

Latimer Road Montessori Consultation FAQ

Process

What stakeholders (i.e. outside community groups) are being consulted in this process?

The Board values the voices within our community and ensures that persons who may potentially be impacted by a decision, that is, the school community as well as interested members of the public, will be given an opportunity to provide input on the proposal before a final decision is made.

Will the report going to the school board be available after the board meeting?

Yes

Will there be a follow-up opportunity for consultation after the board meeting?

No. The consultation feedback window closes on October 27, 2023.

What does the school board look for in terms of a petition demanding a fourth option?

The Board values the feedback from our community through the consultation process and is seeking input on the three options provided. Stakeholders are welcome to suggest a fourth option.

Options

Why are Montessori families being asked to move instead of neighbourhood program families?

The Surrey Board of Education values the “neighbourhood school” (defined as the school catchment area) and strives to maintain the integrity of student placement in neighbourhood schools (*policy #9320*). Montessori is a choice program, not a neighbourhood program. School catchment boundaries for programs of choice will be considered district-wide and not site specific. Programs of choice will be offered only in space surplus to the needs of the neighbourhood school program or in space leased for a specific program need (*policy #9200*).

Was keeping the Montessori program at Latimer Road considered when making the options?

Many options were considered. Latimer Road Elementary is over capacity and enrolment will continue to grow as development increases around the future Skytrain line. Finding an alternate location for the program of choice will help reduce capacity and allow room for neighbourhood enrolment.

Did the district consider redrawing the catchment boundaries instead of moving the program? Will the boundaries be redrawn anyway with the impending population growth from the SkyTrain expansion?

The district is growing significantly and is engaged in continuous conversation and consultation regarding the management of enrolment growth. Moving the Montessori Choice Program from Latimer is just one step in alleviating enrolment pressure. Other options may be necessary in the future.

Were other local schools considered to host the Montessori program? (Regent Road, Port Kells, Clayton Elementary)

Yes. Strawberry Hill was one of the few schools in our district that would be able to accommodate seven classroom spaces for the program. In keeping with the guiding principle to look at spaces that have long-term

sustainability, Regent Road was not an option as it is expected to be at capacity within a few short years. Both Port Kells and Clayton Elementary are too small and don't have the classroom space.

Would the district consider a short-term solution of moving the Montessori program somewhere within Cloverdale for a few years instead of a long-term solution?

No. We want to ensure we are following our guiding principles:

- Stay in alignment with Board policy
- Minimize disruption to students
- Find solutions with long-term sustainability
- Ensure students have access to their neighbourhood school

Can the decision on the future of the Latimer Road Montessori program be delayed for a few years until more accurate population growth numbers are available from the city?

No. The Surrey School District and the City of Surrey have been working closely on the expected population growth over the next 5-10 years and it is significant enough that we need to start looking at options. One mitigating step is to look at options for the Latimer Road Montessori Choice Program.

Will the district poll parents on if they would follow the Montessori program to another school or choose to stay at the Latimer Road neighbourhood program?

A survey done at this early point in time would really only give a speculative view of interest and responses could change at any time. This may be something considered in the future.

With Options 2 and 3, how will students starting the Montessori program in the 2023-24 school year be impacted by never having younger peers in their classroom to mentor?

Option 1 offers the opportunity for students to mentor younger peers within the Montessori program if this is a priority to consider.

Options 2 and 3 would not be accepting new kindergarten enrolment into a Montessori program but may have opportunities for other creative mentorship of students in younger grades.

Montessori

Has the district considered turning Latimer Road into a Montessori school entirely?

No. Montessori is a program of choice for families should they choose it.

Has the district considered making Montessori the standard education style in Surrey?

No. Montessori is a program of choice for families should they choose it.

How many people normally apply for the kindergarten Montessori lottery?

Applications for all three locations (2023):

- First Choice = 69 applications
- Second Choice = 70 applications
- Third Choice = 54 applications

Current Waitlist as of Oct. 10, 2023:

| | Kindergarten | Grade 1 | Grade 2 | Grade 3 | Grade 4 | Grade 5 | Grade 6 | Grade 7 |
|--------------|--------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Latimer Road | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Teaching

Would Montessori teachers from Latimer Road move with the program? If not, where would the teachers come from if the program is moved?

Montessori teachers may choose to move from school to school as opportunities arise. Montessori trained teachers have specialized training prerequisites that give them priority to apply for positions within specialized Montessori learning environments.

Siblings

For Options 2 and 3, would younger siblings of current Latimer Road Montessori students have to enter kindergarten at a different school?

Yes, if they wanted a Montessori Choice Program. Montessori Kindergarten would not be offered at Latimer Road. However, kindergarten siblings would be welcome to attend the neighbourhood program at Latimer Road so that siblings could stay together.

Could they attend kindergarten at Latimer Road in the neighbourhood program?

Yes.

If parents keep the older sibling at Latimer Road, will younger siblings entering kindergarten Montessori at another school be automatically entered or would they still have to go through the lottery?

To attend kindergarten Montessori at another site they would need to enter the lottery process. However, kindergarten siblings would be welcome to attend the neighbourhood program at Latimer Road.

For Options 2 and 3, if younger siblings of current Latimer Road Montessori students enter kindergarten at Douglas, Mountainview or Strawberry Hill, could their older sibling attend Montessori at their younger sibling's school?

Yes, provided space is available.

Out-of-Catchment

How many students in the Latimer Road neighbourhood program live out-of-catchment? How many live out-of-district?

