40500	-12%	39800	-2%	
Outside Greenbelt	27525	31650	15%	35000	11%	40400	15%	45000	11%	48600	8%	
Rural	13260	12550	-5%	13700	9%	13900	1%	14300	3%	14900	4%	
TOTAL RMOC	95760	100850	5%	102700	2%	100400	-2%	99800	-1%	103300	4%	

Sources: 1996 from Statistics Canada, Census of Canada. All other data from Region of Ottawa-Carleton projections

**TABLE 1: School Age Population Projections ~ 1996-2021**

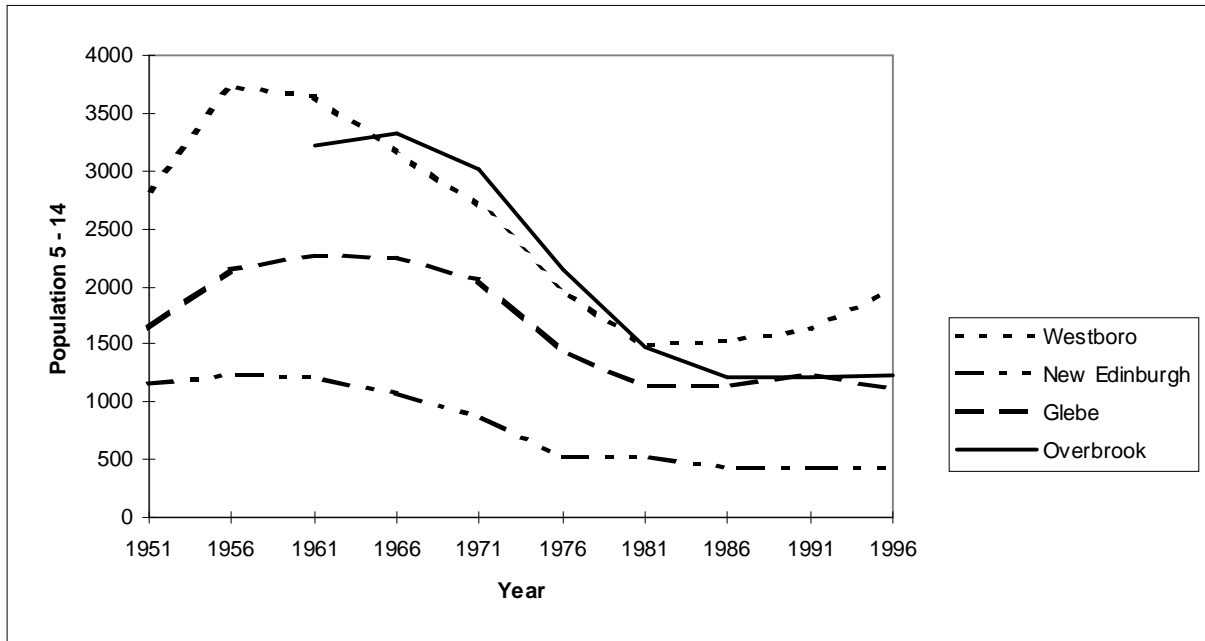
As part of this discussion on demographic trends, it is useful to examine the shifts that occur in the SAP as new neighbourhoods mature and the population ages. Over time as a neighbourhood matures, there is a turnover of homes as seniors move to alternate forms of housing and younger couples move back in. In this way, a mature neighbourhood is characterized by a mix of longer term residents in the form of seniors, young couples with young children, middle aged couples with fewer, older children, as well as empty nesters.

Thus, with respect to the SAP, there is a major surge in new neighbourhoods followed by a major drop as grown children leave home. As many such neighbourhoods have already experienced, certain schools have been closed or converted to other uses for lack of young students. Eventually, a levelling off of the SAP occurs as younger children entering the school system tend to offset the effect of teenagers leaving the system.

