

South Surrey Consultation 2019 FAQ

Updated November 27th, 2019

General Information / Student Placement

How many classes will be moving to the new schools?

This will depend on which option is chosen. The district used 2019 Baragar projections in each option to show the number of students expected in 2021.

Will there be enough teachers hired for the opening of the new schools?

We work with our HR department and put out a special posting bulletin ahead of the regular posting rounds. As with all schools, HR will work with the principal to fill the all the positions posted.

How accurate are the projected enrolment numbers for Site 180, given the potential for families living in illegal secondary basement suites and coach houses nearby?

Baragar uses a number of indicators to capture all students living in an area and these include families living in secondary suites, regardless of their status.

What is the process for naming the new schools?

Check back soon! - We have asked our Communications Manager to provide an overview of the process for naming new schools

Catchment Boundaries

How does the district determine the size and shape of the new catchment areas? How were the boundary options and the movement of Choice Programs and school populations decided on? (i.e. Montessori to Site 180 or Hall's Prairie, Hall's Prairie student population to Site 180, etc.)

HOW THE DISTRICT PROJECTS

For the South Surrey area, the very long-term planning (25+ years) for the area started with reviewing all of the city's plans to understand where all the new residential neighbourhoods would be. From this vantage point, the district determined where new schools would likely be needed to serve neighbourhoods. Moreover, knowing that the city is looking to increase the existing population of the area by 40,000 people in next 20 years, we could begin determine at a high level how many schools we would need. From this, rough blocking was used to determine potential future catchments.

LEADERSHIP IN LEARNING

In the past, the district has tried to keep elementary school capacities below 600 students. Because growth is far outpacing construction, the district is looking to build larger schools to meet the demand faster and to maximize capital funding as many schools in the South Surrey community also require the district to purchase land along with building the new school.

City planning invites the district to collaborate on the creation Neighbourhood Concept Plans (NCPs). This work typically starts two years before the plan is presented to council for adoption. During this stage, population size and makeup and housing densities are further refined. All of these numbers determine the size and number of future schools required to serve that NCP.

After the NCP has been adopted, the district reviews and comments on the impact of future development permit and rezoning applications. The district works with the city to manage the schedule of residential construction over time. It is the district's preference to have developers of large housing developments build in phases in order to reduce the impact on enrolment growth by spreading it over several years.

A year prior to a new school opening, by way of modelling and data mapping, planning starts to reconfigure boundaries to study the impact between enrolment and existing student spaces in the short and long term. As South Surrey is experiencing the highest level of population growth in the city, it was important that each option would at some level provide some relief to the existing overcrowding while still protecting space for future growth in the new neighbourhoods. Factors that are considered when redrawing new boundaries include the ease of accessing the schools without a car, land use adjacencies, locations of large green/park spaces and major transportation patterns to highlight the some of the top factors.

Through public consultations, feedback is provided by school community, which can have a major impact on the final boundary layout as their feedback provides more granular information that ensures that the final boundaries better serves the new school community.

PROGRAM MOVES AND HALL'S PRAIRIE

For the Montessori program, we looked at the impact on Sunnyside's space needs by studying the pros and cons of keeping the program at the school or moving it. After this final addition is completed at the school, the existing site and school will have reached its maximum build out. In the future, to meet high in-catchment demand, the catchment will have to shrink to align enrolment growth with capacity.

The strategy was to maximize the number of seats available over the next 10 years to serve the demand of the in-catchment families. There are only three potential ways to do reduce enrolment:

- reduce the catchment area,
- move an existing choice program,
- or both.

The growth in the existing catchments will remain significant in future years. We first looked at spreading some of the growth to the north, where there is space at Morgan to accommodate more students and if required portables. This phased move was not enough but would provide some needed relief. The realignment of existing boundaries was then included in all options.

As the neighbourhoods around Morgan Crossing along 24th avenue are very dense, portions of both Sunnyside's and Pacific Heights' catchments were manipulated to help balance some of the overcrowding at both the schools and still allow some space for Site 206 for future growth. The amount of students in these neighbourhoods made balancing enrolment relief and protecting space for future growth impossible without moving the Montessori program.