There are many reasons why a student may be out-of-catchment. For example, a student may have been in-catchment and their family moved. The district tries to have students continue their education at the same school. That is why the recommended option provided parents with the choice to have students who are

already enrolled in the Latimer Road Montessori program finish the program there. Approximately 7% of students in the neighborhood program live out of catchment (K-7); 93% are in-catchment.

Why doesn't the district send out-of-catchment neighbourhood program students to their in-catchment schools?

There are many reasons why a student may be out-of-catchment. For example, a student may have been in-catchment and their family moved. The district tries to have students continue their education at the same school. That is why the recommended option provided parents with the choice to have students who are already enrolled in the Latimer Road Montessori program finish the program there.

Has the district considered closing the Montessori program to out-of-catchment students?

No. Montessori is a choice program and offered where there is space, it is not a neighbourhood program.

Bearing in mind that closing the Montessori program to out-of-catchment students would create a very small kindergarten Montessori class, would the district consider a K-1 class for Montessori in that case?

No. Montessori is a choice program and offered where there is space, it is not a neighbourhood program.

Choice Programs

Why isn't Cloverdale more of a priority to host Choice Programs?

Currently the Clayton/Cloverdale community has three Choice French Immersion Programs and a Traditional Program. Montessori has been a part of the Clayton/Cloverdale community as a Choice Program for a number of years.

School catchment boundaries for programs of choice will be considered district-wide where there is space. The Clayton/Cloverdale community is experiencing growing enrolment and space is limited. There was not a long-term sustainable option available in the Clayton/Cloverdale community to move the Montessori program.

Other schools with Choice Programs, such as École Woodward Hill Elementary and École Peace Arch Elementary with French Immersion, have been quite over capacity. Why have their programs been "safe" from being moved?

The district reviews catchment boundaries and choice program locations on an ongoing basis. Decisions are often complex and involve a number of different considerations dependent upon a number of different factors for each unique location. All Choice Programs are subject to the same policies and reviews; however outcomes may vary. Many Choice Programs in the district have had to be relocated since 2014.

New Schools / Additions

Is there any proposal to the provincial government from the Surrey Board of Education to build more schools in the Cloverdale area to accommodate growth?

Yes. The Surrey School Board has been continually advocating for new schools and additions in the district, including in the Cloverdale/Clayton community. The Long Range Facility Plan (LRFP) is a Surrey School District strategy to manage short, mid and long-term enrolment growth. As a key stakeholder within the City, the

Surrey School District engages in continual dialogue regarding the City's planning initiatives. We are currently in the process of updating our LRFP to address the significant increase in enrolment expected over the next 5-10 years. With the LRFP in mind, Districts also submit a Five-Year Capital Plan submission to the Ministry. Future schools within Clayton/Cloverdale are part of LRFP and the Capital Plan being submitted.

When will Latimer Road receive the proposed addition that is on the district's Five-Year Capital Plan? Why isn't the Latimer Road addition more of a priority?

The Ministry of Education and Child Care continually prioritizes requests for capital funding provincially. Provincial reviews include funding for:

- new schools
- additions to existing schools
- replacement of existing schools
- renovations of existing schools

The Latimer Road addition is being considered by the Provincial Government within the context of all requests provincially.

If Montessori wasn't a choice program, would the Latimer Road addition be a higher priority on the capital plan?

As per above. The Latimer Road addition must be considered within the context of all requests provincially. If a School District can utilize strategies internally to mitigate some of the enrolment pressure, it is expected they do so.

Is it true the district is looking to sell some land in the Clayton corridor?

The Surrey School District is looking to purchase land within many areas of the district, including Cloverdale/Clayton. Any land the school district would look to sell, in the entire district, wouldn't be land that could be used to build a school.

Portables / Modular Schools

Are students at Mountainview Montessori in portables?

Mountainview Montessori is a modular complex designed to be a more permanent installation than a group of portables. It includes a full gym and office spaces.

To free up classroom space at Latimer Road, could a modular school be built onsite at Latimer Road or in Cloverdale for the Montessori students?

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Enrolment

How does the district come up with enrolment projections?

The Planning and Demographics Department prepares long range enrolment projections using several factors. These factors include but are not limited to birth rates, migration patterns, participation rates, yield rates, and housing development data from the City of Surrey and City of White Rock.

Do the projections for each option take into account that some Montessori families may choose to stay at Latimer Road in the neighbourhood program? What percentage of students would be expected to stay?

We fully expect that many families will opt to stay in the neighbourhood program at Latimer Road. While this may not create a significant decrease in enrolment immediately, we will begin to see space availability for neighbourhood enrolment over time as we redirect kindergarten from the lottery for Latimer Road and open new kindergarten spaces in the school.

Has the district considered limiting kindergarten enrolment in the Latimer Road Montessori program to students who have an older sibling at Latimer Road?

Many options were considered. Ultimately, the relocation of a choice program needs to cap the kindergarten enrolment at some point in time to reduce the capacity. Whenever this is done, it is likely to impact a sibling group.

How many students will these options reduce from the Latimer Road catchment and other catchments year over year?

Please refer to our Latimer Road Elementary Montessori Program consultation page ([link here](#)) and the Latimer Road parent information package.

Why is Mountainview Montessori so far under capacity?

Enrolment in our Choice Programs is dependent upon interest from the Kindergarten lottery as well as interest at other grade levels.

Nearby Schools

Why isn't École Martha Currie Elementary accepting neighbourhood students considering they have a choice program?

Martha Currie does accept neighbourhood students. This year the neighbourhood program at Martha Currie grew by approximately 50 students.

The district reviews catchment boundaries and choice program locations on an ongoing basis. Decisions are often complex and involve a number of different considerations dependent upon a number of different factors for each unique location. All Choice Programs are subject to the same policies and reviews; however outcomes may vary.