To better illustrate this trend, six representative mature neighbourhoods were examined for each census year from 1951 to 1996. Included on this list are: Ottawa South, the Glebe, Overbrook, Westboro/Island Park/Tunney's (as one area), Alta Vista and New Edinburgh. All of these neighbourhoods experienced a SAP peak in the early 1960's, followed by steady declines through to 1981/86. Most neighbourhoods then exhibit a levelling off of the SAP up to 1996 as shown with the Glebe and Overbrook in Figure 1 below. Even New Edinburgh, an area that has experienced considerable infill recently has remained constant. It is interesting to note in Westboro/Island Park/Tunney's that a turnaround materialized after 1981 with the SAP increasing by 25 percent to 1996. This is partly due to the appearance of the children of the baby boomers

but there was also a corresponding 14 percent increase in the number of dwelling units for this area.

**FIGURE 1:  
School Age Population for Selected Mature Neighbourhoods ~ 1951-1996**



Another interesting point of contrast in the SAP for these mature neighbourhoods is the significant difference between the high levels experienced in the late 1950's and early 1960's compared to present day levels. In the "baby boom" era, for instance, the number of school age children per dwelling unit ranged from 0.49 to 1.22; whereas in the 1990's the range for these neighbourhoods is 0.19 to 0.32.

One factor that has potential to increase future SAP levels is the development/redevelopment of large parcels of land within the Greenbelt for housing. Background work done in preparation of the new Official Plan identified development potential inside the Greenbelt. Local School Boards have this information and have considered this potential as part of their review.

In discussions with School Board staff, with the possible exception of large vacant parcels like Rockcliffe Air Base, the School Boards do not anticipate a major surge in SAP levels within the Greenbelt. While some additional school age children will accompany growth in older areas, the form of housing expected (primarily apartments and townhouses) coupled with the general aging of the population is not expected to generate large numbers of children.

## CONSIDERATION OF IMPACTS

As part of this first round of school closures, the community at large is facing the possible closure and disposal of 4 secondary schools, 19 elementary schools and 8 non-day schools. Of these, all but two elementary schools are located in older neighbourhoods within the Greenbelt. With additional school closures anticipated in the future, this represents a major community resource that may disappear from the public realm.

While the students affected by these closures are expected to be accommodated at the nearest available school, there are also many community uses that will be disrupted. Such uses as day care, adult education, scouts and guides and outdoor recreation facilities are what many residents depend on and to a major degree, contribute to their sense of community. These community uses will be compelled to find alternate facilities, if possible. Annex B attached to this report outlines a sample of the types of community uses that will be impacted if the OCDSB decides to close the ten schools identified as part of their first round of closures.

### Impacts On Regional Social Service Programs ~ Child Care

Child Care is a service that many families in Ottawa-Carleton rely on to provide a safe stimulating environment for their children while parents work or study. There are currently 70 licensed child care programs located in schools in Ottawa-Carleton. These programs serve a total of 3,505 children 1,606 of whom are in receipt of subsidy. These spaces represent approximately one third of all licensed spaces in Ottawa-Carleton and 25% of our total subsidized child care program. The following chart outlines the details of co-located programs according to School Board.

<b>SCHOOL BOARD</b>	<b># OF PROGRAMS</b>	<b>CAPACITY</b>	<b># OF SUBSIDIZED SPACES</b>
OCDSB	33	1,658	796
OCCSB	18	860	447
CECLF	14	667	213
CEPE	5	321	150
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>3,505</b>	<b>1,606</b>

In addition to the licensed centres indicated above there are also four family resource centres, 14 nursery schools and a number of informal child minding services often associated with 'English as a Second Language' programs.

In response to the lobbying efforts of parents and child care providers, the Province has exempted the space occupied by licensed child care programs in existence as of March 1998 from the calculation of space available to School Boards for their students. This exemption does not, however, protect programs in schools slated for disposal since there is no guarantee that school boards will be able to offer them any alternative space. In addition, there has been no indication from the Ministry that the exemption could be transferred to another school location if the School Board was able to relocate the child care program with the students. Without the ability to transfer the exemption, School Boards will be reluctant to relocate child care programs.

Similarly, child care programs in schools not recommended for closure could be affected by the School Board's need to relocate pupils from schools that are closing. In this case, space occupied by child care programs would have to be converted back to regular classrooms and once again the child care program could find themselves without space.

