

Draft Accommodation Scenario

Parent Meeting Questions & Answers: October 23, 2019

1. To be clear, current Grades 6 to 8 students at WMS will stay at WMS for the duration of construction? Yes, that's correct.
2. How will you keep middle school programming intact? Combining French Immersion and middle school programming feels like a tall order. There will be a minimum of three administrators at WMS during the period in question. At least one will be specifically for French Immersion one will be for middle school programming.
3. Will start times be different per school since parents might have to drop off kids at different ends of town? YK1 has to take that into consideration. Staff are brought in early for JK students as it is and that would continue.
4. What accommodations will be made because of people having to go to different schools now? These are considerations YK1 will have to make for the period in question.
5. There are a lot of kids that will be split up now. Now we'll have to go to multiple schools. How will I get a spot for after-school care? What transportation accommodations will be made? This is a tall order for parents. YK1 considered several different school models, including a JK-2 school and a 3-7 school but the numbers didn't work. The school district already has an agreement with YWCA to have enough after-school spots for parents who need them. Incoming JHS students won't be competing with RLN students.
6. Cohesiveness will also be an issue with programming changes and new grade level introductions so I think portables should be considered. They're being considered already.
7. Drop-off times: There needs to be flexibility here. 15 extra minutes is safe. That's certainly something YK1 can consider. The same goes for extending pick-up times for after-school care.
8. My family is thankful the community is getting a new school and appreciates YK1 for involving parents in this process. However, parents need reassurance and certainty that there will be enough space for students in after-school programs. Will YWCA accommodate these extra numbers? Yes, YK1 now has an MOU and extending pick-up times is a consideration that can be brought forward.
9. It's important to look out for more vulnerable students. There will have to be retrofits to accommodate younger students.
10. Will YK1 consider any work on the parking lot at WMS? YK1 has already met with the Department of Infrastructure, ECE and the City to see what we can do. There will be a big increase in the number of vehicles coming in every day now. Public Works staff were also present during this meeting. We have held discussions on this matter already and will see what can be done.
11. Will there be a lot of split classes? Mr. Huculak says he hopes not but it's tough to predict without firm numbers. The district office and administration at WMS will have to find a solution that works for the number of students enrolled.
12. Wouldn't we save money by not doing retrofits in different schools? Those funds are not part of the money allocated for the school build.

13. Can we use EASC and their space? According to Infrastructure they have no space. We've also given them gym time in the past so maybe they can return the favour.
14. Why is this scenario the leading one now? YK1 heard loud and clear from parents that they wanted us to keep the integrity of the middle school and French Immersion programming intact while disrupting the least amount of students. This way we can keep those two things together. One significant change from the spring is that enrollment at NJM and MHS is up. YK1 had to find another option as a result.
15. The middle school environment wasn't different from high school. Why are we placing such an emphasis on the middle school? YK1 has an opportunity here. Our schools will be full but we can make this work for the projected two-year period.
16. Comment: There is no bussing for junior kindergarten students as is so parents have to drive them anyways.
17. Will Grade 8s moving to the high school have two principals? No, they would still fall under WMS administration. They'd also have their own separate wing somewhere in the high school.
18. SJF Assistant Principal Peter Curran: We're happy to have the Grade 8s. Every room is used in the building but not all day and we already have Grade 8s visiting the school periodically anyways. SJF used to be a 10-12 school and while there was anxiety about it expanding to include Grade 9s, everything has worked out well. Even now, Grade 8s are already on the high school's radar.
19. WMS Principal Jodi Lee-Lewis: As far as Camp Akaitcho, sports academies, the canoe trip and middle school programming is concerned, we'll ensure that students receive the same experience even if they're at the high school. Middle school staff will care for middle school students.
20. Comment: Transition years will be lower for middle school students now which will require extra thought.
21. Comment: This plan is great for older students but JK/Ks need to feel as supported as this is a transition period for them as well. They should feel just as supported as they navigate through the YK1 system.
22. Thank you for listening and holding these meetings. I'm a little anxious though that this is still in draft form when there's a lot of work to do between now and the summer. Packing up and moving will be a massive task. This will all be looked at. We also need to accommodate staff who will be moving as much as possible.
23. What is the timeline for this project now? We'll ask for more public comments in the coming days and then there will be a principals' meeting in the next week to move forward with an accommodation plan.
24. During a parent engagement meeting in the spring, one solution pitched was to have all Grades 6-8 IF/PIF housed together at RLN. Why isn't that being considered? Mr. Huculak said this could be damaging to the middle school.
25. Comment: My child is currently benefiting from the middle school environment so I'm happy this programming will remain intact. This is an important transition period for students and adolescents. I support this plan the most as it's the least disruptive. Everyone is going to be inconvenienced to some degree.

26. Is this accommodation scenario set in stone? No, this draft scenario is not finalized.
27. If and when the construction schedule is delayed, what happens to students at RLN? If this happens we have to have some type of back-up plan. My guess is that Grade 1s may have to come back to WMS.
28. Comment: Just because students are in a JK-8 school doesn't mean that they're being robbed of a middle school experience.
29. Is there space at Weledeh or St. Joes for French Immersion JK. We're not sure about their figures at this time.
30. Will WMS students have the same experience as previous middle school students? Yes. We want to maintain the integrity of all programs during this transition period. Because enrollment will be higher, it may look different from a space standpoint but our programs and staff will remain the same.
31. Is any discussion of portables over? No, they're still part of the plan, between the school and field at WMS. This is the only site that would have portables.