

# CONCERNS WILL BE ADDRESSED: TRUSTEE

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This means that, in September, Robert Little will become a kindergarten to Grade 6 school, giving this year's Grade 5 students an extra year there.

McKenzie-Smith Bennett will follow suit in September 2021, when the Grade 7 and 8 classes are relocated to the high school.

A board staff recommendation to approve the overhaul was moved by Halton Hills Trustee Jeanne Gray. She acknowledged the change isn't favoured by all Acton parents, but said she's supporting it for five reasons, including a reduction in the number of transitions for Robert Little students

and research that indicates student retention at Acton High will be increased, allowing for richer course offerings.

She also pointed out that safety concerns raised by parents worried about their children entering a high school setting at a younger age will be mitigated by an organizational plan created through an integration committee, which will be formed in September.

"I am convinced that the concerns expressed by the community members will be adequately addressed through the work of this team," she said.

The sentiment was echoed by Burlington trustee Leah Reynolds, who was involved in the boundary review process and second-



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ed the motion. She noted that parents can get involved with the committee to help shape what the new configuration will look like at Acton High.

"I hope that you (parents) commit to being a part of this change so that it can really reflect a piece of the Acton spirit," she said.

This is what local mother Heather Kelly said she

plans to do. With her two children being impacted by the changes, she admits she was initially 100 per cent opposed to the idea.

But after attending the final boundary review committee meeting last month, she said she found comfort in some of the measures that've already been discussed, including the creation of dedicated hall-

ways for grade 7 and 8s, along with staggered entry, lunch and release times.

"Change can be positive, albeit in this case a bit intimidating and scary," she said. "Personally, I'll be ensuring I dedicate time to the planning committee and prepare my children, helping them welcome the change with positivity and

eliminate as much apprehension for them as possible."

Board officials say the boundary review process was kick-started by the fact ADHS has been underutilized for the past decade. The school is currently sitting at 71 per cent capacity with 445 students — a number that's projected to rise to 658 students by 2021 with the proposed change.

The review was led by a Boundary Review Steering Committee of board staff, superintendents and trustees, along with a smaller Boundary Review Committee that involved parents from all three schools.

For further details visit [hdsb.ca](http://hdsb.ca) and search Acton Schools Boundary Review.

*STORY BEHIND THE STORY: We've covered this story every step of the way since it was first announced late last year, and will continue to keep our readers informed on this important issue.*

# Have your say on March 23

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Our consultants will lead discussion in four topic areas: Volunteerism, community partnerships, fitness and fostering a love of outdoors, and the marketing and communication of recreation and parks services.

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