As of the end of January 1999 there are 12 licensed child care programs located in schools recommended for closure. These programs have a combined licensed capacity of 483 with 55% of the spaces occupied by families with subsidies. Included in this list are Youville Infant Toddler Program which is targeted to teen mothers, Dalhousie and Fairview Child Care Centres both of which provide full day programs with a high percentage of new Canadian clients, two part day nursery schools and a number of programs providing before and after school care for kindergarten and school age children. Annex C provides a complete list of these programs.

The Social Services Department is currently meeting with officials from the School Boards to determine what options, if any, exist for these programs. Individual program operators are also investigating any relocation opportunities outside of the school system. It is certain that many families will find their lives disrupted by this process and without significant financial resources to cover relocation costs some of the effected programs will close.

### Impacts On Adult Learners

Programs for adult learners include English as a Second Language (ESL), French as a Second Language (FSL), and Literacy and Basic Skills (Basic Skills). An estimated 6,000 adult learners are expected to participate in these programs in schools across Ottawa-Carleton in 1999. It is estimated that half of these adult learners (3,000) would be social assistance recipients.

The Region considers these programs to be essential supports for adults seeking to move toward self-sufficiency. Lack of proficiency in at least one official language, or lack of literacy and basic skills, constitute a major barrier to labour force participation, and thus prevent people moving from social assistance to employment. Furthermore, the Region's economic development depends on having a literate, skilled workforce. One of the building blocks of such a workforce is the provision of ESL, FSL, and Basic Skills programs for adult learners.

Currently, funds flowing from Provincial and Federal governments for these programs provide program operating costs. Programming dollars for ESL, FSL and Basic Skills are not in jeopardy. However, new Provincial funding formulas affecting local School Boards do not include Operations or Building Renewal grants to maintain and operate buildings for "non-qualifying" programs such as ESL, FSL and Basic Skills. This is one factor potentially affecting School Board decisions on school closures.

No schools will be closing at the CEPE (French Public) where an estimated 1,500 adult learners participate in FSL classes. At the OCDSB (English Public), the first round of proposed school closures will not affect schools where ESL and Basic Skills programs are held. The OCDSB projects there are about 2,000 learners in these programs. However, decision-making with



respect to school closures at the OCDSB scheduled for later in February may affect other schools that do provide adult learning programs.

At the OCCSB (English Catholic), four schools where adult learner programs are located are being considered for closure: St. Andrew's, St. Joseph's, St. Patrick's and Queen of the Angels. Approximately 2,500 adult learners could be affected by these closures which will be decided upon by the end of April. The Board has proposed disposing of these schools to the Ontario Realty Corporation, then leasing them back to allow the Board to continue providing adult learner programs at these sites. However, to date the Province has not approved this lease back proposal.

Funding to secure alternate space for these affected programs, should the OCCSB dispose of these schools, is estimated to be \$400,000 (gross) per year for Class C office space.

While solutions have not been found at this time, Regional staff will continue to work with the School Boards to ensure that space is available for the continuation of these important programs.

### Summary of Impacts

In summary, closing these many schools primarily within the Greenbelt may have the following impacts:

- The attractiveness of some neighbourhoods will be reduced for those families with school age children. An official at the Real Estate Board of Ottawa-Carleton suggested that for such families, schools rank as the second or third priority in their home buying decision. This in turn may impede our ability to achieve the Regional Development Strategy.
- In their function as a major community resource, school closures will impact significantly on community uses. It is not known to what degree community uses will be able to obtain alternate facilities for their continued operation at rates they will be able to afford.
- 12 licensed child care programs will be forced to relocate, incurring considerable expense.
- While program funding for adult learners is not in jeopardy, there is a great deal of uncertainty regarding the continuity of these programs at their current locations and the potential disruption if they are required to relocate.
- For those students affected by school closings, the School Boards will have to determine the closest school in which to provide them on-going educational services. In some cases this may see split grades eliminated and through economies of scale, better facilities made available to a larger student base population. In other cases, portable classrooms may be required to accommodate student population shifts at the chosen receiving school.

