



Final plan for Broad Street schools

Community Report



Halifax
Regional Centre for Education

Background

In April 2018, the provincial government announced that a new Primary to Grade 9 school would be built in Bedford to address enrolment growth in the area. This [announcement](#) was part of the 2018-19 Capital Plan.

In November 2019, the provincial government [announced](#) a new high school would be co-located on the same site on Broad Street. At the time, it was confirmed the schools would be configured as Pre-Primary to Grade 8 and Grade 9 to 12. In 2019, enrolment in the Halifax Regional Centre for Education (HRCE) exceeded 52,000. Now, in 2023, there are more than 57,000 students and ***we continue to grow!***

After the school site was selected, a School Steering Team (SST) was created to provide input to government to support the design process. The SST included the principals of the new schools, a member from each School Advisory Council (SAC) within the Charles P. Allen Family of Schools (CPA FOS), along with staff from both HRCE and the provincial government.

Early in 2022, we let the school community know that both schools would be opening for September 2023 (PP-8 school was originally scheduled to open September 2022). The original construction timeline was set prior to the pandemic but was postponed due to delays and disruptions in supply chains – especially with building materials.

Finally, in the fall of 2022, we launched our Virtual Town Hall!

Consultation

On November 1, 2022, HRCE launched a Virtual Town Hall to gather community input about the new schools in a variety of ways. Students, staff, families, SACs and community members within the CPA FOS were invited to share their thoughts and ideas on the following three proposals:

1. Proposed Pre-Primary to Grade 8 boundary;
2. Proposed grade configurations at some schools; and
3. The idea of families choosing where they want their child to attend high school (CPA or the new Broad Street school).

Participants were encouraged to contribute to the conversation regularly between November 1, 2022, and January 3, 2023. There were multiple opportunities to provide input, including:

- *ThoughtExchange*
- HRCE website
- Email
- Phone
- Mail

Our goal was to be responsive to community as we worked through the consultation process.

Throughout our consultation, we:

- Sent letters to families (seven since October 2022)
- Consulted School Advisory Councils (SAC)
- Consulted school staff
- Consulted students
- Regularly updated FAQs
- Provided progress updates
- Shared *ThoughtExchange* feedback and reports

By the end of the consultation, we engaged with more than 2,500 participants, with almost 42,000 interactions. Here’s how those totals break down:

ThoughtExchange	1,927 participants 1,363 thoughts 40,020 ratings
Email	44
Phone	6
HRCE website	158
Mail	2
SACs meeting	21
School staff meeting	87
Student survey (Grades 4-6)	137
Student survey (Grades 7-12)	157
TOTAL PARTICIPANTS	2,539
TOTAL ENGAGEMENT	41,995

What we heard

After reviewing all ideas and feedback we received from the Virtual Town Hall, the following three key themes emerged:

1. Where at all possible, families and students want to attend their neighbourhood school.
2. Families want consistency; grade reconfigurations should only be used if they put an end to the changes and moves experienced in the CPA FOS in recent years.
3. Families need more information about the idea of *choice* for high school.

These community-driven themes, the goal of maximizing HRCE facilities usage, and the updated enrolment projections received late in December, were used as our guiding principles.

Guiding principles

1. Neighbourhood school

Overwhelmingly, we heard that, when possible, families and students want to attend their neighbourhood schools for several reasons. They include, but are not limited to:

- The ability to walk to school, promoting a healthy lifestyle
- Not having to ride the bus, which contributes to already heavy traffic
- Active transportation is best for the environment

Here are some of the thoughts we received:

We live one street over from the new Broad Street school (Larkview Terrace) and could walk there. Why are we outside of the school zone? Our children get to school late because of traffic, they wouldn't if they could walk one street over. It would save HRCE on transportation costs too!

If sustainability is at the forefront of this school model, we need to decrease busing. Traffic will be a major issue with the Broad Street location. We need to enable as many students to walk for their health, and to decrease traffic.

The physical school closest, should be the school attended. Why bus kids when they are close enough to walk? support healthy communities, and strengthen community involvement by keeping kids closer to home.

Boundaries Students should be permitted to attend the closest school to their primary residence, unless there are extenuating circumstances

Walking to school makes more sense from an environmental perspective, a health perspective, a congestion perspective and any other logical metric. It seems strange to bus children out of their own neighbourhood for primary school instead of allowing them to attend a school that is next door.

