



Village of Bath

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DEC Presentation, April 9, 2014

DEC members,

My name is Troy Stone, and I am the mayor of the Village of Bath.

The two schools combined generate approximately \$ 71,000 in property tax revenue per year. This can be split roughly into \$42,000 and \$29,000 per year from the middle and elementary schools respectively. In addition, the combined water and sewer utility payments amount to approximately \$17,000 annually. Property tax revenues support a number of services, but for the municipality the only real discretionary item in our budget is recreation. Our recreation budget is about \$ 50,000 per year. It supports pool infrastructure, soccer, baseball, six students and one part time director during the summer months. Over the years the village has employed just as many students who do not live in Bath as do live in the community. It's an opportunity for students to learn skills and work during the summer months when there are not a lot of student employment opportunities available. Certainly the children participating in the recreation programs are principally from the outside the municipality and we do our best to keep those services afloat. I have to say with candor that like your own budget, we do not have any eureka's in our income or expense. We have significant cost pressures and infrastructure that needs to be maintained. Wearing my mayor's hat I would say, perhaps selfishly, that my preferred option would be status quo. Frankly, there was plenty of thought that went into making a two school solution work within the municipality. From my end I have contemplated the various bits of financial and statistical information, and probably could poke holes through it if really wanted to. But I suspect it is a moot point. The DEC does have information for ongoing economic development which I could belabor. But again, I expect the thinking would be that if those activities lead to space challenges you will cross bridge when you get to it. Regardless of which school closes, the likely eventual loss of property tax revenue will result in the council of the day needing to make difficult choices. Baring additional revenue to offset the loss, I fear recreation will eventually fall off the budget. All this said, once the steering committee settled in, they felt that a single school solution was the preferred choice. Ultimately this is the parent's franchise, and while the Village might prefer status quo, as a municipality we will do what we can to support what they desire despite the possible outcome to our services.

I must say that early on the process to determine what a single school solution might look like, there was a tremendous amount of frustration amongst the PSSC members. Their early thoughts were that more space was needed and floated that idea to district. However, that collided with the districts view of what needed to be done to the school. Neither PSSC was reassured that this would adequately address educational outcomes and appeared to be a band-aid solution to accommodating the children

and other programs. In fairness, if it were your children, you might have the same feelings. As a result, the Village offered to engage a third party to review the situation, and offer up a fresh perspective on the single school idea. So you are aware, we did not ask for a "deep dive" analysis. I do not intend to go through the report in detail as it is included on your presentation package, but I will offer up a few observations and comments:

- Closing the middle school will have a wide ranging impact on the community, not the least of which is an impact on early child development and intervention, the loss of a gym, and the loss of the school as a hub for various activities;
- The Anglophone West school district offices provide a tremendous support service for the area, and as the school is central to the district likely offers other unmeasured tangible benefits to the district;
- While it is understood that early child hood development is not in your mandate, If the children in the Step Ahead program were considered in the functional capacity, it is likely that we would not be looking at a sustainability study for either school;
- The functional capacity resulting from internal renovations with added class space where possible would be ~ 75%, depending on how the class size is determined. This does not include other programs offered (e.g. Step Ahead) in the building.
- An expanded facility with three additional rooms would have a functional capacity of between 56% and 60% again without considering other programs.

The report does recommend that in a perfect world, the preferred solution would be to expand the building. However, the report also opines that neither internal renovations nor major capital is optimal. Clearly, each has advantages and disadvantages, not the least of which would be any financial constraints the district has.

As we have heard tonight, the Elementary School PSSC in particular has taken the time to consider what an expansion would look like. Frankly, if they had not undertaken this, they would not be doing their job as PSSC members. Their preferred solution in a perfect world would also be a slightly larger building. I would add that they have done a tremendous amount of heavy lifting to prepare for this meeting. At the end of the day, both PSSC's and indeed all of the stakeholders here tonight, interest is singularly in trying to get the best school that they can for the children and maintain its important role in the community.

