



May 2, 2024

Families,

Thank you for taking the time to provide feedback on Halifax Regional Centre for Education's (HRCE) recommendation to move Grade 6 students from Burton Ettinger Elementary to Fairview Junior High, and have Pre-Primary children, currently at Fairview Heights Elementary, return to Burton Ettinger.

We met with your School Advisory Council and collected 151 thoughts in ThoughtExchange about the proposed change. [Click here](#) to view the ThoughtExchange report.

What We Heard

- Some participants believe that moving Grade 6 students to junior high makes sense given the growing school population. They feel the grade configuration is common in other regions and will provide a smoother transition for students into Grade 7.
- Others think that Grade 6 students are too young and not emotionally or socially ready for the transition and exposure to older students. Participants also mentioned the potential negative impact on academic performance and the loss of their 'senior' status in elementary school.
- Participants expressed concerns about the integration of Pre-Primary students into elementary schools. They mentioned the need for age-appropriate play structures and safe outdoor spaces for these young children.
- Some raised concerns about the impact on after-school programs and services.
- Participants suggest building new schools or adding more classrooms as a more sustainable solution.

Our Response

We know that moving children to a new school is an adjustment. Throughout HRCE, many schools seamlessly and safely blend students of various ages and stages. As always, school staff will ensure that all students are appropriately supported in their learning, so they feel welcome in their new environment.

The community around Burton Ettinger Elementary is one of the region's fastest growing areas. HRCE's planners are tracking this growth and monitoring it closely as we wait for the new Fairview-Clayton Park school, announced in 2018, to be built. Once the new school opens, we expect more stability within the Halifax West Family of Schools.

The Decision

After careful consideration, and after hearing from you, we are proceeding with moving Grade 6 students to Fairview Junior High, and having Pre-Primary children, currently at Fairview

Heights Elementary, return to Burton Ettinger in September 2024.

We know that a strong transition plan is important for students who will be moving schools. Staff at these schools will now begin working together to support students and families with this change.

Thank you again for sharing your thoughts, ideas and questions. You can look forward to updates on the transition plan from principals in the coming weeks.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'SAG', followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Steve Gallagher
Regional Executive Director
Halifax Regional Centre for Education