The last variation needed was if the Montessori program remained at Sunnyside. In order to balance growth and space, most of the southern half of Sunnyside would be required to go to Site 206. As a result Site 206, would open full with portables. In the end, we are recommending, moving the program as per board policy, as Sunnyside no longer has surplus seats because of the high in-catchment demand. Furthermore, we want to see the program remain in the region to ensure that all students have access to choice programming.

For Hall's Prairie, enrolment growth is mostly being fueled by young families moving into the new Summerfield community (we have referred to this area as Douglas based on the NCP name). This area is expected to continue to grow as this community has not reached full residential build out. The Hall's Prairie site sits in the Agricultural Land Reserve, which is protected and governed by the Provincial government. As a school is not a conforming use (farming, agriculture etc.), it would be incredibly difficult for the district to get the approvals to build a new larger school on the existing site. Again, with a majority of the students living in Summerfield, it only makes sense to locate the new larger school in that neighbourhood.

What is the difference between an immediate boundary move and a phased transition?

New School Catchment Move: When a new school opens, the district moves students that reside in the newly established catchment immediately. Students are not grandfathered and students do not have the option of remaining at their current school.

Phased Move: A phased transition is used when realigning boundaries between existing schools. In this case, the district has an opportunity to implement a phased transition so that current students can continue at their current school. Only new registrations (kindergarten children without older elementary aged siblings and those who are who are new to the area) would attend a different school based on the new boundaries.

With phased transitions, are younger siblings grandfathered?

Yes. As long as they have an older sibling attending the school, younger siblings are grandfathered during phased transitions.

Will students entering Grade 7 in 2021-22 who live in the new Site 206 catchment have to switch schools?

Yes, students who live in the new Site 206 catchment, regardless of grade, will have to switch schools in 2021-22.

Will there be an opportunity to attend one of the new schools as an out-of-catchment student?

Closer to the opening of Site 180 and Site 206, the district will look at balancing out-of-catchment requests across the South Surrey elementary schools. If any student wants to attend a school other than their catchment school, they must fill out a cross boundary registration form.

The district will examine how to accommodate the moves in a manner that attempts to balance the populations to the best degree possible. This phase will be the initial review of out-of-catchment requests. Not all student requests will be able to be accommodated in this initial review. More details will be announced closer to the opening of Site 180 and Site 206.

Will current out-of-catchment students be forced to attend their in-catchment school because of these boundary moves?

- Out-of-catchment students at Hall's Prairie can choose to attend Site 180 when that school opens in 2021, as Site 180 is proposed to take the majority of Hall's Prairie students, or they can return to their catchment school
- Out-of-catchment students currently attending a school impacted by a phased move (Morgan and Rosemary Heights) can choose to stay at their current catchment school.
- If Montessori is moved, all out-of-catchment students attending Sunnyside Montessori would be expected to move with the program or they can return to their home catchment school.

How likely is it that families will have the option of staying at Sunnyside if they reside in an area within a new catchment?

Families that live within the existing boundaries of Sunnyside could face two scenarios:

1. Addresses that will become part of the Morgan catchment are part of a phased move and will have the option of being grandfathered at Sunnyside.
2. Addresses that will form the new school Site 206 will be required to move to the new school.

Prior to the new school opening, if we move to another catchment that may become the future Site 206 catchment, can we avoid moving our children through three schools? (i.e. Sunnyside to Pacific Heights to Site 206)

Families that move into the new Site 206 catchment will be expected to attend that school at opening.

Choice Programs

What is the plan for adding more Choice Programs in Surrey? If there is demand for more Choice Programs, why isn't the district offering more at schools that aren't full?

The district reviews neighborhood catchment boundaries and Choice Program demand, waitlists and locations on an ongoing basis. There is very little surplus classroom space in the district as a whole with close to 400 classes in portables. Often, the demand for a choice program is in the same community that is significantly over capacity and there is no classroom space. We have tried offering programs at under-utilized sites and, at times, they have not had enough interest to remain viable. We are committed to regional access to Choice Programs and we will continue to look for viable sites to offer these programs.

How is the district making parents aware of Choice Programs? (i.e. advertising, messaging, etc.) Could more be done to inform parents about their options with Choice Programs?