So, it boils down to three options. Those are status quo, closing the middle school or a K-8 in the middle school (or more accurately newborn to grade 8). Realistically, the first option is more likely than not, the least desirable outcome by the DEC. Closing the middle school in favour of busing students to Florenceville has been demonstrated to be patently untenable to the stakeholders here tonight. That leaves a K-8 (newborn to 8) school. The only question then is what will the building look like. Given that the DEC will likely take a \$ 15 million budget hit during this fiscal year, along with other capital projects already on the to do list (with no funding from government) I would speculate that you will be hard pressed to add more space. I would suggest though that the positives in a one school scenario will outweigh the negatives regardless of number of classes and that students and teachers alike will adapt. That said, if the path of least resistance is to do only internal renovations, then don't nickel and dime it to death. To be very blunt, under that scenario, not only are the principal stakeholders in this going half way, they are going more than halfway to meet your needs and still maintain a strong school community. They are not demanding all the bells, whistles and programs that new or other schools have. But they do want to have the same equality of opportunity for their children to thrive and excel. Their children deserve no less of an education than children other parts of the province.

In closing, (stealing shamelessly from our third party study) the strength of educational programming extends beyond the classroom and is complimented by experiences formed by strong community relationships. Both schools should be applauded for their innovative approach to service delivery and their ability to foster community partnerships. Every effort should be made to further allow this innovation to flourish and become a model for community – school partnerships in rural New Brunswick.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Troy Stone', written in a cursive style.

Troy FJ Stone, CPA, CA
Mayor



DILLON
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Community Impact Analysis

Proposed Changes to the Village of
Bath Schools



April 2015 - 15-1830

April 9, 2015



Village of Bath
161 School Street
Bath, NB
E7J 1C3

Attention: Mr. Troy Stone
Mayor, Village of Bath

Community Impact Analysis – Proposed Changes to Village Schools

Your Worship:

Please find enclosed an electronic submission of the Community Planning Analysis that assesses the capacity and community impact of the Province's proposed changes to the Village of Bath Schools.

I am confident this submission will satisfy the Village of Bath in making an informed presentation and subsequent recommendation to the District Education Council on a preferred solution to the proposed school changes.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (506) 444-8820 x 5150.

Yours sincerely,

DILLON CONSULTING LIMITED

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen Stone", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Stephen Stone, MPI.
Project Manager

SAS:mhc
Enclosed: Community Impact Analysis

Our file: 15-1830

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1.0

Introduction

This report is organized into four sections. The **Introduction** outlines the contents and intent of this Memo. **Section 1- Background** information outlines the relevant background information that led to the request of this Memo. **Section 2 – Review of Options** provides an overview of the options being considered. **Section 3 – Community Impact Analysis of Options** provides a planning analysis of the anticipated impacts of the options provided in Section 2. **Section 4 – Recommendation** provides a final recommendation to the Village of Bath on a preferred option that would have the least impact to the community, from a community planning perspective.

The intent of this report is to provide the Village of Bath with a professional planning analysis to inform the preparation of a Stakeholder presentation to the District Education Council community meeting on April 9th 2015.

2.0

Background Information

The New Brunswick Department of Education, through Anglophone West School District, has initiated a Policy 409 review of the sustainability of the Village of Bath Elementary and Middle Schools, citing low capacity at Bath Middle School and sustained decreased student enrolment. Policy 409 tasks the District Education Council (DEC) to make a recommendation to the Minister on the future of a school. In this case, the Anglophone West District Education Council is undergoing a sustainability study on the Village of Bath Elementary and Middle Schools to recommend to the Minister: (a) status quo (schools remain as is), (b) one or both schools should close and students be consolidated into education facilities in Florenceville-Bristol, or (c) students from both schools consolidate into one kindergarten to grade 8 facility, in the current Bath Middle School (with renovation options). This community planning analysis will provide a legislative review, policy analysis, and determine the community impact of the proposed changes. This Memo will ultimately provide a recommendation to the Village of Bath on the option that will have the less impact to the community of Bath.

To complete this community planning analysis a site visit to the Village of Bath was completed on March 23rd, 2015. Meetings were held with Gerald Sullivan, Principal of Bath Middle School; Rebecca Derrah, Coordinator of Step Ahead Early Childhood Development Program; Troy Stone, Mayor of the Village of Bath; and Charles McNair, Deputy-Mayor, Village of Bath. Additionally, information was gathered from relevant provincial legislation, policies, and strategies, Anglophone West School District, and relevant literature.

