



# Thames Valley

## District School Board

Adelaide Metcalfe and Strathroy-Caradoc Elementary Panel Attendance Area Review  
Initial Attendance Area Review Report

# Contents

- Executive Summary ..... 4
- 1. Background ..... 5**
  - 1.1 Analysis Parameters ..... 5**
  - 1.2 Adelaide Metcalfe & Strathroy-Caradoc Attendance Area Review – 2024 ..... 6**
- 2.0 Current Situation ..... 6**
  - 2.1 Strathroy-Caradoc & Adelaide Metcalfe Study Area ..... 6**
  - 2.2 Issues Under Review ..... 10**
- 3.0 Current and Projected Residential Growth and Community Trends ..... 11**
  - 3.1 Current and Projected Residential Development ..... 11**
  - 3.2 North Meadows Secondary Plan Area ..... 11**
- 4.0 Proposed Attendance Area Changes ..... 12**
  - 4.1 Phase 1: Relieving enrolment pressure at Caradoc North PS ..... 12**
    - 4.1.1 Phase 1: Option 1 (Recommended) ..... 12**
      - 4.1.1.1 Expected Outcomes ..... 13**
    - 4.1.2 Phase 1: Option 2 ..... 14**
      - 4.1.2.1 Expected Outcomes ..... 15**
  - 4.2 Phase 2: Balance enrolment between Mary Wright PS and North Meadows PS ..... 16**
    - 4.2.1 Phase 2: Option 1 (Recommended) ..... 16**
      - 4.2.1.1 Expected Outcomes ..... 17**
    - 4.2.2 Phase 2: Option 2 ..... 18**
      - 4.2.2.1 Expected Outcomes ..... 19**
  - 4.3 Phase 3: Creating an attendance area for a future Strathroy Elementary School ..... 20**
    - 4.3.1 Phase 3 Recommendation ..... 21**
      - 4.3.1.1 Expected Outcomes ..... 22**
- 5.0 Implementation ..... 23**
- 6.0 References ..... 24**

## List of Figures

Figure 1: 2023-24 Utilization Rates by School

Figure 2: Geographic Distribution of Students Within Study Area

Figure 3: Phase 1 Option 1

Figure 4: Phase 1 Option 2

Figure 5: Phase 2 Option 1

Figure 6: Phase 2 Option 2

Figure 7: Phase 3

## Executive Summary

This report provides an overview of current and projected enrolment at elementary schools in Strathroy-Caradoc and Adelaide Metcalfe: Caradoc PS, Caradoc North PS, Mary Wright PS, North Meadows PS, and Adelaide-W.G. MacDonald PS. The recommendations contained in this report aim to relieve enrolment pressure in the short-term while also helping to better position the Thames Valley District School Board to receive Capital Priorities Program funding for a new elementary school in Strathroy in the long-term. This report is not intended to be a stand-alone document and should be referenced in conjunction with other Board strategies, policies, and objectives.

The primary goals of this study are to consider short and long-term enrolment and space needs in Strathroy-Caradoc, relieve enrolment pressure at a facility that was not designed for a large student population, and better utilize space at the subject schools to effectively demonstrate a need for additional future capital investment from the Ministry of Education. The background analysis for this review included a broader study of current and projected enrolment across Middlesex County, current student distribution, as well as active and planned housing development.

Given the scope of this review, the recommended changes are broken into three phases. These boundary adjustments not only contemplate optimization of current learning environments for students but also plan for projected housing development and its role in supporting a future new elementary school in Strathroy. The potential boundary changes were formulated with consideration to natural geographic features and proximity to nearby schools.

Strathroy-Caradoc has experienced increasing enrolment over the past several years primarily due to housing development and expansions to the settlement area of Strathroy. Existing attendance areas do not take into account some of these settlement expansion areas, with many students residing in Strathroy attending schools outside of the community. Additionally, based on long-term enrolment and housing projections, Strathroy will need an additional elementary school to accommodate students resulting from increased housing. Embarking on this review well in advance of this need allows TVDSB to begin submitting a business case to the Ministry of Education for Capital Priorities Funding to secure a new school as early as possible.

This review seeks to relieve pressure at Caradoc North PS while balancing enrolment at Mary Wright PS and North Meadows PS and preparing an attendance area for a future new elementary school in Strathroy.