Lottery timelines are shared with schools for distribution in school newsletters and online for their communities. As well, parent brochures and information nights for families, are advertised in several local Surrey newspapers and information can be found as a headline banner on our website. New this year, we have produced a comprehensive full colour brochure which has been distributed in hard copy format to all schools and is available on our website. We have also updated our Program of Choice website and lottery application process to make it easier for parents and families to understand their selection options and the lottery process.

Can the district spread Montessori and EKOLogy into the mainstream school system?

We have not historically considered this option. Programs of choice currently run as a cohort with a variety of grade options, typically K-7, to allow for consecutive years at one school.

Montessori

What is Sunnyside's current enrolment in Montessori?

The Montessori program at Sunnyside currently has 135 students. Of those students, 53 live in the Sunnyside catchment.

What is the application process for Montessori?

Montessori is a district wide choice program and the application to apply for the program is online and selection is based on a lottery system.

Is enrolment in Montessori down?

Enrolment this year at Sunnyside was down due to families vacating the program during the summer. There is a waitlist. In the case of Sunnyside, the additional space was needed to add a division for the neighbourhood program, and as such, the waitlist was not activated. This allowed the district to reduce the number of portables at Sunnyside by one classroom space. This process follows existing board policy.

In Options A & D, Site 180 could open in January 2021. Would Montessori students move in January 2021 or September 2021?

If the decision is to go with option A or D, we would work with the school community to determine when the Montessori program would move. We would have the ability to consider either option.

If Montessori moves to Site 180, will that make room for the program to expand and take people off of the waitlist?

When programs expand, we take into consideration a number of factors, which support the continuity of student learning. In addition to available space, several other key elements, such as ensuring we have enough qualified staffing, are required for Choice Programs to successfully expand.

In Options B & E, if Montessori moves to Hall's Prairie and reduces to five divisions, what would the divisions look like? K-4? Gr. 3-7? Split classes?

The implication for class structures will depend on who stays in the program. We can reduce to five divisions by reducing the kindergarten enrolment and by not allowing new students into other grades from the waitlist when current students leave the program. Optimally, the configuration would be as close to Montessori philosophy grade grouping as possible. The grade groupings are different at other Surrey Montessori program sites and are dependent on enrolment.

In Options B & E, could one or two portables be added to Hall's Prairie to accommodate all divisions of Montessori?

This has not been considered as the board and the Ministry of Education are trying to reduce the number of portables, not add portable spaces.

Has the district considered splitting the Sunnyside Montessori program by grade or division similar to the proposed EKOLogy programs? (i.e. K-3 Montessori at Sunnyside, 4-7 Montessori at another school)

This had not been considered.

If Montessori moves to another school, will students have the option to leave the Montessori program and stay at Sunnyside? Even if they do not live in the Sunnyside catchment?

No. Only Montessori students who live in the Sunnyside catchment will be given the option to remain at Sunnyside if they leave the Montessori program. Otherwise, they will have to attend their in-catchment elementary school.

Have the parents of Montessori students been surveyed to see how many of them would remain at Sunnyside if the program moved to Site 180 or Hall's Prairie?

There are 53 students who are currently in-catchment at Sunnyside and would have the option to remain at the school and not move with the Montessori program. A survey could be done, but this would only give a speculative view of interest and those families could change their mind at any time.

If Montessori moves but the in-catchment students stay at Sunnyside, what have we gained?

If all 53 in-catchment students leave Montessori and remain at Sunnyside's regular program, we would gained 82 spots at Sunnyside, based on current Montessori enrolment.

Will in-catchment Montessori students who become out-of-catchment because of the boundary changes be allowed to stay in Montessori?

Yes, they would have the option of staying in the Montessori program.

In Options A & D, if Montessori moves to Site 180 and the new school becomes overcrowded in the future, what will happen to the Choice Programs on site?

As per board policy, Choice Programs occupy spaces where there is room. The district reviews neighbourhood catchment boundaries and Programs of Choice placements yearly and determines if programs need to relocate. Projections that are based on NCP plans and future building do not indicate that Site 180 will become overpopulated. If the NCP plans change and the school fills to capacity, the district may look at relocating the program.