2.1

Bath Elementary School

Bath Elementary School was constructed in 1957 and currently serves 140 students in grades kindergarten through 5. The school's catchment area is North to civic number 11122 Route 105; West to the Saint John River; East to the Aberdeen Parish line; South to the intersection of Carlow and Lockard Mill Roads and civic number 9450 Route 105. Students from Bath Elementary School feed into Bath Middle School for grade 6; however, students who choose French Immersion programming feed into Florenceville Middle School (Department of Education, 2015a).

Currently, with 140 students in 10 classrooms, the school is at a functional capacity of 58.8%. This capacity is at the lower threshold of the preferred 60%-80% functional capacity. Enrolment has declined from a high of 186 students in 2002-2003 to a low of 140 students in 2013-2014; however, there have been limited fluctuations in the past 5 years. Projected enrolment numbers through 2017 support this trend (Department of Education, 2015a).

The average class size at Bath Elementary School is 17.6 students. In comparison, the average class size is 19.1 at Florenceville Elementary, 17.4 at Bristol Elementary, and 18.8 at the new Townsview Elementary School in Woodstock, NB (Department of Education, 2015a).

Bath Elementary School currently has a number of events that encourage community-school partnerships that are seen as beneficial to the sense of community of the Village including, yearly visits to local businesses, visits to the Fire Hall and Volunteer Firefighter programming, concerts at Riverview Manor and family literacy nights. Additionally, the school benefits from community volunteers through enrichment activity days, and local businesses often fundraise for the school (Department of Education, 2015a).

2.2

Bath Middle School

Bath Middle School was constructed in 1954 and was designed for high school students. Currently, the school serves 41 students in grades 6 through 8. The school's catchment areas boundaries are the same as Bath Elementary school, outlined in section 1.1 (Department of Education, 2015b).

Currently, with 44 students in 7 classrooms, the school is at a functional capacity of 20.9%, which is below the ideal capacity of between 60%-80%. This functional capacity only considers the current grade 6-8 student population and does not take into consideration additional community uses in the school (described below). Enrolment has declined from a high of 134 students in 2006-2007 to a low of 41 students in 2013-2014. Projected enrolment numbers through 2017 suggests increased enrolment to 56 students in 2017 (Department of Education, 2015b).

Bath Middle School currently has a number of events that encourage community-school partnerships that enriches the Village's sense of community including, various fundraisers that contribute to the students' Global Project through Me to We (students recently built a school in Nicaragua), community men's basketball and co-ed volleyball, community art exhibit and dances (Department of Education, 2015b; personal communication, 2015a).

2.2.1

Community Use of Bath Middle School

This section describes additional programming that occurs in Bath Middle School.

2.2.1.1

Step Ahead Early Childhood Development Program

The Step Ahead Early Childhood Development program is a model early childhood development program and social enterprise. What began as a \$300,000 publicly (provincial) funded pilot project has turned into a self-sustaining model program that is being replicated in other jurisdictions, including Nova Scotia, with Newfoundland having used the model in their research of a program. The program received start up support from the McCain Foundation. The program attracts children ages 2-5 in the region and currently serves 72 families in the Village of Bath and neighbouring communities. The program, based in the Bath Middle School

basement, utilizes two classroom spaces for hybrid preschool-childcare program and a before and after school program. The program seamlessly integrates preschool students in the classroom environment, acclimatizing them to the educational program routine in New Brunswick. It is viewed as an essential part of the school system and has been linked in student success in the early elementary curriculum. Its successes are linked to the program's proven ability to integrate children in the provincial education curriculum and its ability to allow single parents to return to the workforce (personal communication, 2015b).

Step Ahead's success is attributed to its location. It is offered in-kind space in empty classrooms in the school; however, it supports a mutually beneficial mission with Bath Middle School, along with another room in the elementary school for a total of three rooms. The program operates a breakfast program to both its own students and students at Bath Middle School (at no charge to BMS students or administration). Additionally, a third of its mandate is to partner with local organizations to benefit community members and children. The program is currently partnering with the Victoria Order of Nurses, Valley Family Resources, Public Health, and the Talk with Me program, to name a few. Also, Step Ahead has initiated Food Mentors, a knowledge-sharing, volunteer-based program which focuses on food security and policy. Since its establishment, 17 people have graduated from the program and have over 100 participants in programs ranging from diabetes awareness and mitigation strategies, lessons on lunch box nutrition, and slow cooker classes for parents. The program offers countless opportunities for community volunteerism and is viewed as a strong community hub (personal communication, 2015b).

