

The following questions and answers are meant to address the most common questions received since the parent assembly and information session held on February 5, 2019. If anyone has further questions about the proposal please contact the Steering Committee directly at: willingdongb@gmail.com

1. How will an expansion for Willingdon improve the overcrowding at other 'West End' schools? Why is it Willingdon's issue to resolve?

A: The overcrowding issue in the sector is not Willingdon's issue to resolve. Willingdon is trying to be proactive to address its own overcrowding issue. Willingdon is at 90% capacity, and at 100% capacity (projected to occur) Willingdon students stand to lose a variety of specialist rooms and programs. We are proposing an expansion for Willingdon because we see an opportunity for growth and improving services. We know it is one way to safeguard our specialist programs and offer our cycle 3 students what they have asked for in the way of more green space, creative learning spaces, more autonomy, and upgraded facilities.

2. Are there statistics from Willingdon, the EMSB, or Montreal to forecast future enrolment and justify the expansion?

A: Yes. Reviewing the past and future data trends, we are anticipating another 3 years of growth pushing our enrollment to close to 600 students. We were in the 400s only 5 years ago. This means another 3 homerooms added to our current 26 bringing us to 29 homerooms. This would result in the loss of the resource and science rooms, and eventually the music room as well. Increased enrolment at Willingdon also puts pressure on lunchtime and recess spaces as we currently only have one yard and one very small gym and one set of working bathrooms on the main floor.

3. Why not look at another school that doesn't have high enrolment and look at converting that school into a new elementary school? Where other options considered?

A: We are not in control of EMSB's decisions about other schools. The initial proposal from the EMSB was for a Français Plus school to open in the area. EMSB consulted on this proposal and has taken the Français Plus stand-alone school concept off the table for 2019-2020 and asked for other proposals from nearby schools for a junior annex. Willingdon has proactively presented a different proposal (senior campus concept) whereby it expands to service the needs of a bigger community.

4. How will the proposed Français Plus program fit into the Willingdon plan? How will it be implemented and will it happen right away?

A: If the proposed plan proceeds, we would not implement the Français Plus plan in the first year. We would explore the possibility of offering it as of September 2020 to run concurrently with our French Immersion Program. We will continue to engage our families on this program going forward.

5. What was done with the feedback received to date? What are the next steps in consultation?

A: The feedback has been tabulated and will be posted on the school website. Over 120 unique feedback forms were returned both online and through students at school, as well as direct emails to members of the committee. We feel the parent community was well represented at the assembly and through the online forms, and we have heard a multitude of responses to the proposal. Overall, over 60% of parents

stated they are generally supportive of the initiative, or want to learn more, while only about 15% of parents stated they don't like the proposal to expand Willingdon.

A: The next steps will be to formalize the proposal, with firm conditions for Willingdon to proceed, and present it to the Council of Commissioners on February 20, 2019. The proposal may not be accepted with the conditions, and Willingdon may not want to proceed if it doesn't get sufficient support from the EMSB. An update will be sent out to all parents following this presentation.

6. The nighttime meetings and visits are impossible for us. Are there other opportunities to go see the site? Is there a possibility of a daytime tour/info-session?

A: If anyone wants to have a site visit during the day, please contact us directly with your request. Another site visit will be scheduled to meet the needs of the parents that can only attend during the day.

7. How will the start and end times be done at the two campuses? How will transport work?

A: We will use the same bussing for both campuses. Siblings will still board the bus together in the morning and return home together in the afternoon. There will be a daily shuttle from Willingdon to the senior campus in the morning and at night. This will provide families with the ability to do one drop off and one pick up. Junior entry would be a bit earlier, from 8:50-9:00, and senior entry would be from 9:05-9:15. Senior dismissal would be from 3:20-3:30 and junior dismissal from 3:40-3:50.

8. How will the philosophy exemplified by the School and community up till now (ex: environmental philosophy, walking program to school) be maintained with the additional shuttle and bussing?

A: Trottibus will remain ongoing for all students to the main school. The shuttle will then take the senior students to and from the campus. Bussing all students at once is the most environmental and efficient way to do transport and other alternative methods (biking and walking) will continue to be encouraged.

9. What are the pedagogical advantages of the expansion campus?

A: Taking on the senior campus will allow the protection and expansion of our specialist programs for all kids at Willingdon. With new resources (kitchens, parklands, bigger classrooms) we will seek to innovate our pedagogical approach to include more universal design learning, more experiential learning and more outdoor learning. Currently the population pressures at our junior campus hampers our ability to properly integrate and implement the innovative pedagogical strategies we know will be beneficial for our students.

10. Please explain the process for getting access to the Public Park and fields. Has there been any talk with the city of Montreal about requirements or conditions for using the fields?