- Closing schools will likely result in increased busing. In this sense, the School Boards should be encouraged to keep schools open in central locations that are easily accessed by public transit. For older students this will mean increased use of OC Transpo.
- On the other hand, opportunities for the redevelopment or re-use of surplus school sites will be increased. For some sites, this could take the form of new residential development which would directly support the Region's policy of encouraging more residential development inside the Greenbelt. There are many examples of the successful conversion of surplus schools throughout older parts of the Region. One recent example is the former St. Charles School in New Edinburgh that was converted to loft apartments and townhouses.

However, the successful transition to residential use will depend on the strength of the 'empty nest' and non-family housing market. Alternatively, surplus sites could be retrofitted for other public or institutional uses and thereby continue to serve their communities.

### Disposal of Surplus Sites

Previous Provincial policy allowed School Boards to offer surplus property at no cost to municipalities. However, Ministry of Education & Training staff confirmed this no longer applies as new disposal rules have been established under the latest Regulations.

School Boards can dispose of all or part of a closed school. Two main disposal options are available:

- School Boards may offer these sites at no charge to other School Boards or the Ontario Realty Corporation in which case they receive full credit for any excess capacity eliminated thereby. (But no financial returns from the eventual sale of the property)
- Alternatively, School Boards may decide to retain certain schools even though they will still count as surplus capacity. Retained sites may be sold or leased at fair market value in accordance with agreements between the individual School Board and the Education Improvement Commission. Funds received from such transactions would accrue to the School Board. In this case, other School Boards, municipalities (including the Region), colleges and universities will receive a written proposal of the intent to sell or lease, to which they may respond if interested in the property.

One interesting variation that might arise in the future disposition of closed schools is that the Ontario Realty Corp may choose not to accept all the schools offered to it at no cost. The Ontario Realty Corp is not obliged to accept closed schools, particularly if for any reason the properties are not considered marketable. In this case, the School Board would retain ownership but would have to offer it for sale at market value if they wished to reduce their surplus capacity. Potentially, there may not be any willing buyers, but as long as the offer to sell was made, the School Board would receive credit for the surplus capacity. And if no buyers surfaced, the Board would be allowed to retain the closed school. This is a somewhat convoluted sequence of events but it is possible that some schools may go this route and remain in School Board ownership.

School Board officials have indicated that with these new Provincial rules, in order to build new schools their preferred option is to close and dispose of all surplus capacity, thereby making themselves eligible for capital funding. To retain some schools with the aim to sell them later just will not generate the necessary funds to build new schools.

## STRATEGIES

While the impacts are considerable, the question arises what can be done to alleviate these impacts?

### Regional Official Plan Amendment

One approach identified in Council's resolution is to adopt an amendment to the Region's Official Plan to protect schools. The intent here is to preserve schools for on-going public use; to retain them in the public domain as community resources.

The Official Plan expresses Council's intent for managing the future growth of Ottawa-Carleton. Among other matters, the Official Plan establishes land use policies that serve to guide the form that future growth will take. While the Official Plan has no explicit policies on the provision of schools, a new policy could be developed in an attempt to protect schools. This new policy direction might specify that:

- Zoning By-laws require that all existing schools be limited to only school uses and related community uses. The policy would have to address additional matters, including:
  - How to treat reserved school sites in suburban locations that may not develop for school purposes;
  - What criteria to consider should a School Board wish to amend the Region's Official Plan policy and proceed to close and dispose of a school that for other reasons (program improvements, poor condition, major enrolment shortfall) is no longer required for educational purposes;
  - What community impacts are expected from the use of schools for some other purpose.
- If adopted, the local official plans and zoning by-laws of all local municipalities in the Region would have to conform to this policy and amendments to these documents may be required.

As confirmed with the Region's Legal Department, a policy like this would only apply to a change in use and would not prevent a school from being closed, nor disposed of as required under Provincial Regulations. Therefore, an Official Plan policy designed to protect school sites will not ensure schools are retained in the public domain. In fact, it might result in a number of empty school buildings for which there will be no money for maintenance and operations, leading to deterioration of the property.

Assuming the Region's Official Plan is successfully amended (an Ontario Municipal Board challenge is likely ~ see next paragraph), a policy like this would only affect the current landowner

(School Board, Ontario Realty Corporation or private landowner) if their interest was the redevelopment of a former school site. In this case, the proposed redevelopment of a former school would require the full range of planning approvals, including an amendment to the Region's Official Plan. Typically, the redevelopment of a closed school to residential use in the past has had to undergo a rezoning based on an acceptable site plan (and possibly a local Official Plan amendment), but never has a Regional Official Plan amendment been required.

