**Letter to the OCDSB Trustees on proposed changes to Woodroffe Avenue Public School**

 *It is recommended that you make the letter personal to your family circumstance and not copy paste a templated letter, however, here are some factual points you can include to support your argument to the Trustees.*

**To (Board Trustees):** lynn.scott@ocdsb.ca, julia.fortey@ocdsb.ca, donna.blackburn@ocdsb.ca, suzanne.nash@ocdsb.ca, amanda.presley@ocdsb.ca, lyra.evans@ocdsb.ca, jennifer.jennekens@ocdsb.ca, donna.dickson@ocdsb.ca, nili.kaplan-myrth@ocdsb.ca, justine.bell@ocdsb.ca, matthewj.lee@ocdsb.ca, cathryne.milburn@ocdsb.ca

**CC (Board Committee Review Members, Bayward Municipal and Provincial Reps, Local Media Contacts):** director@ocdsb.ca, CPasma-CO@ndp.on.ca, Councillor Theresa Kavanagh <bayward@ottawa.ca>, boundaries@ocdsb.ca, pic.chair@ocdsb.ca, "walter.piovesan@ocdsb.ca" <walter.piovesan@ocdsb.ca>, natalie.vanrooy@bellmedia.ca, mark.sutcliffe@ottawa.ca, "Vandenbeld, Anita - M.P." <Anita.Vandenbeld@parl.gc.ca>, "WAPSChair@gmail.com" <WAPSChair@gmail.com>, "nathan.fung@cbc.ca" <nathan.fung@cbc.ca>

**Subject:** Concerned Community Member/Parent opposed to the OCDSB proposed changes at Woodroffe Avenue Public School

**Intro:**

Dear OCDSB Trustees and stakeholders,

I am writing in opposition to the proposed grade configuration and boundary changes at Woodroffe Avenue Public School, as they are in direct contradiction to the stated Objectives of the Program Review on the [OCDSB website](https://engage.ocdsb.ca/elementary-program-review) to create Community Schools.

**The Proposal for WAPS:**

* To have the JKs who start in Sept 2025 then moved to Regina Street Alternative in Lincoln Heights for SK in Sept 2026 for SK-grade 3, then come back to Woodroffe Ave for 4-8
* Woodroffe will no longer be a K-8 Early French Immersion school and will only offer grades 4-8

**Points to support your argument:**

* **Against the proposed Objectives (see Appendix A for arguments to include):** Proposal for Woodroffe Avenue Public School goes against the proposed plan on the [OCDSB website](https://engage.ocdsb.ca/elementary-program-review) to create “Community Schools” and is taking our youngest kids (grades K-3) out of our Community and shipping them to a community much further away and cut off from ours. Splitting children in grade groups doesn’t achieve your goal of community schools.
* **Dangerous:** A more than 30min walk along a major busy/dangerous artery through multiple traffic lights across LRT construction and the Parkway, as well as planned construction at Lincoln Heights
* **Removing benefits of socializing older/younger kids:** Having K-8 schools allows for learning for both young and older kids and creates neighbourhood bonds.
* **Proposal results in Overcapacity at Regina St and Severn and undercapacity at other local schools:** The proposal plans to bring Regina’s attendance to 125% capacity (about 75 students over), and Severn to 116% capacity (60 students over). While surrounding schools will mostly see their capacity drop and will be under capacity : Devenshire (66% of full capacity); Connaught (80% of full capacity); Elmdale (67%); Hilson (95%); Churchill (63%); Broadview (92%); Woodroffe (77%); D. Roy Kennedy (67%); Briargreen (70%); Lakeview (66%).
* **There are 4 OCDSB Schools geographically closer to our Community than Regina:** Woodroffe Ave P.S., Broadview, Churchill and D. Roy Kennedy
* **Many families are already considering other schoolboards or will consider moving,** tearing apart the community we live in
* **The Program Review was not presented in earnest**, there are underlying motivations that are not being transparently communicated

I request that you vote against this proposal that will see the removal of our kids from our community and does not achieve the stated objectives, and will negatively impact our children’s lives and wellbeing over the course of their elementary education.

I look forward to your response.

Best,

Concerned Parent/Community Member

**Appendix A: Comparison of Rationale for the change vs Reality**

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| **Rationale for changes (copy-pasted from** [**OCDSB website**](https://engage.ocdsb.ca/elementary-program-review)**)** | **Reality Impacting Woodroffe Avenue P.S. students/Community** |
| “Currently, many students must travel outside of their community to access programs and/or services. With the proposed changes, most students will attend the neighbourhood school, learning and interacting with peers from their own community.” | Young kids will now have to travel ~3km (>30 minute dangerous walk) outside of our community to attend Regina and will attend school with peers not in our neighbourhood. Commute times will be lengthened |
| “School grade configurations will be streamlined from eight to five, which means fewer transitions to new schools for students.” | Kids will have a disruptive school experience having to change schools multiple times (3 times by grade 4) |
| “When all neighbourhood children attend the same school, there are more opportunities to interact with peers and form friendships—before, during and after school.” | Fewer children in the neighbourhood will attend the same school. Already due to these changes, many in the neighbourhood have registered or are considering registering their child outside of the community OCDSB school.  |
| “The closer proximity of the school can lead to increased parental involvement and engagement in school life.” | Further distance to Regina will result in a decrease in parental involvement from those in our neighbourhood. Parents have very full plates. The additional distance to Regina will be an inhibitive factor for engagement.  |
| “The school becomes a hub for the neighbourhood, fostering community development and partnership opportunities for sports and other recreation and learning activities.” | The school is so far away from our community, it would require driving to spend time there. This is not possible for many nor preferable for anyone. |
| “More children are able to walk to school or have a shorter commute by bus.” | Kids will no longer be able to walk or bike to school. This will not be a safe nor feasible option. Instead they will have a long bus ride.  |
| “Students and schools will be better integrated into their community.” | There will be no integration of students and schools in the community as the Regina, **school is not in our community.**  |