

Elmdale Public School Addition and Retrofit Overview

20 June 2018

Dear Families:

We wanted to share some information regarding next steps for the addition to Elmdale Public School. I know there have been many questions surfacing in the community and it is important for everyone to understand the facts.

After much effort by the community and a capital priorities submission by the school district, the Ministry of Education approved funding for a 7 classroom addition. This addition will add a 170 pupil places to Elmdale Public School which will increase the school capacity to 577.

Recognizing the site size and budget considerations, the preferred location for an addition is on the existing library footprint. The school district has retained the architectural firm Edward J. Cuhaci and Associates for this project. In the coming months, the architects will confirm plans and develop a detailed project schedule. The construction work is not expected to fully begin until July 1, 2019.

In order to move forward with the detailed plans for this project, consideration must be given to the scope of work. The capital funds provide for the additional classroom space and will include accessibility upgrades to the school. It is also possible that while the construction is underway, additional work is completed to upgrade the building. For example, the building is in need of major retrofit work, such as the replacement of the steam plant to hydronics, a new HVAC system, a new sprinkler system, a new elevator serving 3½ stories, front office renovations, library renovations, classroom ceiling and lighting upgrades, flooring upgrades and painting throughout. However, a retrofit project of this magnitude is not possible to complete if the building is occupied.

The first step is determining the scope of the project. There are two options being considered:

- a smaller project scope which ensures the building addition with enhanced accessibility and fewer building retrofits; this can be completed over 3-4 years with staff and students onsite during construction; OR
- a larger project scope which includes the building addition, accessibility work and major retrofit to the existing structure which could be completed in one year if the building is unoccupied.

There are advantages and disadvantages with both options and our goal is to minimize the disruption and ensure a positive learning and working environment both during and after construction. Regardless of the scope of the construction project, the benefits of the investment into Elmdale Public School will outweigh the inconvenience of construction, but everyone will experience some disruption. Attached you will find more detail about the options.

Recognizing the interest in this project and the potential impact of the different options, community feedback is important. We wanted to share this information with the community before the end of the current school year, so that in September, we will be able to move forward with more detailed planning. At that time, we anticipate a community meeting where more information will be available to support these decisions.

I share your excitement about the future of Elmdale Public School and I am working with incoming Principal Isabelle Flannigan and our Communications Department to create an Elmdale Construction News page on the school website. This will ensure the ongoing provision of timely information to the community.

Thanks for your ongoing support.

Suzie Robertson, Principal

PROPOSED OPTIONS:

1. **OPTION 1 Occupied** – Construction activities on site during the school year; 7 classroom addition

The school building would remain occupied for the duration of the project. The project would be done in phases over several years, starting in 2019 and estimated for completion by 2023. During the construction period, there would be construction fences onsite and restrictions in terms of areas of access. In addition, it is reasonable to expect disruption due to temporary relocation of learning spaces, addition of portables, construction noise, vibrations and smells from active work within the building. Based on past experience, notwithstanding best efforts to mitigate the impact the construction activity would be disruptive to the occupants of the school.

The first phase of work would be the demolition and construction of a 2 story addition on the north side of the existing school. The existing library would need to be demolished and a new addition would be constructed at that location. The accessibility investments would be within the new addition, with a new elevator serving two floors. The targeted completion date for phase 1 would be January 2021.

The second phase of work would include front office renovations, corridor ceiling and lighting upgrades, washroom retrofits and kindergarten renovations. Depending on the scope of work undertaken, construction would likely be completed within the school in either 2022 or 2023.

1. **What will be the financial investment?**– \$5.7M School Capital Construction and School Condition Improvement funding.
2. **How long will it take and what will be the timing?** – Work would start in July 2019 and take between 3 to 4 years to complete. The work would need to be done in phases which could require moving students into temporary portables for several weeks or months at a time while individual floors are under construction/renovation within the existing school.
3. **What would the scope of work be?** Modest renovations to front office, washrooms and corridors. Boiler replacement with new heating controls.
4. **What work could not be done?** In an occupied building it would not be possible to complete mechanical ventilation upgrades or to add central air conditioning. In addition, the elevator would be constructed only within the 2 storey addition with links to the existing main and second floors. Building an elevator within the existing school would be too disruptive and create exiting issues while being occupied during construction.
5. **What impact would there be on students and staff?** Reduced play yard due to construction staging of materials and construction trailers. Additional portables on site for duration of construction to provide classroom swing space. Construction noise, vibrations and smells from active work within building and at the new addition. Restrictions in areas of access to the site to create construction zones. Multi-year construction activities that create an inconvenience.

OPTION 2 Unoccupied –7 classroom addition and major retrofit

In order to complete an extensive retrofit of the school, the students, staff and childcare would need to be relocated to another site for the duration of construction. The major retrofit work would include a complete replacement of the steam plant to hydronics, a new HVAC system, a new sprinkler system, a new elevator serving 3½ storeys, front office renovations, library renovations, classroom ceiling and lighting upgrades, flooring upgrades and painting throughout.

The benefit of this approach would be the reduced impact on the classroom and learning environment. This was a successful approach with the Carleton Heights Public School and Devonshire Community Public School renovation projects. A challenge with this option is the impact of relocation on families and on staff. Any change requires effort and adjustment and we are mindful of the impact of relocation, but must assess this against the scope of the project and the duration of the relocation/construction.

1. **What would be the financial investment?**– \$11.1M School Capital Construction, School Condition Improvement, and Facility Renewal funding.
2. **How long would it take and what would be the timing?**– Work would start in July 2019 and take 1 year to complete. Demolition work within the boiler room may start earlier, likely after the heating season, in order to get a jump start, if feasible from a contractual point of view.
3. **What work could be done?** The addition of seven new classrooms as well as a full interior renovation to front office, washrooms and corridors. Boiler replacement with new heating controls and a complete new ventilation system including central air conditioning. In addition, the new elevator would be constructed within the existing east stairwell to serve all of the existing floors and tie into the new 2 story addition.
4. **What impact will there be on students and staff?** The relocation of the school and classroom supplies as well as the childcare would require additional effort. Students would need to be transported by school bus for a full academic year which will create a disruption to the regular routines of walking to a community school. Logistics around childcare, busing, after hours activities and travel times would need to be planned.
5. **If we move, where are we going to?** Century Public School is available and can house most of the student population. The school is 7 km away and takes approximately 20 minutes by car in traffic.
6. **Does the school building have enough space?** The school is not currently being used. To accommodate the school and childcare, Elmdale would occupy the entire building and would likely require the use of 3 or 4 portables to provide the necessary number of home rooms required.
7. **Will children be bused?** Yes, school bus transportation would be provided for all students to Century Public School.
8. **What about getting before/after care?** The school board will ensure that there will be an Extended Day Program offered at the school, and would enter into discussions with the current provider, Mothercraft about their possible relocation.
9. **Have you done this before?** Yes, the district has past experiences with major retrofits at occupied schools and in cases where students and staff were relocated. Two examples of recent relocations were at Carleton Heights Public School and Devonshire Community Public School where students were housed off site for the year while renovations were completed.

10. **What happens next?** The project is in the preliminary stages. In the fall, there will be an opportunity for a more fulsome discussion with the school community so that a final decision can be made about the scope of the project.