In discussions with School Board staff on their reaction to such an Official Plan policy, all felt this would not be helpful to their Board. They cite future instances likely to arise whereby a School Board may wish to close and dispose of a school for other reasons, such as improving the quality of education through better facilities, severe obsolescence, or shifts in staffing needs. In short, the School Boards would not look favourably on an Official Plan policy that would restrict their ability to manage their affairs and provide education services. In fact, the two English School Boards have appealed the new Ottawa Zoning By-law to the OMB as they feel the list of permitted uses for their school sites is too restrictive.

Local municipal planners at Ottawa, Nepean and Gloucester were canvassed for some preliminary views on this idea of amending the Regional Official Plan. While they share the same concerns, no one could foresee any purpose being served by such an amendment, nor is anyone contemplating a similar amendment to their planning documents. Everyone spoke of this being a local issue, that if they are faced with closed schools, they would want to resolve land use issues based on local needs and priorities. To have to amend the Regional Official Plan as well is seen as overly bureaucratic and unnecessary. One point of particular interest: it was noted that jurisdictions under the Education Act and the Planning Act are distinct. In the event of conflict, an OMB decision would have to delineate the prerogatives of elected officials charged with education issues versus other elected officials dealing with land use issues. The likely outcome would be to prevent one jurisdiction from interfering in another's responsibilities.

In summary, the only certain means to achieve the objective of retaining schools in the public realm would be for another public body to step forward and assume ownership, as well as all on-going operating and maintenance costs. As outlined above, current Regulations on the disposal of closed schools require any purchaser to pay market value for the property. Only another School Board has the ability to acquire a closed school at no cost.

### Task Force

Another initiative to deal with these impacts is the Task Force established by Ottawa's Mayor and the Regional Chair, together with the School Boards and other local municipalities. This Task Force intends to meet with the Provincial Minister of Education & Training and present four main points for his consideration. Each point is discussed in detail below:

#### 1. Two Zone Model

Essentially, this would enable the Province's funding formula to be applied separately to each of two zones in Ottawa-Carleton. The growing areas outside the Greenbelt would be separated from the older communities within. In this way, the unique education needs of these two areas could be dealt with on their own merits. In practice, some capital funding might be made available immediately to build much needed new schools in the rapidly growing

areas outside the Greenbelt, while not requiring all surplus capacity inside the Greenbelt to be eliminated first.

Ottawa-Carleton is unique in Ontario insofar as the School Boards have jurisdiction over both older established communities with constant or declining school enrolments, and rapidly growing communities with increasing school enrolments, separated by an extensive Greenbelt. In other Regions, especially in the Greater Toronto area, School Boards have jurisdiction over areas which are either growth areas only (York & Peel Regions, for example) or older established areas like Toronto. This Two Zone Model would allow Ottawa-Carleton to be treated on a similar basis as other Ontario communities that do not face this predicament.

2. 80% Utilization Rate

Capital funding is not available until 100% utilization of pupil places is achieved. Implementing an 80% utilization rate would provide School Boards greater flexibility in delivering their programs and accommodating fluctuations in enrolment. It would also require fewer school closures before becoming eligible for capital funding.

As an example, the OCCSB estimates that the 80% utilization rate would place them in a system wide shortfall situation (approx. 1,838 pupil places), meaning they would not have to close any schools and would be eligible for capital funding to provide for those many pupil places.

3. Flexibility in Funding Model

As the current funding model stands, programs such as adult education and other community partnerships are liabilities for the School Board since the space they occupy has to be counted as surplus. Not including these programs in the surplus space calculations would help enable their continued operation, while recognizing the value to the community that they represent. One example to illustrate this would be the continued operation of non-day schools in facilities owned by the OCCSB.

4. Disposition of Closed Schools

Exploring ways and means to retain schools in the public domain for other public purposes is the intent of this point. As the above discussion has shown, however, closed schools would be available at market value to other interested public bodies. Financial considerations will weigh heavily in decisions whether to acquire closed school sites.