2.2.1.2 Family and Early Childhood West

Anglophone West School District has offices in Bath Middle School for Family and Early Childhood West which provides numerous family resources to the region, including in-home services and resources to support childhood development in the region. Its offices are located in the basement of Bath Middle School and are viewed as crucial community resources in the region (Department of Education, 2015b; personal communication, 2015b).

2.3 Village of Bath

The Village of Bath is a rural community in Carleton County, north of the Town of Florenceville-Bristol. The Town's population is 532 residents in 2011, a slight increase from 2006 statistics (Statistics Canada, 2012). The Village provides a number of services and infrastructure to support the community and promote further development, including significant water and wastewater infrastructure. Although the community has suffered from economic decline throughout the past couple of decades, culminating with the loss of the Bath Hospital in 2007, the community has recently experienced renewed investment, including new commercial enterprises, and proposed future residential development at the hospital site. The proposed development includes a senior care facility and 25 acres of land to be subdivided into single family lots. The development is anticipated to create significant jobs in the community (personal communication, 2015c).

Currently, the Village has engaged the Department of Environment and Local Government to perform a feasibility study to determine if The Village of Bath should amalgamate with out-lying local service districts (Upper Kent, Parish of Kent, Parish of Aberdeen, Glassville) to create a rural community. If supported, the commercial core of the rural community would be the current Village of Bath and provide services for 3,700 people (personal communication, 2015c).

2.4 Legislative Review

This section will outline the policy provisions and legislative roles and definitions relevant to the school closure review process in New Brunswick.

2.4.1 Education Act

The *New Brunswick Education Act* legislates educational programming, personnel and committee mandates, and educational facilities in the province. The current Education Act was legislated in February 1997.

The Act defines pupil as "a person who is enrolled in a school established under this Act" (NB, 1997, s.1). The Act also defines "school age" as when a pupil reaches the age in which they are required to attend school, in this case, at age 5. The Act does not recognize early childhood development students or programs that are currently in place.

Furthermore, the Act establishes District Education Councils (DEC) as a democratic, third party oversight of Province's educational program. DEC's are the authority that recommends to the Minister to close a school. Section 36.9(5) of the Act outlines the roles of the DEC including, "to ensure that provincial policies and procedures are being followed" (NB, 1997, s.36.9(5)).

It is important to note that the Province combined Early Childhood Development (which used to fall within the Department of Social Development's mandate) with Education; however, it has not yet created policies, plans, or amended legislature to assimilate the two sectors (New Brunswick, 2013; personal communication, 2015).

2.4.2 Policy 409

Policy 409 is the Department of Education's Multi-year School Planning Policy to ensure strategic and long-term approach to major capital projects, capital improvement projects, the study of a school's sustainability and proposed grade configurations. The policy was created in 1998 and was most recently revised in December, 2009. As it pertains to this study, *Section 6.4* provides specific policy to determine a school's sustainability. *Section 6.4.1* states: "DEC will advise the Minister in writing when it intends to study a school's sustainability. This study can include one of several outcomes: maintaining the status quo, repairing the school, or closing the school and placing the students elsewhere" (NB, 2009, 4).

Furthermore, the policy supplies specific criteria for DEC to consider when determining a school's sustainability. These include:

1. Low/declining enrolments
2. Health and safety
3. Quality of education programs and services
4. Transportation
5. Finances
6. Impact on local community
7. Impact on other schools
8. Economic development

To obtain this information, DEC will hold a number of community meetings and consult with appropriate stakeholders and department staff. The final DEC recommendation is sent to the Minister who has the ultimate decision-making authority. Furthermore, when a school has been approved for closure, it is deemed surplus, but remains under control of the Department of Education.

2.4.3 Jurisdictional Review

The school closure process in New Brunswick is similar to other jurisdictions across Canada. The jurisdictional review is summarized in table 1.