# 1. Background

TVDSB is a large district that covers many growing communities in southwestern Ontario. Many municipalities in Middlesex County continue to grow; with increased migration from the Greater Toronto Area, several communities have expanded significantly. Strathroy-Caradoc is experiencing notable growth, with a 14 percent increase in population between the 2016 and 2021 census periods (Statistics Canada, 2023). Since the previous boundary analysis took place in this area, Strathroy has expanded its settlement boundary to make room for additional housing and amenities to support community growth; this has resulted in student population growth that is within Strathroy's settlement area boundary but outside of Strathroy elementary school attendance areas. Some of this growth is currently designated to attend Caradoc North PS, a small school located southeast of Strathroy, and Adelaide-W.G. MacDonald PS, a small school located northwest of Strathroy.

In addition to the housing development already underway, a large area of land in the northeast portion of town, known as the North Meadows Secondary Plan area, is awaiting development. The majority of these lands are identified for medium and low-density housing, per the municipality's Official Plan (Strathroy-Caradoc, 2024). Based on discussions with municipal staff, only a small portion of this secondary plan area has active applications for development at this time. TVDSB has also previously identified a potential school site within the secondary plan area.

## 1.1 Analysis Parameters

Attendance area reviews are implemented to balance enrolment and optimize the utilization of schools. In doing so, TVDSB is able to better position itself to receive capital funding from the Ministry of Education through the Capital Priorities Program, which funds new schools and additions for all school boards across the province. When existing facilities and resources are being used efficiently, it demonstrates to the Ministry that increasing enrolment requires new infrastructure to be accommodated properly.

When a school that was meant to serve a smaller community experiences persistent enrolment pressure, everyday operations at that school become difficult. This can include large class sizes, hosting classes in spaces that were not meant for full-time homerooms, and strains on private water and sanitary services on site.

With the growth being experienced in Middlesex County, the previously established attendance areas in Strathroy-Caradoc are no longer practical. Strathroy has continued to rapidly develop; however, Caradoc North PS remains on private services that are not equipped to handle the expected enrolment growth.

The tools available to the TVDSB to provide enrolment pressure relief at Caradoc North PS and better position the Board to request future funding for permanent accommodations in Strathroy include:

- Permanently accommodating students residing in Strathroy but attending Caradoc North PS at Mary Wright PS; and
- The modification of attendance areas to balance enrolment between the Strathroy schools under review.

The schools involved in this review with recommended changes are as follows:

- Caradoc North PS
- Mary Wright PS
- North Meadows PS
- Adelaide-W.G. MacDonald PS

Boundary adjustments for Caradoc PS were investigated as part of this review. However, given the student distribution of students within this attendance area, an expansion of the school will instead be pursued through a business case to the Ministry of Education in order to accommodate students in Mount Brydges.

## **1.2 Adelaide Metcalfe & Strathroy-Caradoc Attendance Area Review – 2024**

The purpose of this report is to highlight the technical aspects of the current enrolment imbalances between the subject schools as well as the operational challenges faced at Caradoc North PS. The potential boundary change provides a solution to better accommodate the growing Strathroy community while the TVDSB seeks additional funding from the Ministry of Education for a future new Strathroy elementary school for the growing student population.

## **2.0 Current Situation**

### **2.1 Strathroy-Caradoc & Adelaide Metcalfe Study Area**

The purpose for undertaking an attendance area review in this area is the overutilization at Caradoc North Public School and ongoing growth in Strathroy. As a result of settlement boundary expansions, many students residing in Strathroy attend Caradoc North PS or Adelaide-W.G. MacDonald PS. Much of the current housing development in Strathroy is occurring along the Carroll Street corridor and along the western edge of the community, each of which are currently designated to the two schools outside of the settlement area.

Caradoc North PS is small facility with four portable classrooms already located on site. The site is serviced by a private septic system and well water, making accommodations for a large student population difficult. Adelaide-W.G. MacDonald PS is also a small facility located a fair distance away from any major settlement area. This school is also on private services and continues to receive most of its enrolment growth from Strathroy. Its current attendance area covers a large portion of the North Meadows Secondary Plan area.