Of the above points, the first two are key. Implementing either one, or better yet, both the Two Zone Model and the 80% utilization rate in conjunction with each other would significantly reduce the expected requirement to close schools.

On the last point, the disposition of closed schools presents an interesting opportunity for the Region to consider. Insofar as the Region may have a need in the near future to accommodate certain programs (relocated day care programs, for example), it may be advantageous to examine whether some former schools could serve this need. As a “Public Use First” policy, this initiative would first consider the acquisition of closed schools prior to looking at other properties. Since

the Region and other public bodies are offered surplus properties first before they are offered for sale on the open real estate market, this represents a unique opportunity for continued public use of these properties. Joint use of these properties, involving cost sharing with other public organizations or municipalities who have similar needs (to house Community Centres, for example), may prove to be a workable approach for serving these community needs.

### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Social Services Department has calculated that up to \$7.25 million could be required to relocate and sustain all of the existing child care programs located in schools currently recommended for closure. This figure could grow if additional schools and consequently child care programs are added to the list of school closures.

In the event the Region were to consider acquiring ownership of a closed school, a detailed financial audit of the subject property would be required. It should be noted that several of the school buildings in question are in need of major repair work. In addition, if buildings have to be purchased at market value this would mean that taxpayers in this community would be re-purchasing buildings originally built with dollars from the same tax base.

### CONSULTATION

Each school board has undertaken an extensive public consultation program in their review of school closures. Regional staff have had discussions with School Board officials, staff at the Ministry of Education and Training, local municipal planners and representatives of the child care community.

### CONCLUSION

As the above analysis has shown, there is the potential for significant impacts on older communities in Ottawa-Carleton if anticipated school closings proceed. An amendment to the Region's Official Plan would not keep schools open nor would it ensure the retention of closed schools in public ownership. For this reason, staff do not recommend the Region's Official Plan be so amended.

Insofar as the Province has created this situation with these recent changes to Ontario's education system, it suggests the most likely means of alleviating these looming impacts is to deal directly with Provincial officials. In this respect, the Two Zone Model and 80% Utilization Rate applied together would be the best approach for achieving Council's objective of protecting schools.

In the event large numbers of schools are closed, the Region may be able to lessen the impacts through the joint acquisition, operation and use of certain closed schools with other interested public bodies.

*Approved by  
Nick Tunnacliffe*

*Approved by  
Dick Stewart*

Attachments:

1. Annex A ~ List of Possible School Closures
2. Annex B ~ Community Uses Impacted
3. Annex C ~ Child Care Programs Located In Schools Recommended For Closure

## ***ANNEX A***

### ***LIST OF POSSIBLE SCHOOL CLOSURES***

26 Jan 99

#### **OCDSB (English Public):**

1. Crichton Community School ~ Crichton St, New Edinburgh, Ott
2. Fisher Park Public/ Summit Public ~ Holland Ave at Queensway, Ott
3. McNabb Park Public ~ Percy & Gladstone, Ott
4. Overbrook Public ~ King George St., Ott
5. Queensway Public ~ Elmira Dr, beside Queensway in Parkway Park, Ott
6. Riverview School ~ Alta Vista area, south of Industrial and Alta Vista Dr., Ott
7. Whitehaven Public ~ Parkhaven Ave, Ott
8. Riverview Public in Cumberland Village, Cumberland

#### High Schools:

1. Confederation High School ~ Woodroffe Ave. in Nepean (beside Sportsplex)
2. McArthur High School ~ Donald St.(vocational school), Ott

#### **OCCSB (English Catholic):**

1. St. Thomas ~ Leeming Dr., Nepean
2. St. Mary (Ottawa) ~ Beech St., Ott
3. St. Margaret Mary ~ Bellwood Ave, Ott South
4. St. Michael (Ottawa) ~ Bernard St., Ott - Overbrook
5. Jean Vanier Intermediate ~ Lajoie St, Vanier
6. St. Victor ~ Brookfield Rd., Ott
7. Immaculate Heart of Mary ~ Pleasant Park Rd., Ott
8. St. Nicholas Adult School ~ closed but retained until Stittsville HS completed
9. St. Raymond ~ Fellows Rd., Ott ~ Closed for Grades 7&8 only
10. Elmridge ~ Elmridge Dr, Gloucester ~ Closed as elem. school but retained as HS annex