Rosemary Heights' student population is declining. If the portion of Morgan that is proposed to attend Rosemary Heights were to stay at Morgan, could the Montessori program at Sunnyside be moved to Rosemary Heights?

Rosemary Heights is still over capacity. It will be a number of years until the school would be in a position, if ever, to accept a full stream choice program (typically 6-8 divisions). This could be considered but would require portables to house the program.

What is the possibility of adding portables and Montessori to Rosemary Heights?

This has not been considered as the board and the Ministry of Education are trying to reduce the number of portables, not add portable spaces.

Has the district considered moving Montessori to Site 206?

Yes, it was considered, but the school would have grown beyond capacity too quickly.

Has the district considered moving Montessori to Jessie Lee?

No. Jessie Lee is full and growing and would not have room to accommodate Montessori.

Will there be opportunities for staff to participate in the transition process if Montessori moves?

Yes, we will strike a transition committee once the option is determined and the principal is selected.

Would Montessori teachers move with the program or would it be a post and fill?

Once an option is chosen, and as part of the transition work, the district's Human Resources department will work with the union to determine how to move interested qualified Montessori teachers to the new Montessori program. Montessori teachers may choose move from school to school as opportunities arise. Montessori trained teachers have specialized training prerequisites that give them priority to apply for positions within specialized Montessori learning environments.

If Montessori moves and families choose to stay with their in-catchment schools, will the waitlist be accessed to maintain or grow enrolment levels to sustain the program? Will the same number of divisions be maintained regardless of enrolment?

For all neighborhood programs and programs of choice, the number of divisions is dependent on student enrolment. For a program to expand, there must be available classroom space. Decisions to take students off the waitlist depend on available space in certain grades, the grade of the student, program continuity and available space.

If Montessori moves, will there be opportunity to expand the program at all grade levels?

When programs expand, we take into consideration a number of factors, which support the continuity of student learning. In addition to space, several other key elements, such as ensuring we have enough qualified staffing, are required for Choice Programs to successfully expand.

Will there be combined classes that do not align with the Montessori philosophy?

Optimally, the configuration would be as close to Montessori philosophy grade grouping as possible. The grade groupings are different at other Surrey Montessori program sites and are dependent on enrolment. Teaching and learning within the Montessori philosophy and approach is not dependent on certain grade groupings.

If Montessori remained at Sunnyside, would there be the opportunity to reclaim the 7th division?

No. As per policy, space would be utilized for the neighbourhood program.

If Montessori remained at Sunnyside, would we be able to call off the waitlist?

No. As per policy, space would be utilized for the neighbourhood program.

If Montessori remained at Sunnyside, would we be able to call off the waitlist if a child moved?

Yes, if it happens during the school year.

Will there be an opportunity to grow a division if we lose a division in the first year?

When programs expand, we take into consideration a number of factors, which support the continuity of student learning. In addition to space, several other key elements, such as ensuring we have enough qualified staffing, are required for choice programs to successfully expand.

If Montessori moves, would the furniture and materials travel with the program?

Decisions on the moving of materials and resources would happen as part of the transition work done collaboratively with the school principals and stakeholders.

Isn't moving Montessori contradictory to the guiding principle of crossing major roadways?

Choice Programs are accessed by all students in the district, and as such, major roadways are not a consideration as families transport their children to the Choice Program location.

EKOlogy

Is there enough demand for EKOlogy across two schools? Or even beyond the current students at East Kensington?

The EKOlogy program has had a controlled growth of one division per year. Given the current trend and request for this program, we expect to reach capacity with one grade per division within three years. Families from across the district will access the program in the same way as other Choice Programs and families not successful will be placed onto a waitlist.

Will LST and support staff be shared between the East Kensington and Hall's Prairie? Families would like to see a continuity of support services between the two schools.

This will be part of the transition work. The LST support model and staff utilization will be discussed with the Student Support Service Department and the schools.

What is the likelihood of the EKOlogy program stopping after Grade 3? If EKOlogy stops at Grade 3, what is the plan for students whose in-catchment schools are full?

This will depend on the feedback from the consultation process and subsequent recommendation. If students are required to return to their catchment schools in Grade 4, they would be given a priority placement.