The elementary schools in Strathroy are projected to continue experiencing an enrolment imbalance. Mary Wright PS, located in the south end of town, opened in 2013 and is located closest to most of the ongoing housing developments. This school is on full municipal services and located on a large site. The school is operating just under capacity and enrolment is projected to remain stable.

North Meadows PS is located in the north end of Strathroy. It covers a large portion of the built areas of Strathroy as well as the North Meadows Secondary Plan area. Enrolment at this school is projected to slightly decline until housing development begins in the secondary plan area. This school is on full municipal services and located on a large site. Once a significant portion of the North Meadows Secondary Plan area develops, the schools in Strathroy-Caradoc will not have sufficient space to accommodate all of the projected pupils.

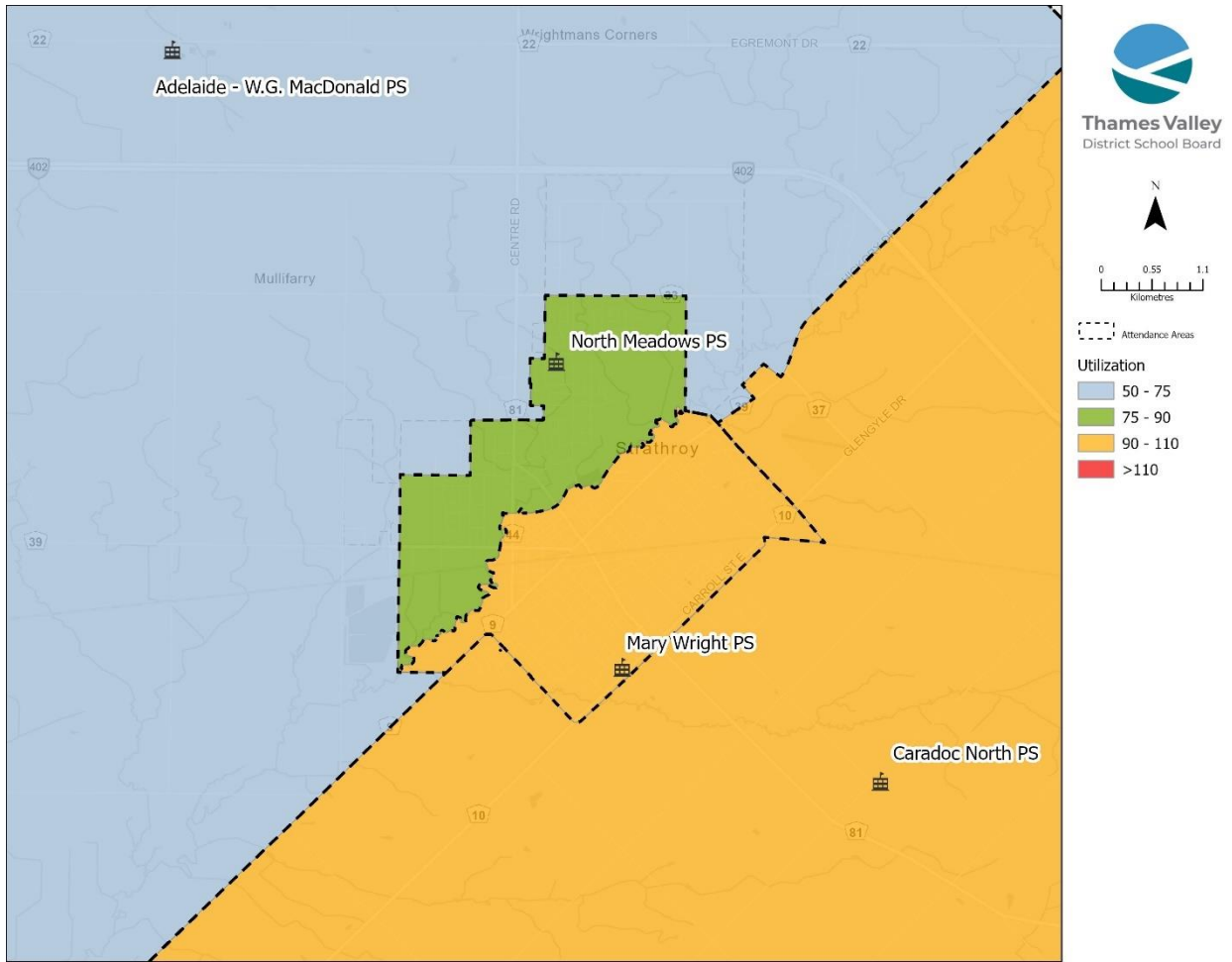
As part of this review, Administration reviewed potential boundary adjustments for Adelaide-W.G. MacDonald PS and Caradoc PS. For Adelaide-W.G. MacDonald PS, small adjustments could be made to designate students who are attending the school but residing within the settlement area of Strathroy to a Strathroy school; however, doing so would significantly reduce enrolment at Adelaide-W.G. MacDonald PS.