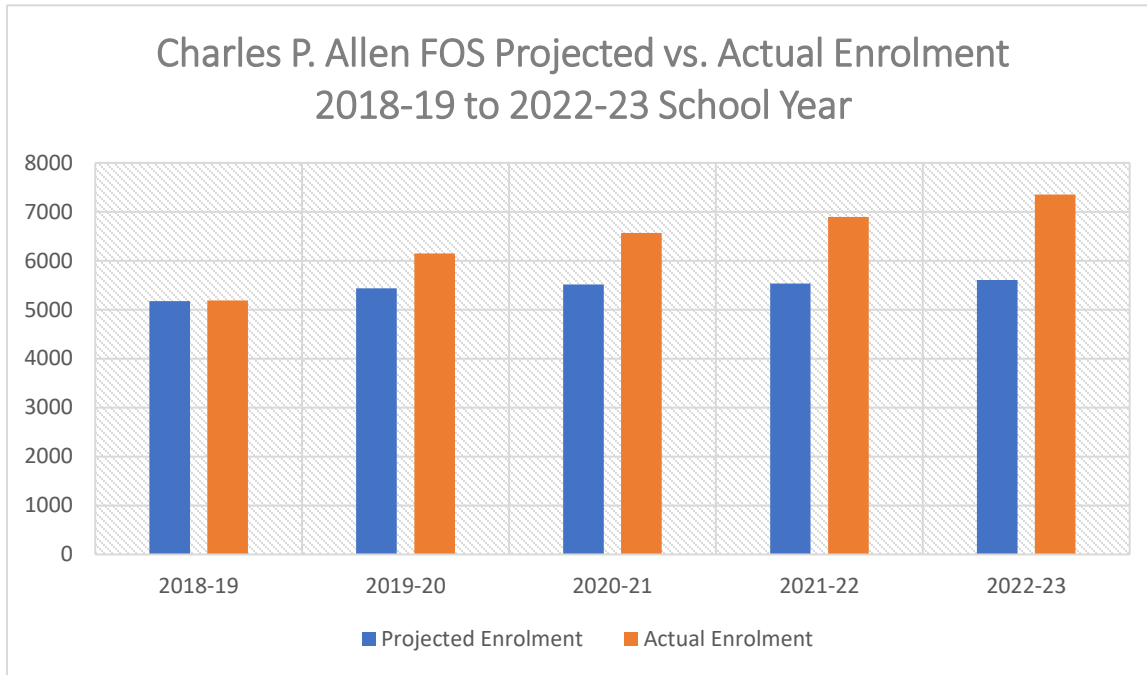
With traffic the way it is around Bedford, Larry Uteck and HP, we should encourage as much walking students as possible. Kids that live near the new school, should go there and thereby reduce busing and parent pickup/drop off (ie improve traffic)

We've heard your concerns. Our new plan includes updated boundaries, that allows more students to attend their neighbourhood school.

2. Grade reconfigurations

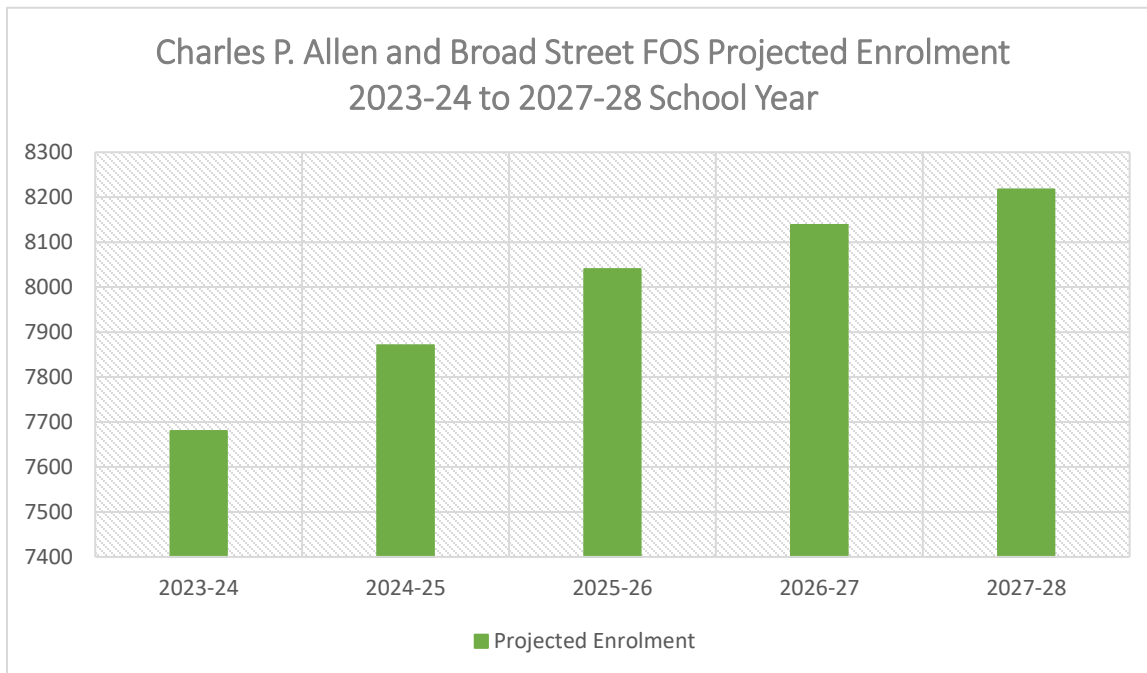
Families have expressed a desire for consistency. Many families said they are frustrated with constant change and short-term solutions which have a negative impact on their children. Many suggested that grade reconfigurations should only be used if the strategy puts an end to the changes and moves experienced in the CPA FOS in recent years. Some families also shared concerns with students in Grade 6 going to junior high and students in Grade 9 going to high school.

