

Facilities

Responses:

- ***Number of elementary schools and number of secondary schools***

- Make tough decisions sooner, rather than later, to close a number of elementary schools in order to reach a manageable and high-quality system within a few years; consolidate schools to strengthen; PACs; fundraising; economies of scale; program options; access to programs and a larger, more diverse staff.
- Consolidating schools is the only area that will result in significant savings to support instruction and program delivery; get on with the process now to minimize the pain
- Low-enrolling schools (under 200 students) could be closed; schools in close proximity to one another could be closed and consolidated to achieve a population of about 400; some elementary schools could be annexed to reduce costs
- Reduce the number of schools before reducing programs
- Be selective in reducing the number of schools; consider building condition, low enrolment
- Work with District planners to ensure that safety measures (crosswalks, lighting, sidewalks) are addressed prior to consolidating schools
- Maximize space use in all schools; operate all schools close to capacity (perhaps 90%)
- Don't close a school and then re-open it to support construction of a new school
- Support and follow the plan within the "Toward Future for Schools"; reduce/consolidate a number of schools as per recommendations and build new schools in each zone.
- Need to consider long range effect of full day kindergarten and spaces.
- Don't close schools. This allows children to walk to schools in their neighbourhoods at no cost.
- Keep secondary schools at a reasonable size to offer a good selection of educational programs (new schools built should not be too small).
- Maintain number of secondary schools as present geographic distribution is good
- Identify land that could realistically be sold on an exceptional basis and not the rule; keep lands for the future and develop for revenue generation

- ***Reduction of greenhouse gases***

- Build new facilities to reduce emissions; reduce energy use in all schools
- Focus on behavioural change with regards to green house gases; turn off lights, etc.
- Closing schools will increase transportation needs, costs and parents' green house gases

- ***Transportation to and from school***

- Ideally children at the elementary should be able to walk safely to school; secondary students should have easy bus access
- Students should not have to travel by car or bus for more than 10-15 minutes to their school; consider carpooling, a 'green' bus system; reduce transportation costs between schools
- No transportation should be provided to and from school
- Transportation support must be maintained for special needs children; consider carefully whether parents may be able to provide this service instead.

- ***Other suggestions***

- Impose catchment areas to distribute student population more evenly (*School Act* provisions)