Plus 8 Non-day schools (schools previously closed but still owned by School Board), including:

Barette ~ Vaughan St, Vanier	Jean XXIII ~ Karen Way, Ott.
Queen of the Angels ~ Heron Rd, Ott	Sacre Coeur ~ Melrose St, Ott
St. Agnes ~ Louisa St, Ott	St. Andrew ~ Lazard St, Ott
St. Patrick ~ Nepean St, Ott	St Thomas Aquinas ~ Bayswater Ave, Ott

#### **CECLF (French Catholic)**

1. Baribeau ~ Baribeau St, Vanier
2. Notre-Dame-du-Cap ~ Navan Rd, South of Orléans
3. Saint Gabriel ~ Appleford St, Beacon Hill South, Gloucester
4. Saint Pie-X ~ Mann Ave, Ott

#### High Schools:

1. André-Laurendeau ~ McArthur Rd, Ott
2. École de l'éducation sans frontières ~ St. Laurent Blvd, Ott (moving to a new location)



## ***ANNEX B***

### ***COMMUNITY USES IMPACTED***

The following list provides an indication of community uses that will be impacted by the closure of the school within which they operate their programs. This list only represents community uses of the 10 OCDSB schools proposed for closure. Many more such social and cultural organizations will be affected by the school closures of other School Boards as well as possible future closures.

Ottawa Valley Co-operative Preschool Association  
Cumberland Co-operative Nursery School

Soccer ~ 3 groups  
Boy Scouts/ Cubs ~ 2 programs  
Girl Guides/ Sparks ~ 2 programs  
After School Dance ~ 2 programs  
Pathfinder  
Church Groups ~ 3

City of Ottawa Recreation and Culture Programs ~ 5 programs  
City of Ottawa Day Camp (Fisher Park)  
Continuing Education ~ programs at 3 schools

National Capital Music Academy  
Artists in Residence  
Learning Disabilities Association of Ottawa  
Multicultural Arts in School & Communities  
Pinecrest-Queensway Health & Community Services  
Ontario Swimming Association  
Ottawa Valley Co-operative

ACN Canada  
Ottawa Storytelling Festival  
Carleton Condominium Corporation  
Overbrook Community Association  
Ottawa Community Centres ~ operate in 3 schools

**ANNEX C**

**CHILD CARE PROGRAMS LOCATED  
IN SCHOOLS RECOMMENDED FOR CLOSURE**

<b>School Board</b>		<b>School</b>	<b>Child Care Program</b>	<b>Capacity</b>	<b>Subsidized Spaces</b>
OCDSC	1	McNabb Park Public 160 Percy, Ottawa	Centretown McNabb	18	16
	2	Riverview Public 2620 Market, Cumberland	Cumberland Co-op Nursery School	12	0
	3	Riverview Alternative School 260 Knox, Ottawa	Riverview School Age	30	6
	4	Whitehaven School 920 Parkhaven, Ottawa	Whitehaven School Age	50	23
			<b>Total</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>42</b>
OCCSB	5	St. Margaret Mary 88 Bellwood St, Ottawa	Bytown Co-op	42	9
	6	St. Agnes 18 Louisa Street, Ottawa	Dalhousie Parents	57	57
	7	Jean XXIII 1002 Karen Way, Ottawa	Fairview	64	57
	8	Barrette 50 Vaughan St, Ottawa	Fernhill (Private School/Child Care)	94	1
	9	St. Agnes 18 Louisa St, Ottawa	Thursday's Child	9	9
	10	Sacre Coeur 19 Melrose Ave, Ottawa	Youville	25	25
			<b>Total</b>	<b>291</b>	<b>158</b>
CECLF	11	St Francis d'Assissi 35 Melrose Ave, Ottawa	Le Carrefour	32	27
	12	St. Pie X 150 Mann Ave, Ottawa	Quatre Saisons*	50	40
			<b>Total</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>67</b>

\* Operated by the Region