This graph demonstrates the *projected enrolment* against the *actual enrolment* in the CPA FOS over the past five years, starting in 2018 when the school was first announced.



**Data Source: Baragar Systems*

This graph shows the projected enrolment over the next five years for the CPA and Broad Street FOS.



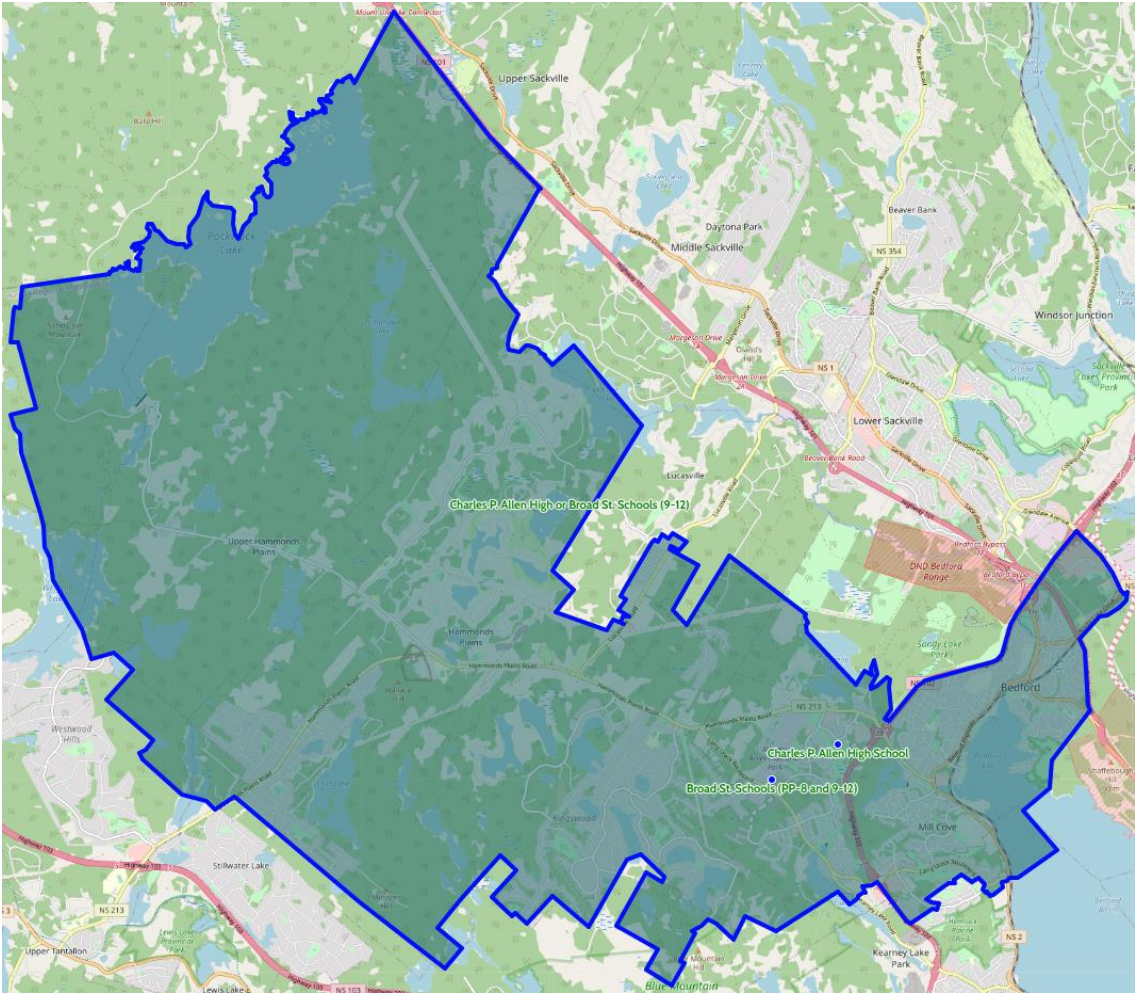
** Data Source: Baragar Systems*

Based on this projected enrolment data, along with the valuable input provided by families, students, staff and community members, we finalized our plan for the new schools on Broad Street and the CPA FOS.

