

The Binbrook New School Boundary Review

Advisory Panel #1

Tuesday, October 28, 2025

Bellmoore Elementary School

Present:

Chair: Paul Denomme, Superintendent of Equity and Student Achievement, Family of Schools 1

Matthew Gerard- Associate Director

Trustee: Amanda Fehrman

David Anderson- Senior Manager, Facility Services

Ellen Warling- Manager, Planning, Accommodation and Rentals

Lisa Kiriakopoulos- Manager, Parent Engagement and Early Years

Robert Fex- Senior Planner

Karolina Grochowska- Executive Assistant to Superintendent Denomme

Bellmoore: Principal: Suzana Milinovich, Vice-Principal: Julie Boulton, Camine Chiappetta

Shannen Koostachin: Principal: Maria Marino

Representative from Bellmoore Elementary School: Ami Bhensdadia, Nadira Stoddart, Raman Rakkar

Representative from Shannen Koostachin Elementary School: Allison Larsen, Javaria Ahsa, Holly Bint, Steph Welton

Regrets:

Trustee: Kathy Archer

Allison Reynolds- Manager, Corporate Communications

Sally Landon- Manager, Research and Analytics

Carly Holmstead- Public Relations Officer

Lorraine Valmadrid- Research Officer

Shannen Koostachin: Vice-Principal: Chris Hollingsworth and Heather Pyke

Meeting Start Time: 5:13 PM

Land Acknowledgement- The Superintendent

Agenda Review

The Superintendent commenced the presentation by outlining the agenda, which was structured into two parts.

Representatives from both schools provided an overview of key facts about their schools and highlighted anticipated challenges related to the boundary review process.

Bellmoore Elementary School is recognized for its strong sense of community and commitment to fostering a welcoming, inclusive, family-like environment despite its large student population-over 900 students.

The school and its parent/guardian community actively engage in a variety of meaningful initiatives and cherished traditions, including:

- Established School Traditions: Annual Winter Bazaar, Pancake Day.
- Fundraising Initiatives.
- High Level of Parent Engagement.
- Community Communication.
- Boundary Review Consideration: The review may offer more advantages to Shannen Koostachin School than to Bellmoore.
- Return of students who live in Binbrook attending Shannen Koostachin School.
- It will be challenging to meet the expectations of all families.

Students at Shannen Koostachin School demonstrate strong daily engagement in school activities. However, there are logistical challenges, including bell times—Shannen Koostachin has the latest dismissal time—along with student pick-up and drop-off routines, which can result in late arrivals and extended travel times home. Additionally, operational considerations such as access to before- and after-school programs require further attention to support families effectively.

The Superintendent provided an overview of the advisory panel's mandate and the goals of the meeting. The panel's mandate is to offer feedback and guidance through ongoing discussions and inquiries related to HWDSB recommendations and information. This includes, but is not limited to, reviewing the guiding principles of the Boundary Review and ensuring meaningful engagement with community voices.

Meeting etiquette emphasizes respecting the consensus decision-making process, valuing diverse perspectives, and communicating constructively while fostering a safe, inclusive environment for open dialogue.

Today's goals are to build understanding of the process, clarify member roles, review key dates and communication methods (School Messenger, School Website, Engage Website), interpret options and materials, and prepare for the next meeting.

In addition, Superintendent Denomme spoke about the boundary review goals:

1. Accommodate new school construction.
2. Balance student enrolment.
3. Address site or facilities constraints.
4. Support evolving program needs.

Further, the timeline highlights were provided:

- Initial communications began in September 2025.
- Key meetings scheduled: Oct 28, Nov 18, Dec 2, Jan 6.
- School opening planned for Sept 2027.

Superintendent Denomme emphasized the importance of community voices, and gathering feedback and recommendations. Staff will compile the input received and developed recommendations. Trustee Fehrman noted that the collected feedback and proposed recommendations will first be presented at the Finance and Facilities Committee meeting for review.

Ellen Warling- Manager, Planning, Accommodation and Rentals, reviewed the school information for Bellmoore Elementary Schools such as capacity, FDK classrooms, on ground capacity (OTG), portables,

Before and After Care Program Provider (Umbrella). Then Manager Warling, talked about the new school Binbrook New School.

- Constructions of school (615) capacity, 5 FDK and 21 classrooms) set to open 2027-2028.
- Need to set permanent boundary for the new school.
- Before and After School Program- HWDSB is in discussions with 11 different providers and the City of Hamilton on meeting student needs.

