



## REPORT TO

# CORPORATE SERVICES, STRATEGIC PLANNING AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE

## ST. JEROME C.S. WARD 5 ACCOMMODATION STRATEGY

*"Enlarge the site of your tent and let the curtains of your habitations be stretched out; do not hold back; lengthen your cords and strengthen your stakes." Isaiah 54:2*

**Drafted**
**May 24, 2023**
**Meeting Date**
**June 8, 2023**

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M. Loberto, Superintendent Planning and Development Services

M. Zlomislic, Superintendent Capital Development, Asset Management & Renewal

C. Fernandes, Executive Superintendent, Student Achievement, Innovation, and Well-Being

### INFORMATION REPORT

**Vision:** *IN GOD'S IMAGE: Growing in Knowledge, with Justice and Hope.*

**Mission:** *Nurturing the faith development and academic excellence of our Catholic learning community through the love of God, neighbour, and self.*



**MULTI-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN**  
2022 - 2025

**IN GOD'S IMAGE:** Growing in Knowledge, with Justice and Hope



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## A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides a response to the motion approved at the June 9, 2022, Board meeting regarding enrolment and accommodation challenges at St. Jerome Catholic School.

St. Jerome is significantly oversubscribed, with enrolment projected to continue increasing in the future due to residential intensification in the area. The school requires a long-term capital solution and was submitted for Ministry funding consideration as part of the last full Capital Priorities program in 2021. While enrolment control measures, through caps on kindergarten intake, have been implemented at the school to reduce the rate of enrolment increase, an accommodation solution is likely required in the near term.

The report outlines potential options to address enrolment pressures at the school. A permanent capital solution is required to accommodate and alleviate enrolment pressures at St. Jerome.

**The cumulative staff time required to prepare this report was 35 hours.**

## B. BACKGROUND

1. ***St. Jerome Catholic School, located at 111 Sharpecroft Blvd, has a 444 pupil place capacity and 10 portables on site.*** The school, built in 1963, is located on a 4.10 acre site. The current enrolment at St. Jerome is 585 students, with a utilization rate of 132%. Given the site configuration, the placement of additional portables restricts play space available to students, and requires a power upgrade to the property, with an estimated cost of \$800,000.
2. ***In 2017, the French Immersion program (FI) was implemented at St. Jerome.*** One FDK class was allocated to FI to accommodate the new program. Since implementation, FI has phased year over year to Grade 5 (as of 2022-2023), with a total of 74 students currently enrolled in the program.
3. ***Prior to the 2022-23 school year, a significant plan to improve and reconfigure the play yard began.*** A maximum of 10 portables were incorporated into the site design with a commitment to seek avoiding placing additional portables in the foreseeable future. Enrolment control measures, through caps on FDK intake, have been implemented at St. Jerome to reduce the rate of enrolment increase to achieve this commitment in the short term. Even with these caps in place, enrolment could exceed the capacity of the existing building with portables by the 2025 school year.

4. ***Since 2019, approximately \$5 million has been spent on significant upgrades to the school.*** This includes site work, stair and railing replacements, window and door replacements, washroom upgrades, HVAC upgrades, and the addition of a cooling centre. Although these upgrades improve the learning environment for students, an accommodation solution is still required to mitigate enrolment pressures at St. Jerome.
5. ***In 2021, St. Jerome was the TCDSB's #7 Capital Priority needs project in the Board approved rankings.*** The Board requested Ministry funding for a 700-pupil place replacement school to accommodate enrolment growth at St. Jerome. The top 10 capital priorities submitted in 2021 are listed below. The Board did not receive any Ministry funding awards in 2021, and a replacement St. Monica was funded 2022. The 2022 Capital Priorities program allowed only 5 submissions, which included the top 3 from the approved 2021 list.

Rank	School
1	Notre Dame
2	St. Monica
3	St. Cyril
4	St. Raphael
5	Our Lady of the Assumption
6	Chaminade
7	St. Jerome
8	St. Martin De Porres
9	St. Michael and St. Paul at Duke of York
10	St. Gregory

6. ***Enrolment at St. Jerome has experienced a consistent growth trend since 2018.*** This can be attributed to the completion of housing projects in the Stanley Greene neighbourhood, to the east of Keele Street which are occupied and generating enrolment growth. The school age population in the surrounding community has remained consistent, thus maintaining the existing community levels so that any new development increases enrolment pressures.
7. ***On June 9, 2022, the Board approved the following motion regarding enrolment and accommodation challenges at St. Jerome.***