A: Yes, the city has been contacted and discussions are ongoing. They are aware of the need and access will be granted. There is no issue with accessing the fields during the school day, and priority is given for schools and education.

11. Will the building be renovated before the next school year starts? Are there any health risks at the school presently (mold, cleanliness, etc.)?

A: Part of our conditions for the annex concept will be testing for mold in the building. A renovation request will also be included in our proposal including upgrades to the windows, roof, schoolyard fence, gate to the park, paint job for the school, locker maintenance, new kitchen cabinets and appliances and bathroom maintenance.

12. How will Willingdon get support from the EMSB to provide the resources needed to make this plan successful? What commitments can be expected?

A: We have outlined all the conditions in our proposal regarding material resources, human resources, transportation budgets, building renovations and all technological and classroom materials required for the school to be successful. We intend to make it clear that these conditions must be met if we are to proceed with the proposal. We will ask for written confirmation from the school board.

13. Will the EMSB commit to prioritizing Willingdon for getting new French teachers?

A: This is a union and EMSB human resources issue and will be dealt with at that level.

14. Willingdon will present its proposal to the EMSB on Feb. 20th. Is the final decision being made by the EMSB at that time? In either case what happens next?

A: The EMSB will read all briefs (proposals) from the different schools and decide who will get the annex. However, based on what we know, we are the only school contemplating a path forward at this time for the 2019-2020 school year. We will therefore present a conditional brief where we will be highlighting some conditions. We will not confirm our position until we get written confirmation from the EMSB. We will notify all parents of next steps once we get written response from the EMSB.

15. What will happen to the student population (size) at Willingdon (main campus) if the expansion does go through? How big will the school get?

A: Willingdon is an NDG school and will remain so. The catchment area would increase to justify the bigger campus and resources. It will likely take years to grow the enrolment from about 550 to 800 which is the approximate capacity of both buildings put together.

16. What happens if growth stops or isn't achieved? What is the backup plan?

A: In our proposal to the EMSB, we will outline an exit strategy which would give us a predetermined period (3 to 5 years) where if our numbers dip below 550 for 3 consecutive years we would go back to one building.

17. With a new campus, will the K-4 population also get any upgraded facilities?

A: The Ministry of education in conjunction with school boards has set to renovate all the buildings to reflect the needs of a 21st century school. Major renovations are planned for Willingdon's current building in the next 5 years. The EMSB Director General and the director of material resources will visit the Willingdon Governing Board in April to present the plan.

18. Aside from requesting a new VP and secretary what other new positions will be created and requested from the EMSB as a condition for expansion?

A: Taking on the annex as proposed by the EMSB would require many additional resources in order to maintain the quality of services we provide and make the option viable for our community. A proposed resource list beyond a VP and secretary would be:

- *A minimum of 2 full time resource teachers (one on each campus)*
- *A full time behavioural technician in each campus*
- *More professional services (ex. SLP 1 day/campus and psychologist 1.5 days/campus)*

19. The specialists covering two campuses may have a diluted impact. Will new specialists be hired? If not, how can they be equally effective at both campuses?

A: Specialist time is calculated by number of homerooms. If our numbers increase and we are able to grow our specialist programs we will take on additional specialists who will collaborate with our existing specialists.

20. What is the plan for morning and afternoon Extended Day Program (EDP)?

A: Part of our conditions will be that we keep our private EDP. After consulting with our EDP we are confident that the program will be able to service all families at both campuses. After EDP registration, decisions will be made regarding bussing students back to the junior campus, or developing a satellite program at the senior campus.

21. With two physical campuses, how can the culture at the two campuses be the same?

A: Preserving the Willingdon culture and community is very important to us. We have worked in a multitude of crossover activities where the students at either campus will come and benefit from each others' facilities, participate in events and the older students will continue their mentoring of younger students through science and Phys Ed activities. For example, some events would be held at the senior campus such as a welcome back BBQ to encourage families to come and see the new campus.

22. One of the aspects which has always been attractive about Willingdon was the mentoring between older and younger grades. How can this mentorship be preserved?

A: With our additional transportation budget we can provide our two campuses with enriching crossover activities, learning experiences and events to help foster community and mentorship.

23. Parents are very active and involved at Willingdon. How can you bring together all of the parent community to two campuses?

A: Parent involvement and engagement are top priority at Willingdon. Our Home and School is already thinking and developing ideas to address the issue of parents who want to volunteer at both campuses. We will need to recruit parents at two campuses, stagger event times, bus senior students to the junior campus or hold separate types of events and initiatives more suited to each campus. This planning will develop and evolve over time and in consultation with Home and School and the parent community.