A small portion of the attendance area for Adelaide-W.G. MacDonald PS would be included in the attendance area of the new school but this would not significantly impact the enrolment of this school.

Caradoc PS has a large attendance area but most of the student population is residing in Mount Brydges. Any significant boundary adjustments to relieve enrolment pressure will require that students be relocated from their community school and is therefore not practical. Administration does not recommend any changes to the attendance area through this review and instead will proceed with a Capital Priorities business case for a permanent addition at this school.

Figure 1 below shows the current utilization of the schools involved in this review as of October 2023.

**Figure 1: 2023-24 Utilization Rates by School**







**Table 1: Out of Boundary Students**

<b>School</b>	<b>Current Enrolment (2023)</b>	<b>Number of Students Attending from Out of Boundary</b>	<b>Percentage of Total Student Population (%)</b>
Adelaide-W.G. MacDonald PS	177	4	2.3
Caradoc North PS	238	5	2.1
Caradoc PS	516	8	1.6
North Meadows PS	426	9	2.1
Mary Wright PS	502	11	2.2

Based on the information above, it has been determined that students attending from outside of each subject school's boundary are not making a significant impact on enrolment levels.

## **2.2 Issues Under Review**

Enrolment at Caradoc North PS is projected to continue increasing due to development taking place in the south end of Strathroy. The purpose of the review is to accommodate this growth while balancing enrolment across Strathroy elementary schools and preparing an attendance area for a potential new Strathroy elementary school. The potential options must balance the needs of current students with the long-term need for a new elementary school and the Ministry of Education requirements that must be met to achieve this.

Table 2 presents the current and projected utilization for the schools involved in this review if no intervention is undertaken. As shown in the table, Caradoc North PS will continue to grow, operating over capacity, as the larger schools in Strathroy remain stable and operate below their capacities.

**Table 2: Status Quo Projected Utilization**

School	Capacity	Portables			Enrolment			Utilization		
	OTG	2023	2026	2031	2023	2026	2031	2023	2026	2031
Caradoc North PS	216	4	6	6	238	278	277	110%	129%	128%
Mary Wright PS	534	0	0	0	502	487	492	94%	91%	92%
North Meadows PS	518	0	0	0	426	424	468	82%	82%	90%
Caradoc PS	424	6	8	10	516	573	628	122%	135%	148%
Adelaide-W.G. MacDonald PS	256	0	0	0	177	179	248	69%	70%	97%

## 3.0 Current and Projected Residential Growth and Community Trends

### 3.1 Current and Projected Residential Development

There is significant growth taking place across Middlesex County, including in the municipality of Strathroy-Caradoc. As part of the recently approved Middlesex County Official Plan Update, population and housing projections were completed to help guide development in the county until 2046. Even in a low growth scenario, the municipality of Strathroy-Caradoc population is projected to grow from 23,300 in 2021 to 26,800 by 2036 (Middlesex County, 2021). As a result, total households are projected to increase from approximately 9,000 to 11,230 in the same time frame (Middlesex County, 2021).

The municipality of Strathroy-Caradoc has also recently updated its local official plan, with an objective to diversify the types of housing available to current and future residents. Currently, there are over 15 active residential development sites in Strathroy-Caradoc that will continue to contribute to growth at area schools, in addition to the large North Meadows Secondary Plan area.

### 3.2 North Meadows Secondary Plan Area

This development area will necessitate a new elementary school in Strathroy, with several hundred units expected as a result of increased unit types and density targets set out by the

municipality and the province. Currently, only a small portion of the secondary plan area has active development applications.