*“That staff review programming, enrolment, boundaries in order to address the concerns at St. Jerome, as well as a system review (FI program) and report back within one year”.*

## C. EVIDENCE/RESEARCH/ANALYSIS

1. ***In an effort to mitigate enrolment pressures at St. Jerome, a cap on FDK intake was implemented in 2022.*** If enrolment control measures were not implemented, the number of FDK students would have exceeded the 4 purpose-built classrooms at the school by 2 additional classes. With the implementation of enrolment caps at St. Jerome, the additional students are being redirected to nearby St. Wilfrid, however, that school will also soon be at capacity.
2. ***By 2025, there is currently a projected need to place an additional 5 portables at St. Jerome to accommodate the changing school population.*** Additional measures are required to accommodate the growing student population.
3. ***Projected future enrolment growth at St. Jerome is attributable to significant residential intensification in the area.*** The TCDSB tracks development applications in the City of Toronto, which inform enrolment projections. The redevelopment of the Downsview Secondary Plan Lands is the focus of residential intensification in the area and is anticipated to include a total of approximately 51,323 development units and 110,000 new residents upon full build-out over 30 years. There is a growing need for additional school capacity in the area to address growth related needs, and until a Downsview capital solution is secured, these developments will directly impact St. Jerome.
4. ***The Downsview Secondary Plan area is located in the CE06 review area under Education Development Charges (EDC) By-Law No. 194.*** The TCDSB is eligible to acquire approximately 5 acres of land to address development-related accommodation needs.
5. A boundary realignment was considered as a possible solution to the enrolment pressures at St. Jerome. However, ***a boundary change will not help mitigate the enrolment pressure from residential intensification in the area.*** Neighbouring schools are approaching capacity or are projected to be over-subscribed. Overall utilization in the area will reach 128% by 2030.

		CURRENT		2023		*2024		2025		2026		2030	
SCHOOL	OTG	ENR	UTL	ENR	UTL	ENR	UTL	ENR	UTL	ENR	UTL	ENR	UTL
ST JEROME	444	585	132%	604	136%	630	142%	730	164%	789	178%	984	222%
ST MARGHERITA	337	315	93%	300	89%	296	88%	289	86%	275	82%	244	72%
ST MARTHA	263	203	77%	209	79%	210	80%	212	80%	212	81%	192	73%
ST NORBERT	354	323	91%	316	89%	300	85%	294	83%	281	79%	360	102%
ST RAPHAEL	392	521	133%	519	132%	507	129%	503	128%	508	130%	540	138%
ST ROBERT	501	657	131%	654	131%	675	135%	708	141%	732	146%	815	163%
ST WILFRID	706	579	82%	563	80%	552	78%	528	75%	531	75%	693	98%
GRAND TOTAL	2997	3183	106%	3165	106%	3195	107%	3263	109%	3329	111%	3828	128%

\*Note: Includes enrolment cap for St. Jerome FDK.

6. ***Approximately 73% of the total St. Jerome student population resides within the regular fixed attendance boundary,*** with the majority of the St. Jerome students residing just west of Keele Street and Sheppard Avenue West.

### **French Immersion**

7. When French Immersion is implemented at a school, the program begins at Junior and Senior Kindergarten. This program is phased in, adding one grade yearly, and when fully phased requires a minimum of 5 classes to accommodate. Staffing French Immersion programs continues to be challenging amid a shortage of available and qualified French Immersion teachers.
8. ***Of the 74 FI students at St. Jerome, 23 students are within the regular track boundary and 50 are within the larger FI boundary.*** FI boundaries are larger than the regular track programming boundary due to the distribution of FI programming at the Elementary level. *Appendix 'A'* provides details on the pupil distribution in relation to the regular track programming boundary and FI programming boundary.
9. ***As FI is not fully phased in at St. Jerome, accounting for its viability is difficult.*** Based on the previous board-wide analysis from the December 7, 2017, *French Immersion Consultation Results* report, the retention rate for French Immersion is 52% for the students that begin in JK to Grade 8 Board-wide.
10. Since the implementation of the FI program at St. Jerome in 2017, two (2) of the ten (10) students enrolled in JK have remained in the FI program to Grade 5, six(6) remained at St. Jerome but transferred into regular programming, and nine(9) of those students remained within the Board.

Based on this analysis, the FI program is attracting students, and students are remaining in the TCDSB but not within the FI program. When fully phased to

Grade 8, FI enrolment could reach approximately 150 students. The table below provides detailed enrolment for the FI program since 2017.

