



January 11, 2024

Dear Elementary School Families – Clarke High School

As you know, last year we engaged in an extensive consultation process with families to seek input on possible approaches to student accommodation pressures in the community. Specifically, we have significant challenges in having enough space for all our students at Newcastle PS and The Pines Senior PS.

Thank you again to all the families and community members who shared their voice, either in-person or online, throughout those meetings. As you know, and flowing directly from those consultation meetings, the Board approved adjustments to educational programming at Newcastle Public School and The Pines Senior Public School.

Beginning September 2024, The Pines Senior Public School is changing from its current Grade 6-8 structure to become a Grade 5-8 dual-track French Immersion School. Newcastle Public School will become a Junior Kindergarten to Grade 4 dual-track French Immersion School.

I am writing today to share that, at last evening's Resource Committee meeting, school board administration provided an update to the Board on the next steps for these changes in the school community. That update will be provided to the full Board of Trustees at its January 23 Regular Meeting.

Specifically, to best use the available space on-site and keep student cohorts together, incoming Grade 5 and 6 students from Newcastle PS will be housed at The Pines Senior PS while Grade 7 and 8 students from The Pines Senior PS will be housed on the second floor of the Clarke HS building.

We recognize that accommodation issues can be challenging for students and appreciate the input of community and staff throughout the consultation process. We believe this plan aligns with community feedback to keep the Grade 7 and 8 cohorts together.

School and board staff have been working collaboratively to review any necessary facility upgrades required at Clarke HS to welcome and accommodate the incoming Grade 7 and 8 students. We will continue to provide information and support to staff and community as part of this transition plan.

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Administration continues to prioritize securing funding to build a new JK-12 school on the Board owned property at Grady Drive/Ruddell Road in Newcastle, Ontario, as part of the Ministry of Education capital priorities application process.

We believe that this plan offers a solution to the accommodation pressures while continuing to prioritize securing funding for a new school, addresses concerns raised by community and provides students who are impacted with appropriate structures and programming opportunities to enhance their learning journey.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sonal Gohil". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "S".

Sonal Gohil

Superintendent of Education