What's the plan?

New boundaries

After careful consideration, including all public consultation feedback, updated enrolment data and CPA FOS school capacity information, we have finalized the boundaries for the new schools on Broad Street. Click the map to view the updated boundaries.



Reminder: the new school will offer French Immersion. Any students who attended a French Immersion program, but now fall within the boundary for the new schools, will be able to continue French Immersion at the new schools.


New grade configurations

We originally thought it would take a few years to transition to final grade configurations. Recognizing that families value consistency, all changes will be in effect for September 2023. Our intention is that these grade configurations should be in effect for the next three years. This is great news in a rapidly changing community.



BROAD STREET FOS	Current grades	Proposed grades	Final grades
Broad Street	N/A	PP-8	PP-8
Hammonds Plains Consolidated School	PP-5	PP-5	PP-5
Kingswood Elementary	PP-6	PP-5	PP-5
Madeline Symonds Middle School*	6-9	6-8	6-8
Broad Street	N/A	9-12	9-12

* Madeline Symonds Middle School students currently in Grade 8 will attend Broad Street for Grade 9 starting in 2023-24. For their Grade 10 year, they will have a choice of which high school to attend.



CHARLES P. ALLEN FOS	Current grades	Proposed grades	Final grades
Basinview Drive Community School	PP-5	PP-5	PP-5
Bedford South School**	PP-4	PP-5	P-5
Sunnyside Elementary	PP-6	PP-5	PP-5
Rocky Lake Elementary	5-6	N/A	6
Rocky Lake Junior High	7-9	6-8	7-9
Charles P. Allen High	10-12	9-12	10-12

** Pre-Primary will attend Basinview Drive Community School.

Choice of high school

All Grade 9 students currently attending Rocky Lake Junior High and Madeline Symonds Middle School will get to choose which high school they would like to attend for the 2023-24 school year.

What about Grade 10 students? Yes, Grade 10 students get to choose too! Any Grade 10 student currently attending CPA will also get the choice of continuing at CPA or switching to the new school for the 2023-24 school year.

All Grade 11 students currently attending CPA will continue at CPA for their Grade 12 year.

We know you need more information, and we'll have more details in the coming weeks. Soon the new high school principal will visit Grades 9 and 10 students to introduce exciting new programming options for high School at Broad Street.

What's next?

The transition begins!

We are currently working to update our data systems with the new boundary information. Given the scope of the new plan, it will take a couple of weeks to finalize.

Registration for families in the Broad Street FOS and CPA FOS begins on March 20, 2023. Our systems are now being updated to reflect the new boundaries. We will share a reminder with all families when it opens.

Here's what else you can expect:

Month	Transition Planning
February	In late February, the principal of the 9-12 school will be visiting Grades 9 and 10 students and families to showcase the new approach of teaching and learning at the high school level. The principal will also visit Grade 8 students at Madeline Symonds Middle School who will be transitioning to regular programming at the new school for their Grade 9 year.
March	Principals at the new schools on Broad Street will begin transition planning with staff in each school in the Broad Street FOS and CPA FOS to create robust transition plans for students. Families will begin receiving monthly updates from principals. These messages will invite questions from families. Questions will be answered in subsequent messages from principals.
April and May	Families will receive a monthly update from principals.
June	Families will receive bi-weekly updates from principals.
Late August	Families will receive a video tour of the new schools in addition to a welcome message from principals.

Thank you

Much has changed since the day the new schools on Broad Street were first announced. From a global pandemic to disruptions in building material supply chains to tremendous population growth in the CPA FOS, we've worked through many complex challenges. We sincerely appreciate your understanding, your support and most importantly, your contributions to this process. Your thoughts, ideas and feedback during our consultation were invaluable. Thank you for helping to shape our final decisions for the new schools on Broad Street!

We've still got lots of work to do before the schools open their doors to welcome children, students, and staff. We look forward to your continued involvement as we begin building a new school identity and planning for the transition. We know that every child's success depends on a strong and thoughtful transition plan. Your participation in the next part phase of the journey will be just as important!

Thank you, CPA FOS community!

Questions

We know you still have questions... and will have many more in the coming months.

Please reach out to by calling 902-464-2000 or emailing connect@hrce.ca. We will continue to update [our webpage](#) as new information becomes available.