Manager Warling, provided the key consideration for boundary options:

- Balance of overall enrolment.
- Geographical area and barriers.
- Student experience.
- Temporary Accommodation.
- Transportation.
- Other.

In addition, Manager Warling discussed the need to review and confirm an evaluation criteria matrix before we proceed to the activity of using the matrix to “evaluate” the status quo slides.

The panel was presented with the current elementary track attendance boundaries and the location for the new Binbrook New Elementary School. Then Manager Warling, analyzed the Binbrook Boundary Review graphs. The enrolment projections presented are based on 2025 figures, comparing the status quo with Option 1 relative to each school's on-the-ground (OTG) capacity. Graphs illustrate annual enrolment using light yellow for the status quo and dark yellow for Option 1, with a red line indicating OTG capacity, excluding portables or portapaks. In addition, the existing Bellmoore projections continue to decline. We have directed students away from the school since 2019 in a particular boundary. All existing families remained while all new registrations got redirected to Shannen Koostachin. Shannen Koostachin underwent a boundary review in 2023 with implementation in 2024. At that time, we redirected a group of students to Gatestone to create longer term permanent boundaries as new development around Shannen Koostachin was being occupied.

Option 1 as an identified option for consideration:

Binbrook Boundary Review- Option 1 for Bellmoore and Shannen Koostachin. Please refer to the map that illustrates the proposed option 1 for the Binbrook Elementary school boundary (PowerPoint presentation, slide number 26).

Option 1 for Bellmoore:

- 2027-2028 existing boundary North of Binbrook Rd. Plus, Bellmoore students living in the area directed to Shannen Koostachin who remained at Bellmoore will remain at Bellmoore.

Option 1 for Shannen Koostachin:

- 2027-2028 removal of holding area.

Option 1 for Binbrook New School:

- 2027-2028 Bellmoore existing boundary South of Binbrook Rd except those living in the area dedicated to Shannen Koostachin and Shanen Koostachin Holding Area students.

All participants took part in the Evaluation Criteria Matrix – Option 1 activity, which later demonstrated that all fields received a check mark under the proposed Option 1, except for one field—Availability of Before and After School Child Care for Binbrook New School—which remains TBD.

Next Steps:

- Review and discuss impacts of Option 1.
- Submit alternative options by Nov 3 to planning@hwdsb.on.ca.
- Public Meeting- Ideas for open house format.
- Next meeting: Nov 18, 2025 @ 5:00 PM at Bellmoore Elementary School.

Key considerations and discussion points and questions:

- **Student Transportation and Bussing:** Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board works collaboratively with the Hamilton Wentworth Student Transportation Services to provide transportation services to eligible students.
- **Grandparenting and Transportation Polices/School Transition Options:** Students (certain grades and criteria) may be given the choice to remain at their current school or transition to a new one. The transportation eligibility will depend on what option a student chooses and in accordance with the Transportation policy. There will be no bussing provided to legacy or grandparented students.
- **Safe Routes to School,** crossing infrastructure, crossing guards: Trustee Fehrman has indicated ongoing discussions with the City of Hamilton. Associate Director Gerard spoke about the Active and Sustainable School Travel (ASST) initiative.
- **Child Care and Daycare Services:** Availability, waitlists, and affordability of childcare services. Discussions in progress with 11 different providers and the City of Hamilton. The Request for Proposals for a provider at the new school will occur in early 2026/2027 school year.
- **Traffic Concerns on Binbrook Road-** Traffic flow and congestion on Binbrook Road.
- **Pick-Up and Drop-Off Zones.**
- **Student distribution by Grade,** providing a breakdown of students by grade is important for planning.
- **Engagement with the City of Hamilton-** Early engagement with the city is recommended to address infrastructure and planning needs.
- **Public Access to Advisory Meetings:** All advisory meetings are open to the public. Community members are welcome to attend, observe, and listen, however they cannot participate.
- **School Size and Infrastructure Planning:** Questions have been raised about the decision to build a smaller school with future additions (e.g. portables or portapacks) rather than a large facility from the outset. The centers on sustainability and promoting walkable access to schools.
- **Family Transitions Support:** The transition process can be challenging for families. A Transition Committee will be in place, and a two-year preparation period is being considered to support a smooth transition.

Participants were thanked for attending.

Meeting End Time: 7:06 PM.