If the 4-7 EKOLogy program starts at Hall's Prairie in 2021, will the program only consist of K-6? What would that look like for combined grades and Grade 7 that year?

If the EKOLogy program is at Hall's Prairie, the school could open with full interest at Grades 4-7 (4 divisions total). If there is enough interest in joining the program at Grade 7, we could offer a Grade 7 program in 2021.

Will the EKOLogy program be extended into high school? If so, what would this look like for students in and out of catchment? Would it be a Choice Program?

This has not been considered at this time.

Can EKOLogy be provided at more schools so parents have more options?

This is something that can be explored at other schools and can be started as a school-based program.

Will current EKOLogy students at East Kensington move with the program to Hall's Prairie?

Yes.

Will siblings of students in the EKOLogy program be grandfathered into the program?

Yes.

What is the district's plan for outdoor space at Hall's Prairie if it hosts the 4-7 EKOLogy program? A lot of work has been put into the outdoor space at East Kensington – would this be recreated at Hall's Prairie?

We would work to create outdoor learning spaces at Hall's Prairie.

What are the logistics of having one student in the 4-7 EKOLogy program at Hall's Prairie and their younger sibling in the K-3 EKOLogy program at East Kensington?

Coordinated bell schedules to accommodate drop-off and pickup would need to be considered.

French Immersion

Was French Immersion considered for the new schools in these boundary options?

The Board of Education has asked staff to look at potential new sites for French Immersion. This work is currently underway and the process continues to be in front of the Board.

PACs / Funding

Will the funds that are raised by the Hall's Prairie PAC between now and 2020 remain at Hall's Prairie? Will the funds move with students and the existing PAC to Site 180 in 2021 or stay at Hall's Prairie?

Determination of distribution of PAC funds will be part of the transition plan. We will work with the PACs to determine the best way to move existing funds.

Could the PAC funds (as of March 2020) be allocated for Hall's Prairie?

We need more information to properly answer this question.

How will the EKOLogy program / PAC be run as two separate entities with two PACs? What would fundraising look like? Would the funds be split or will specific funds be allocated for the two different sites?

If EKOLogy moves to Hall's prairie, we would suggest that East Kensington and Hall's Prairie be unified into one community with one PAC. We would likely explore keeping the original historical names at each site but operate as one school.

School Properties

How much outdoor space is there?

For an elementary school the size of Site 206, the district looks for properties that are five to seven acres to accommodate playgrounds, fields, parking lots and potential room for future expansion.

If approved, where on Sunnyside Elementary's property will the addition be built?

The addition, when approved, will be built on the lower play area by the stairs. Currently, there are a number of portables occupying this space.

How do these plans for future additions (i.e. Sunnyside) that are anticipated to distribute the burden of portables take into consideration access to play space?

Outdoor play space is taken into consideration when planning additions. In order to manage the density in the Sunnyside Elementary catchment, the district can employ the following strategies:

- build a minimum three-storey addition to reduce the impact on the footprint on the site
- further reduce the existing catchment boundaries
- consider Choice Program moves
- control enrolment by capping in catchment registrations. (The implication for in-catchment capping is that new students would be diverted to neighbouring schools until space opens up.)

The district could consider an in-catchment cap on the school size so that field space and play space are preserved and not needed for portables. The district will also continue to advocate for additional schools to be built nearby. One of the biggest challenges will be to find suitable land.

With the limited space at Sunnyside, could the addition be done at Morgan instead of Sunnyside?

Morgan is also on the capital plan for an addition. If an addition is not built on Sunnyside, the catchment would need to be greatly reduced in order to accommodate in-catchment students. Families would be asked to travel farther to get to their new catchment school as the newly formed boundaries would be very small.

Is there room to expand East Kensington? Could portables be added to East Kensington's site?

A maximum of four portables could be placed at East Kensington and the placement of the portables would be limited to one section of the field. Further investigation would need to be done if the location would comply with the City of Surrey bylaws including proximity to other structures and distance to fire hydrant access and fire access.

East Kensington (supposedly) had portables onsite during renovations some years back. Is there a reason why portables were permitted then?

Four portables were temporarily located near the current picnic table and pergola location in order to accommodate a seismic upgrade.

