

BACKGROUND

During the 2015-2016 school year, the Halton Catholic District School Board undertook a Modified Pupil Accommodation (School Consolidation/Closure) Review Process to address declining student enrolment in the area of South Oakville.

Following a three-month review and community consultation process, at the Regular Board Meeting held on April 16, 2016, the Board of Trustees approved to **consolidate the St. James and the St. Joseph school communities.**

For the 2018-2019 school year, students from St. James and St. Joseph will be accommodated on the St. James site while the new Oakville South Catholic Elementary School is built on the St. Joseph site. In September, 2019, all students will move to the new Oakville South Catholic Elementary School.

The following are a list of frequently asked questions and concerns received from members of the St. James and St. Joseph school communities.

Staffing

What will happen to teachers and school staff when the two schools consolidate into one?

We know that consistency in staffing will be important in ensuring a smooth transition for students and families.

As much as possible, and in accordance with collective agreements, we will make **every effort to maintain the current staff of St. James and St. Joseph schools.**

Who will be the Principal of the new school community?

At the Regular Board Meeting on December 19, 2017, it was announced that effective September, 2018, **Mr. Tony Cacciola** will be the Principal of the Oakville South Catholic Elementary School. Mr. Cacciola is currently the Principal of St. Joseph Catholic Elementary School in Oakville.

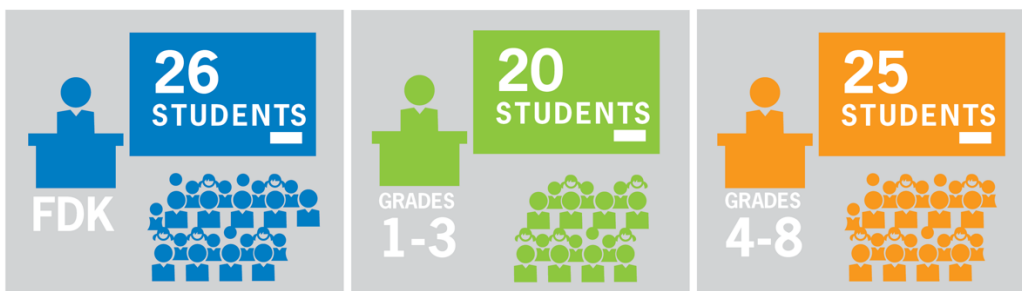


Class Composition

I am worried about bigger class sizes in a larger school.

All elementary schools are staffed according to Ministry mandated ratios and class maximums.

SMALL SCHOOL ≠ SMALLER CLASSROOMS



- **Kindergarten classes** are staffed based on a **26:1** average ratio across the board. Which means one (1) teacher and one (1) Designated Early Childhood Educator (DECE) is assigned for every 26 students.
- **Primary (Grade 1 – 3) classes** are staffed at **20:1**. It is possible that classes could reach a maximum of 23, but only 10% of the primary classes in the entire school board can exceed 20.
- **Junior and Intermediate (Grade 4 – 8)** is staffed on an average ratio of **25:1**.

Generally speaking, students will not see a significant change in class size.

How will classes be created?

All schools will work together to create the class composition, keeping in mind important factors such as friendships, gender balance, and individual student learning needs.



Physical Space/Building

What will the physical space look like (classrooms, teacher workrooms, etc.)?

Our Facility Management staff are currently working on the plans to accommodate St. James and St. Joseph students on the St. James site for the 2018-2019 school year. Once these plans are finalized, they will be shared with both school communities.

There will also be an opportunity for students and parents from St. Joseph to visit St. James.

Community Building and Transition

How will my child's learning and emotional needs be met?

We know that change can create anxiety for some students. We will have a number of initiatives and staff in place to support a successful transition for all students.

I am concerned that our school's identity will be lost.

It is important that we find ways to honour the history of the school communities that will be closing. A Transition Committee - comprised of parents, students, staff and parish representatives - has been established for your school community. One of the sub-committees on the Transition Committee is responsible for school closing events. This sub-committee is gathering artifacts and memorabilia, and exploring ways to commemorate the rich communities of St. James and St. Joseph.

What can be done to avoid an "us vs them" environment?

A Transition Committee - comprised of parents, students, staff and parish representatives - has been established for your school community. There are sub-committees on the Transition Committee responsible for community building and student integration. A number of events and initiatives have taken place or are planned to take place over the next year to help forge bonds between students, families and staff.



Will there be a school uniform dress code in place in the new school community?

Decisions around a school uniform dress code will be determined in accordance with [Policy II-41](#).

How will the school name be determined?

The process for school name selection is outlined in [Policy I-15](#).

Transportation and Safety

Will there be transportation for my child?

[Halton Student Transportation Services \(HSTS\)](#) has created draft transportation eligibility maps. Please note that **these maps are subject to change**. While not yet finalized, these maps provide an early indication of bus routes.

- [View the St. James Catholic Elementary School Transportation Eligibility Map for 2018-2019: **bit.ly/StJames-Map**](#)
- [View the Oakville South Catholic Elementary School Transportation Eligibility Map for 2019-2020: **bit.ly/OakvilleSouth-Map**](#)

I am concerned about parking at St. James during the 2018-2019 school year

The safety of our students and staff is a high priority for us. We will work with St. James Parish to make sure that traffic flow and parking needs are addressed.