New Brunswick is the only jurisdiction in Canada where the Minister has veto power over school closures, which is intended to ensure that the principles of procedural fairness have been applied.

2.5 Relevant Provincial Policies, Strategies, and Plans

This section will outline Provincial Policy that DEC should consider when assessing the sustainability of both schools, particularly how it relates to the impact on the local community.

2.5.1 2013-2016 Provincial Education Plan, Department of Education and Early Childhood Dev.

As aforementioned, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development Plan cites integrating early childhood development with the K-12 sector as a top priority. Plans or policy provisions that accomplish this have as yet not been identified (NB, 2013b).

2.5.2 Living Healthy, Aging Well

In December 2012, the Premier's Panel on Seniors released a healthy aging strategy to address the growing concerns among New Brunswick's aging population. The report establishes a number of strategies to accomplish healthy living in New Brunswick and includes fostering age-friendly communities that support knowledge-sharing, aging in place, and volunteerism. To accomplish this goal, the strategy recommends that government, municipalities and non-profit organizations work together to align program and policies that support and enable age-friendly communities (NB, 2012). Community schools, particularly in increasingly-isolated, rural New Brunswick act as the community hub that provides recreational programming and opportunities for volunteering and knowledge-sharing between generations. Community schools strongly support provincial policy to promote healthy aging.

TABLE 1. JURISDICTIONAL REVIEW OF SCHOOL CLOSURES ACROSS CANADA (ADAPTED FROM: KENNEDY AND MACDOUGALL, 2007)

Issue	Alberta	British Columbia	Manitoba	New Brunswick	Newfoundland	Nova Scotia	Ontario	PEI	Quebec	Saskatchewan
Legislation Date of latest amendment (original date)	2000	2005 (1996)	2005	2004 (1997)	2004 (1997)	2004 (1995-1996)	2006 (1990)	1993 (1988)	2006 (1998)	2006 (1995)
Regulations Date of latest amendment	2003 (1997)	No	No	No	No	1994	No	1995	No	No
Other Policy		2002 Ministerial Order	Departmental Guidelines	2009 DoE Policy 409						
Responsibility	School Boards	School Boards	School Divisions	District Education Councils	School Boards	School Boards	School Boards	School Boards	School Boards	School Boards
Ministerial Approval Required?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	Unclear
School Board closure policy required?	Policy prescribed in regulations	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Final Decision Report Requested?	Yes- written to parents	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Community Consultation Required?	Yes (the board must hold public meeting)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes (opportunity to present to the board)	Yes	Yes	Yes (input into report and public meeting)	Yes	No

2.5.3 New Brunswick Wellness Strategy, Department of Healthy and Inclusive Communities

The Department of Healthy and Inclusive Communities has created a Provincial Wellness Strategy 2014-2021 that provides a framework that will enable any community, school, family, or individual to see how their goals, activities or mandates are supported by improved wellness and further support wellness across the province (NB, 2014b).

The strategy calls for a culture of wellness in New Brunswick that will positively impact the social determinants of health (NB, 2014). This policy aligns well with current programming and mandates of The Village of Bath (e.g. new Parks and Recreation Master Plan) Step Ahead Early Childhood Development Program (e.g. food securities program and affordable childcare), and the student activities and overall school missions of Bath Elementary and Middle School (e.g. Bath Middle School global outreach initiatives).

3.0 Review of Options

This section will provide an overview of the options currently being considered by the DEC.

3.1 Option 1: Status Quo

The First option involves maintaining both Bath Elementary School and Bath Middle School operational as per their current state. This option would see no changes to the Step Ahead Early Childhood Development Program.

3.2 Option 2: Close One or Both Schools

Although unlikely, DEC initiated a Policy 409 for both schools, which theoretically means that closing both schools is possible. It is unlikely that Bath Elementary School would close and students moved to Florenceville-Bristol given that its Policy 409 was triggered by the possibility to combining the two schools into one large K-8 at the current site of Bath Middle School.

What is more likely is that Bath Elementary School would remain operational in its current state, but Bath Middle School be closed and students be transported to Florenceville Middle School. This option would have considerable impacts of the community, including the First Steps Program.

