

Catchment Boundary Review

Black Mountain Elementary and Ellison Elementary Schools

School District staff presented to the Planning and Facilities (P&F) Committee, with recommendations, the process for review of Black Mountain Elementary and Ellison Elementary Catchment Areas, which is a recommendation of the Long-Term Facility Plan (LTFP). During a Board meeting regarding the transportation funding in September 2016, there was discussion regarding re-establishing the elementary boundaries in the Rutland area. Currently, the Rutland area has an open elementary catchment boundary. Direction from the Board was to hold off on establishing the Rutland proper area until there is a decision on the Rutland Middle School; however, the boundaries for Black Mountain and Ellison Elementary schools could move forward because they are distinct communities and the busing eligibility is based on having catchments.

A catchment review is to be a collaborative process to minimize disruptions to families, make the most effective use of existing facilities, provide certainty for transportation eligibility and create sustainable enrolment levels in these elementary schools. The (P&F) Committee recommended that the Board of Education proceed with the Catchment review for Black Mountain Elementary and Ellison Elementary Schools.

The LTFP contains a series of overarching recommendations for all schools and catchment areas that provide a comprehensive plan outlining how the district will manage its school facilities in order to deliver its educational programs at the highest possible standard. SD23 have undertaken and completed several of the recommendations from the LTFP and this review is recommended in the section for the Rutland Area.

SD23 has established policies (Policy 405 and 405R) for setting/changing catchment areas. The following are the principles to follow for catchment review:

- reflect traditional neighbourhoods, subdivisions and regions;
- minimize safety concerns for elementary students as a result of major roadways or other known hazards;
- reflect long-term development to minimize stress caused by frequently changing boundaries in rapidly growing/declining areas;
- maximize the efficiency of schools and the transportation system;
- maintain a cohort of students at each grade level offered at the school, to support the long-term sustainability of the school.

The timeline for this catchment review started in September with the development of some options for this area. Presentations were made at Parent Advisory Committee meetings and the staff are expecting to provide a recommendation to the Board in November/December. Any changes to the catchment boundaries, if approved by the Board, will be implemented for September 2019.

The attachments are the current catchment boundaries and draft options for discussion purposes.

If you have any questions, please contact David Widdis, Planning Manager at 250-470-3276

Frequently Asked Questions

1. *What types of changes can be proposed?*

The types of changes that could be proposed include:

- changes to school boundaries (the catchment area for a school could change)

2. *What are the issues in my community?*

- Transportation eligibility – In an open catchment area, it can be unclear regarding the eligibility of students without defined boundary lines.
- Student management – Black Mountain Elementary School is over capacity and the 10 year projection indicates increased enrolment. The establishment of a catchment boundary will establish student placement eligibility using Policy 405.

3. *When will these changes come into effect?*

The proposed recommendation would come forward to the Planning and Facilities Committee meeting in November/December and moved forward to a public Board of Trustees meeting. If approved by the Board, the implementation for any change would be for September 2019.

4. *What will come forward to the Planning and Facilities Committee for review?*

The way the catchment boundary review process works, staff must develop a proposed plan detailing changes affecting schools in the review area. At this time, it is a proposed plan for change. That proposal is subject to consultation. After the consultation process, staff will make recommendations to the Planning and Facilities Committee and the committee will vote on those recommendations. The recommendations of the committee then go to Board for final approval.

5. *What will happen to students if these changes are made?*

The impact on students depends on the proposed change at the school. Every effort has been made to keep student cohorts together.

6. *How can parents and guardians get involved?*

Parents, guardians, students and community members will have an opportunity to learn more about the recommended plan and to provide feedback in the fall. This will occur in several ways, including:

- Attending a Parent Advisory Committee meeting;
- Provide written input to Planning.Review@sd23.bc.ca
- Attending a Planning and Facilities Committee or Board meeting.

7. *What students will have to move from one school to another? Can all existing students remain in their current school?*

Students who are in Black Mountain or Ellison this current year will continue to stay in the school until they move to middle school. If the catchment boundary is approved for September 2019, any new students applying to the school will be placed in priority based on Policy 405.

8. *Will siblings have to attend different schools?*

The Board of Education policy places a high priority on keeping siblings together, and the intent is to allow siblings to stay together if that is what families decide to do. Any changes that are recommended are to cause the least disruption to families in the area. Here are two examples of unique circumstances, which demonstrate how siblings could stay together:

- **Scenario 1:** Both siblings attend Black Mountain or Ellison Elementary School but are now in catchment for Black Mountain Elementary or Ellison Elementary School. The students are able to stay in the school until they are able to move to the middle school.

- **Scenario 2:** One sibling attends Black Mountain Elementary or Ellison Elementary School and a younger sibling is not currently attending a school. This situation is reviewed on a case by case basis. In previous catchment reviews, the Board has suspended policy to allow the younger sibling to attend the same school as the older sibling.

Rutland Area