## 4.0 Proposed Attendance Area Changes

The following section outlines the potential attendance area changes between the subject schools. Given the interconnected nature of the changes, the options have been phased:

- Phase 1: Relieving enrolment pressure at Caradoc North PS
- Phase 2: Balancing enrolment between Mary Wright PS and North Meadows PS
- Phase 3: Prepare for a future New Strathroy Elementary School

These boundary adjustments were developed based on the need to provide relief at Caradoc North PS and balance enrolment across Strathroy in a logical manner that follows geographic boundaries, all while preparing for a new elementary school in Strathroy.

Enrolment figures used in the following options reflect the projected number of students in September 2026, the first year of implementation.

### 4.1 Phase 1: Relieving enrolment pressure at Caradoc North PS

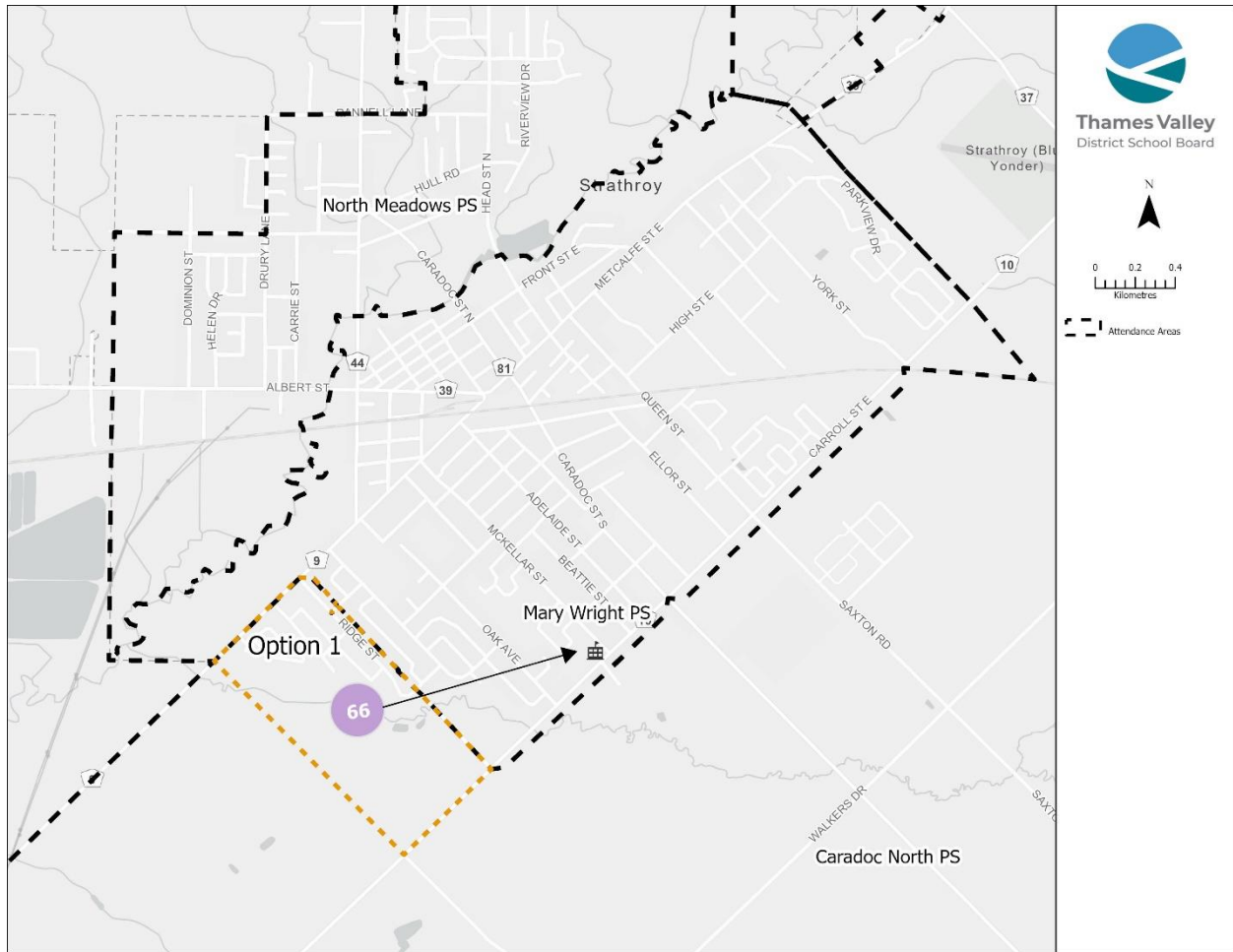
Caradoc North PS is experiencing enrolment growth coming from greenfield development in Strathroy. Given the lack of municipal servicing, Caradoc North PS cannot accommodate the growth projected for the school. Based on a student distribution analysis, the growth at the school is concentrated close to the Mary Wright PS attendance area.