3.3 Option 3: Create a K-8 Bath School

The third and final option being considered by the DEC is to close Bath Elementary School and move its students to Bath Middle School. This option is accompanied by two further options that consider minor and major renovations to accompany this change. One of the additional considerations prepared by staff is a major capital project that would see an addition to the building, adding three new classrooms, one on each level.

4.0

Community Impact Analysis of Options

4.1

Option 1: Status Quo

Keeping both Bath Elementary School and Bath Middle School operational would have the least amount of community impact. The municipal tax base would remain intact, which would not affect service delivery. In addition, on-going and planned school-community partnerships would continue to operate and grow, such as the Global Initiative with the Me to We Organization and the proposed plan for Bath Middle School students to offer basic computer skills to seniors in the area. A concern to consider with Option 1 is that Bath Middle School will remain at a low functional capacity if the early childhood development program remains separate from the K-12 sector, under the Department of Education. If this is the case, the school remains at risk for future Policy 409 reviews, threatening the school's long term sustainability. Being under Policy 409 has affected programming for the K-12 sector, the early childhood development program, and student-community partnerships this year in the community (personal communication, 2015b).

4.2

Option 2: Close One or Both Schools

Closing one or both schools would have a significant impact on the community. The impact on school closures in rural communities has been heavily researched. Generally, school closures bring considerable implications to community resiliency (Oncescu, 2014). School closures have been associated with decreasing residents' sense of community and has contributed to diminishing civic engagement opportunities in the form of volunteerism, intergenerational relationships, and community recreation participation (Oncescu, 2014; Oncescu and Giles, 2014; Galway and Wiens 2013).

The closure of Bath Middle School would negatively impact the Village of Bath. The school's strengths as a small, rural school lies with its community partnerships. The student population is active in the community and the community often supports fundraising activities that contribute to student's various outreach activities. As a community success story, Bath Middle School students worked extremely hard at holding multiple community dinners, bottle drives, and other activities in 2014 and raised \$18,000 to build a school in Nicaragua (Ironically, the students are now struggling to keep their own community school open). This year's fundraising efforts have been hampered by this Policy 409 review and the students are struggling to rally community support to purchase 30 goats for a community abroad (personal communication, 2015). Additionally, the school's gymnasium is heavily used from community recreational use, including co-ed volleyball and men's basketball teams (Department of Education, 2015b).

Additionally, closing Bath Middle School would be detrimental to the Step Ahead Program, which is self-sustaining, due in large part to its ability to use unoccupied space within Bath Middle School, through in-kind support from the District. There is inadequate space for the program in Bath Elementary School; therefore, the program would have to look at additional space. It was determined that the program's success for early years integration is contributed to its location within an existing school facility (NB, 2012) If the program moved to a private space, it would negatively impact the programs ability to seamlessly integrate students into the

Kindergarten curriculum. If the program had to cut back on services or increase costs for childcare, it would assume the risk of single parents backing out of the workforce and relying on government support because they can no longer support private childcare (personal communication, 2015b).

Additional community impact would be the loss of tax revenue from the building. Given the small tax base in the community, large institutional uses such as Bath Middle School contribute significant revenue from property tax to the Village. The loss of this revenue could result in significant service cuts to non-essential services, such as recreational program, which would be in contradiction of additional provincial policies (wellness strategy, health aging report). It would also be in contradiction of section 5.3 of Policy 409, jeopardizing the integral role that schools play in promoting and preserving local culture and community, especially in rural areas. In addition, a private developer is redeveloping the old hospital site to a senior care facility and plans to subdivide over 25 acres of land near the Schools to attract additional single family development to the community. The developer plans to use the Village's two schools as a selling feature for young families and is concerned that closing a school sends the wrong message to families looking to invest in the area (personal communication, 2015c).

4.3 Option 3: Create a K-8 Bath School

Further to consolidating the two schools into one K-8 school at Bath Middle School, DEC has released renovation options to support this option. The community impact differs based on the renovation option, so the impact is further analyzed into two subsections below.

4.3.1 Option 3(a) Minor/ Major Renovations

The minor renovation option requires Bath Elementary Students to occupy space in Bath Middle School. This would create a situation where the proposed K-8 school would be at the upper end of its ideal functional capacity of 60%-80%, depending on classroom composition, by 2017 (table 2)(Department of Education, 2015).

