



## **Willingdon prepares to open its new senior campus in NDG**

**MONTREAL, May 14, 2019** – Beginning in the 2019-2020 academic year, **Willingdon Elementary School in NDG will be housing its Grade 5 and 6 students in what it will be calling its Senior Campus, located at the former St Ignatius of Loyola School building on Coronation and Somerled avenues. Inspections of the facility are on-going, and based on the results to date, the school’s Governing Board voted to move ahead with the project.**

The English Montreal School Board (EMSB) is repurposing the school building over the summer to accommodate for the arrival of the elementary school’s 150 senior students in September. The original Terrebonne building will welcome the five incoming Kindergarten classes and returning students who will be in the Grade 1 to 4 classes.

The school’s Governing Board passed a motion earlier this year to accept the EMSB’s offer of the additional building in response to the reality that Willingdon was reaching its maximum capacity. The Coronation facility presently houses two alternative high schools (Focus and Outreach), which will be relocated to their own space at James Lyng High School in St. Henri.

### **Preparing for the New Campus**

A celebratory ribbon-cutting event is set to be held in September with the beginning of the new school year.

Some of the safety and beautifying renovations include repairs to lockers; a new paint job of the building; securing of the outside fence surrounding the school; creation of a new library/learning common, music room, science lab/maker space and nutrition lab; renovation of the stage with a new sound system; and repairs of classrooms.

“We are excited to be working in partnership with many of the EMSB’s departments, namely Material Resources, Educational and Technology Services, Human Resources and Student Services – to name a few – to turn this vision of a senior campus into a reality,” said Principal Carmen Nicolas.

While remaining under the leadership of its one principal, Willingdon will have a vice principal, secretarial staff, and a behavior technician and resource teacher at each of the school buildings. The cherished Willingdon specialists in the areas of music, science and Phys. Ed. will be providing curriculum at both campuses.

The Senior Campus facility on Coronation boasts ample outdoor space that includes three soccer fields, a park with play structures and a treed area with a field. Both the Phys Ed and Science departments will make great use of this additional outdoor space. The building has eight homeroom classrooms, plus a library, gym, science lab/maker space, nutrition lab/student lounge (both of which include a kitchen), sensory room, music room and a resource room with offices.

### **Preparing the New Classrooms**

The design of the classrooms is made with a 21st century vision for its senior grades, including principles from the Universal Design for Learning educational framework. Continuing from the initiative started at the Terrebonne building two years ago, all classrooms on Coronation will be furnished with flexible seating arrangements, adjustable tables and diverse learning areas with work spaces of different shapes and configurations.

“We believe that the new campus will be an opportunity for our senior students to prepare themselves for high school, by creating an environment that gives them autonomy, more choices in their learning and a place to develop effective problem-solving skills,” said Ms. Nicolas.

### **The Original Facility**

The now smaller student population in the original school building on Terrebonne (numbering about 430 for the 2019-2020 school year) will benefit in several ways. Among them, the school’s youngest students will have more space in the schoolyard, and exclusive access to the gymnasium for each class, including the Kindergarten classes (who, previously, mostly used a smaller gym studio).

By spreading out its student body into two buildings, Willingdon can keep intact its specialty rooms at the Terrebonne building, which were at risk of becoming additional classrooms with the growth the school has seen in the last four years. Even with the entry of the five Kindergarten classes, the science and music program will maintain their dedicated spaces, as well as the tech lab, library, resource room and behaviour technician room. The school is looking to create a sensory room for its youngest students.

### **Transportation Plan**

A bussing system has been created to accommodate those who walk to school and siblings who travel together. School busses will first drop off students at the Terrebonne campus in the morning and then will proceed to transport any senior

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campus students to the Coronation campus. At the close of the school day, buses will first collect students from the senior campus and do a first drop-off stop at the junior campus.

### **Extended Day Program**

The school's popular Extended Day Program (EDP) will be running from the junior campus, with the possibility of some lunch and after-school activities taking place at the senior campus.

The next site visit for Willingdon families is planned for Tuesday, May 14, and in June, students who will be going to school at the senior campus – the current Grade 4 and 5 students – will have a chance to visit their new home.

Stay tuned for a series of special podcasts on the transition, hosted by Suzanne Desautels and a web section dedicated to the move at [www.willingdon.emsb.qc.ca](http://www.willingdon.emsb.qc.ca)

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