#### 4.1.1 Phase 1: Option 1 (Recommended)

In this option, a portion of the Caradoc North PS attendance area be designated to Mary Wright PS. The subject portion will contain approximately 66 students in 2026. Doing so will reduce enrolment pressure and portable requirements at Caradoc North PS in the long term and allow students who live within Strathroy to attend a more proximal school. This option also ensures that programming at Caradoc North PS continues to remain robust.

Figure 3 illustrates the recommended change in orange. Please note that Phase 1: Option 1 only includes the smaller portion containing 66 students.

**Figure 3: Phase 1 Option 1**



<b>Moving From</b>	<b>Students (26/27)</b>	<b>Receiving School</b>
Caradoc North PS	66	Mary Wright PS

**4.1.1.1 Expected Outcomes**

The expected outcomes of this option are that Caradoc North PS enrolment will be reduced to a more manageable level, while enrolment at Mary Wright PS will increase to just above capacity. To reduce portable usage at Mary Wright PS as a result of this change, additional measures will be discussed in Phase 2.

The table below shows the expected change in enrolment in this option.

**Table 3: Phase 1 Option 1 Projected Enrolment**

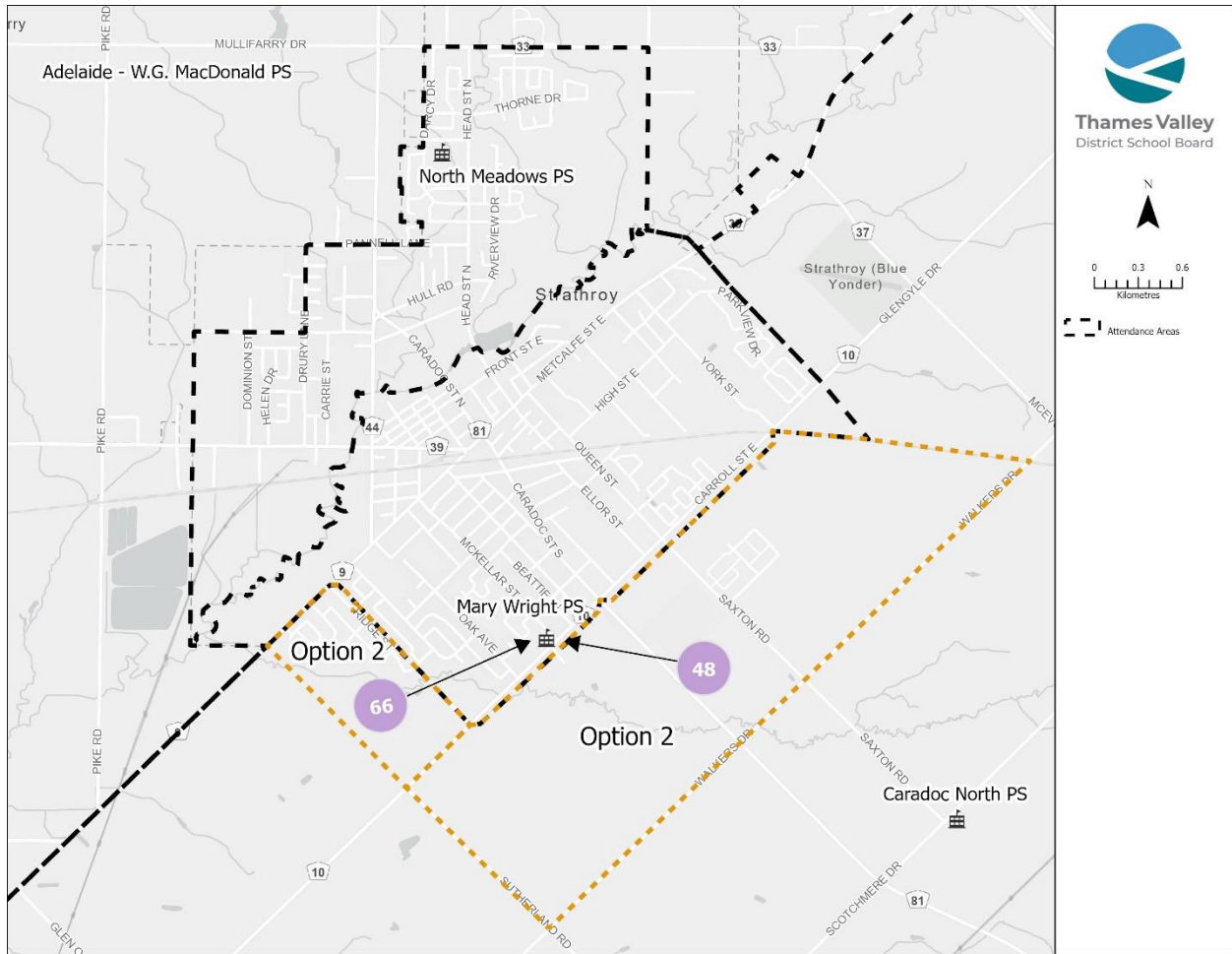
School	Capacity	Portables			Enrolment			Utilization		
	OTG	2023	2026	2031	2023	2026	2031	2023	2026	2031
Caradoc North PS	216	4	0	0	238	213	214	110%	99%	99%
Mary Wright PS	534	0	2	2	502	552	554	94%	103%	104%