Are there plans to have portables at Hall's Prairie if the 4-7 EKOLogy program is hosted there?

No.

How will traffic flow be safely managed at Site 180, given the limited number of roads around the property and potential border backups?

Work and meetings have begun with the city to address concerns of traffic congestion.

How are students going to get dropped off and picked up at Site 180? There appears to be a very small drop-off / pickup zone and very limited street parking along 2nd Avenue.

The district is funded for what the city bylaw mandates, which is nine dropoff stalls on-site. In addition to the on-site dropoff, there will be a lay-by area in front of the school on 2nd Avenue as well as on the west side of the school on 173rd Street. There is also parking available in Dufferin Park on the east side of the site.

What will bus service look like?

Busing will be provided to eligible student In accordance with our busing regulations. Students in K-3 who live more than 4.0 km from the school and students in Grades 4-7 that live more than 4.8 km from the school will be eligible for busing. Paying “courtesy” riders may be offered a seat if space is available.

Based on current catchment options being proposed, there will be a number of students living in areas eligible for free busing.

All bus stops and school dropoff locations will be determined based on safe places for buses to stop and for students to have a protected safe zone to load and unload. Students may be expected to walk short distances to get to their assigned bus stop.

Will there be busing for Montessori students if the program moves to Site 180 or Hall’s Prairie? Will there be busing for the EKOLogy program?

No, Choice Programs are not bused, given that they are open to the entire district.

In Option A & D, if Montessori moves to Site 180, would consideration be given to busing Montessori students from a central location (i.e. Sunnyside or Jessie Lee, according to the Montessori dot map) to cut into the number of vehicles that would be travelling through an already busy area?

No, students enrolled in Choice Programs are not eligible to receive busing.

Would parents be able to subsidize a bus for a Choice Program like the Semiahmoo bus?

This had not been contemplated and has not been done for other Choice Programs. The district has a limited number of buses, all of which are deployed to provide transportation to students living outside of walk limits.

After School

Are there any plans for daycare at the new schools?

We will be exploring options for childcare placements at these sites and understand these services are important for families.

Will there be before and after school care at the new schools?

We will be exploring options for childcare placements at these sites and understand these services are important for families.

If we transition to the catchment school, how will the district support after school care/programs?

We continue to look for solutions for additional after school care and programs. Families may need to change to programs that offer drop off and pick up at their new schools.

Secondary School

When does Grandview Heights Secondary open?

September 2021.

Will students entering Grade 8 in 2020-21 who live in the future Grandview Heights Secondary catchment have to switch schools in 2021-22?

Yes, students entering Grade 8-11 who live in the future Grandview Heights Secondary catchment will attend Grandview Heights Secondary when it opens in September 2021*. Students entering Grade 12 in 2021-22 will stay at their current secondary school.

* Students entering Grade 8-11 in 2021-22 who live in the future Grandview Heights Secondary catchment and have an older sibling entering Grade 12 in 2021-22 will have the option of attending their sibling's secondary school or Grandview Heights Secondary.

If my child attends Montessori and it moves to Site 180 or Hall's Prairie, will they attend Earl Marriott Secondary if we live in a different secondary catchment?

When Montessori students reach Grade 8, they will have the option of attending their feeder secondary school (Earl Marriott Secondary for Site 180 or Hall's Prairie), or their in-catchment secondary school.

Are siblings grandfathered into the secondary school that their older sibling is currently attending?

Yes.

Other

Has the district considered a dual bell schedule for overcrowded elementary schools?

We have not considered extended day at elementary. A number of overcrowded elementary schools do have different bell schedules for recess and lunch to reduce overcrowding on playspace.

The Board Decision

How is the decision on boundary options made by the board?

Feedback is collated from the consultation and included in a report that is submitted to the Board of Education. The report includes a recommendation. A final presentation is made at a public board meeting with the feedback from the consultation process, a decision is communicated at that public meeting and subsequently in writing to schools impacted.

How will parents and staff receive information about the decision?

Communication of the decision will be in writing to each school impacted. The decision will also be part of a press release and be featured on the school district website.

When is the latest that we may hear about the decision?

Tentatively, a target date for a decision has been set for March 2020.