TABLE 2. PROJECTED CAPACITY RATING OF THE PROPOSED OPTION 3(A).

Capacity Bath Middle School	2017 Projected Bath Elementary Student Enrolment	2017 Projected Bath Middle School Student Enrolment	2017 Projected Total Student Enrolment	Capacity Rating (# of students/ total student capacity)
250 - 275	56	141	197	71.6%-78.8%

The capacity rating would fall within the department's preferred function capacity of 60%-80%; however, when considering the Step Ahead program and the Anglophone West district offices, there would be limited space to absorb future growth and programming.

4.3.2 Option 3(b) Renovations and Capital Construction

The major renovations option includes major capital improvements that would see the creation of three new classroom spaces on each level, by means of an addition to the facility. This option would relieve capacity at the new consolidated school, offering the opportunity for program growth and development, especially with the on-going success of Step Ahead. Early Childhood development is designed into new school builds (e.g. Meduxnekeag Consolidated School in Woodstock, NB), and it is believed that this option would ensure the program would

have continued success in Bath. This option would also see major interior update, which would provide elementary functionality to space designed for high school students. This option would provide a projected capacity rating of 56% to 60% (table 3).

TABLE 3. PROJECTED CAPACITY RATING OF THE PROPOSED OPTION 3(B)

Capacity of K-8 School with three add'l classrooms (24 students/ new classroom)	2017 Projected Bath Elementary Student Enrolment	2017 Projected Bath Middle School Student Enrolment	2017 Projected Total Student Enrolment	Capacity Rating (# of students/ total student capacity)
325 - 350	56	141	197	56% - 60%

The addition of three new classrooms would alleviate some of the capacity pressures assumed with option 3(a); however, it is worth noting that new schools in Anglophone West School District (e.g. Townsview and Meduxnekeag Consolidated) are being designed with additional amenity space to support enriched learning opportunities. The additional space includes:

1. Multiple project work areas
2. Multipurpose rooms
3. Rooms for Art, Music, Science and Technology
4. Two modern gyms in each school
5. Library
6. Cafeteria
7. Dedicated space for Early Childhood Development

As noted above, this option would place the school's capacity rating at the lower end of the preferred range, but would provide adequate space for students, staff and community users. This option would also allow innovative learning opportunities to continue for students.

It is also recognized that many schools that are over capacity operate in portable classroom space on a temporary basis. If DEC is hesitant on the cost of the major renovations to Bath Middle School, portable classroom space can be viewed as a temporary fix.

5.0

Recommendation

From a community planning perspective, the preferred solution that offers long-term sustainability of a school in the Village of Bath is **Option 3(b), closing Bath Elementary School and creating one large Bath K – 8 School with renovations and capital construction.**

While the preferred solution is an expansion along with renewal, arguably neither options 3(a) or (b) is optimal. The DEC in weighing their decision must, among other things, balance the needs of the students, staff and community stakeholders with the financial realities of the district. It is agreed that a single k-8 school would provide the best long term support. Maintaining the substance of what is provided today is important to school officials and the community; therefore, the form of the building should follow the most sensible footprint to ensure those outcomes.

As The Village Bath continues to adapt to the changing landscape and economies of rural New Brunswick, it must focus its efforts to become a sustainable community that offers a strong sense of community and opportunities for civic engagement. Research shows that a school sustains the social fabric of a community and all efforts should be made to preserve its pivotal role as a community hub. The Village of Bath's situation is unique because of the hidden role of the Middle School, due to First Steps and Family and Anglophone West Programs. If the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development amended the Education Act to integrate early childhood development into the K-12 sector, it is likely that a policy 409 review would not be taking place. DEC must consider the integrity of these programs to the wellness of the entire Carleton North region. The Village of Bath has recently experienced significant community impact and economic downfall from the closure of the Hospital and has seen turning tides as of late, with the proposed Hospital redevelopment promising job opportunities and new housing stock for prospective families.

The strength of educational programming extends beyond the traditional classroom walls and is complemented by experiences formed by strong community relationships. Both schools should be applauded for their innovative approach to service delivery and their ability to foster community partnerships. Every effort should be made to further allow this innovation to flourish and become a model for community-school partnerships in Rural New Brunswick.

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