**St. Jerome French Immersion 2017 to Present School Year**

<b>Year</b>	<b>JK</b>	<b>SK</b>	<b>Gr 1</b>	<b>Gr 2</b>	<b>Gr 3</b>	<b>Gr 4</b>	<b>Gr 5</b>	<b>Total</b>
2017	10	14	0	0	0	0	0	24
2018	13	16	14	0	0	0	0	43
2019	12	17	16	13	0	0	0	58
2020	9	13	14	15	10	0	0	61
2021	14	9	14	9	8	9	0	63
2022	9	17	9	16	8	5	10	74

*Appendix B* provides system wide Elementary French Immersion enrolment data.

11. ***The distribution of FI and other elementary school programming will be addressed in the Long-Term Accommodation and Program Plan (LTAPP).*** *Appendix C* highlights the location of TCDSB French Immersion programming across the city.

**Potential Accommodation Solutions**

12. Based on the situation at hand, staff have provided options to address the current enrolment pressure at St. Jerome. Short of the Province delivering a new capital priority funded school to help accommodate and alleviate pressures at St. Jerome, options presented in the report include an enrolment cap and adding portables on site, which combined attempt to address the short-term enrolment pressures.

In response to a Board motion requesting a review, staff have developed an alternative long-term option that is not without challenges, however, provides a solution to the enrolment pressures, and thus is presented to the Board in this report.

13. **Cap on Enrolment Intake:** This is accomplished by limiting JK intake and managing remaining class sizes within the parameters of an approved staffing model. While the JK cap has been in place since the start of this school year, the redirection of students and restriction of transfers will result in the eventual oversubscription of schools in the surrounding area, as highlighted in the consideration of boundary realignment. Through continued enforcement of this measure, St. Martha and St. Margherita will reach full capacity in 2025, with St. Wilfrid reaching full capacity in 2028. Furthermore, this may result in the loss of

students to other boards in the community as families seek schools within their immediate area.

14. **Placement of additional portables:** A total of 15 portables could be required by 2025 to accommodate anticipated enrolment. It has been determined that 15 portables can be accommodated on-site with minimal adjustments to the playground revitalization project. As previously noted, any addition to the existing 10 portables would require a power upgrade to the property. The placement of portables beyond the 15 identified requires further site investigations and review by staff.
15. **Annex option:** There are currently two examples of annex accommodation in the elementary panel: St. Michael and St. Paul, and St. Margaret and the Annex (leased facility from TDSB). In both instances, the home schools are within 5 km of their Annex sites. These annex locations have provided relief to the existing sites until a more permanent capital solution is achieved.

There are two TCDSB owned sites, St. Gerard Majella, and St. Philip Neri, within 5 km of St. Jerome. Each have been assessed in the table below to accommodate an annex location.

	<b>St. Philip Neri</b>	<b>St. Gerard Majella</b>
<b>Distance From St. Jerome</b>	3.8 Km	3.4 Km
<b>Size</b>	47,290 Sq. Ft	29,967 Sq. Ft
<b>Site Size (Acres)</b>	1.95	4.72
<b># of Classrooms</b>	20	14
<b>Work Needed</b>	Minimal	To Be Determined
<b>Year of Availability</b>	2025	2024
<b>Current Status</b>	Relocation Site for St. Antoine Daniel	Vacant
<b>Challenges</b>	Can accommodate entire plan long term	Will require portables on site by 2030

*Appendix 'D'* provides the distance and drive time to each site.

16. ***The table below outlines a potential plan to accommodate students from St. Jerome both at the main campus and an Annex location if required.*** Beginning in 2025/26, Grades 7 and 8 classes would be transitioned to the annex location, with Grade 6 to follow in 2026, then grade 5 in 2028. This will result in

two operating sites, JK to Grade 4 on the main campus at the current St. Jerome, and Grade 5 to 8 at the chosen Annex location.

	Current	With Annex Solution	
Year	Potential Portable Needs at St. Jerome	Grade Transfer	Portable Needs at St. Jerome
2025	15	7 and 8	9
2026	17	6	8
2028	21	5	8

17. *There are transportation and staffing costs associated with an annex model.* In accordance with policy, transportation would be provided to students accommodated in the annex location. Furthermore, there is a need for additional school administration at the annex school.
18. *Staff will continue to monitor enrolment at St. Jerome and review options to address accommodation pressures.*

## D. CONCLUDING STATEMENT

This report is for the information of the Board of Trustees.