



## SCHOOL CONSULTATIONS: FINAL REPORT and RECOMMENDATIONS March 22, 2017

### Overview

Following recommendations by the School Options Committee reviewing the Bridgewater and Park View Families of Schools, Senior Staff are considering grade reconfiguration for Bridgewater Elementary School and Bridgewater Junior Senior High School. School start/stop times may affect changes in grade reconfiguration. SSRSB Policy #265 requires that changes over fifteen minutes require a public consultation.

Consultation centered around two main questions:

1. What are the opportunities and challenges associated with changes to start/stop times in the two schools?
2. What are the opportunities and challenges associated with grade reconfiguration in the two schools?

On February 28, a consultation was held with the School Advisory Councils from Bridgewater Elementary School (BES) and Bridgewater Junior Senior High School (BJSHS). On March 6, 2017, a consultation was held with representatives of the public. Between March 6 and 22, teaching staff from the two schools were asked to contribute feedback on the same two questions. Three local daycares were also consulted by phone on March 21<sup>st</sup>.

Verbatim feedback from the first two consultations was consolidated and a Summary Analysis was completed and presented to the Board on March 8<sup>th</sup>. Both were posted to the Board website on March 9<sup>th</sup>. After feedback from the teaching staff was received on March 22<sup>nd</sup>, the Summary Analysis was updated. Both the Original Summary and the Revised Summary are included in this report (see Appendix).

### Recommendations

Recommendations made by Senior Staff in this report are based upon understanding of the opportunities and challenges facing the entire Board, together with the feedback that was provided through the consultation process.

**Bell Times:** Senior Staff recommend that bell times for Bridgewater Elementary School and Bridgewater Junior Senior High School be aligned, with start times beginning at 8:30 a.m. and stop times at 2:30 p.m.

Rational is based on the belief before and after school activities would be positively impacted, parents would find the change more convenient, and both younger and older students would benefit. Senior Staff also believes that any issues related to increased foot and vehicle traffic can be addressed. The times recommended are based upon the bus routes using the same buses serving other schools.

**Grade Reconfiguration:** Senior Staff recommend that in September 2017, grades five and six students remain at Bridgewater Elementary School. In September 2018, grade six students will move to BJSHS. If student registrations at BES provide an unbalanced utilization in the two buildings, then grade five students will also move to BJSHS.

Rational for postponing reconfiguration changes for one year include the time required for the completion of the catchment area review, together with the time required for transitioning staff and students to BJSHS. Additionally, the rational for doing the grade reconfiguration all at once is based upon the belief that moving staff and students at the same time would have a positive impact on cultural change in both schools and would actually be less disruptive than transitioning students and staff over two years.

Various opinions were expressed about the two grade configuration scenarios. The majority of the School Advisory Council supported the P-4, 5-9 scenario, while opinions at the public meeting were mixed with some supporting the P-4, 5-9 scenario and others the P-5, 6-9. Teaching staff in both schools identified the P-5, 6-9 scenario as the preferable choice. Facility utilization, programming opportunities and age-appropriate groupings were cited in support of both scenarios.

Senior staff believes that grade configuration scenarios will be best determined by the number of students registering in Bridgewater Elementary School in September 2018.