**4.1.2 Phase 1: Option 2**

As part of this review, a second option was prepared for Phase 1. This option builds on Option 1 and designates an additional 48 students south of Carroll Street to Mary Wright PS. Mary Wright PS has site capacity to support these additional students. However, this would impact utilization more significantly at Caradoc North PS. This option was formulated to provide an opportunity for the community to provide feedback on moving all students currently attending Caradoc North PS and residing in the settlement area of Strathroy to Mary Wright PS.

Figure 4 illustrates the potential change in orange. Please note that Phase 1: Option 2 includes both orange portions on the map below.

**Figure 4: Phase 1 Option 2**



Moving From	Students (26/27)	Receiving School
Caradoc North PS	66 + 48	Mary Wright PS

**4.1.2.1 Expected Outcomes**

The expected outcomes of this option are that Mary Wright PS will experience increased utilization, while utilization at Caradoc North PS will decrease more significantly.

The table below shows the expected change in enrolment if this option were to be approved.

**Table 4: Phase 1 Option 2 Projected Enrolment**

School	Capacity	Portables			Enrolment			Utilization		
	OTG	2023	2026	2031	2023	2026	2031	2023	2026	2031
Caradoc North PS	216	4	0	0	238	165	166	110%	76%	77%
Mary Wright PS	534	0	4	4	502	600	602	94%	112%	113%

**4.2 Phase 2: Balance enrolment between Mary Wright PS and North Meadows PS**

As a result of relieving enrolment pressure at Caradoc North PS, space will need to be created at Mary Wright PS. To do this, enrolment can be balanced between Mary Wright PS and North Meadows PS. Boosting enrolment as close to 100 percent utilization at all area schools will be important when demonstrating the need for additional funding from the Ministry of Education, as well as optimizing available programming space at both schools.

**4.2.1 Phase 2: Option 1 (Recommended)**

In this option, a small portion of the Mary Wright PS attendance area would be designated to North Meadows PS. This option would only affect approximately 29 students residing between the Thames River and Metcalfe Street.

Figure 5 below illustrates the recommended change in green.



**Figure 5: Phase 2 Option 1**



Moving From	Students (26/27)	Receiving School
Mary Wright PS	29	North Meadows PS

**4.2.1.1 Expected Outcomes**

If this option was approved, enrolment would be balanced between Mary Wright PS and North Meadows PS, but both schools will likely require portables to support any growth that takes place until the new Strathroy elementary school is approved.

The table below shows the expected change in enrolment if this option was approved. Enrolment figures build upon Phase 1: Option 1.

**Table 5: Phase 2 Option 1 Projected Enrolment**

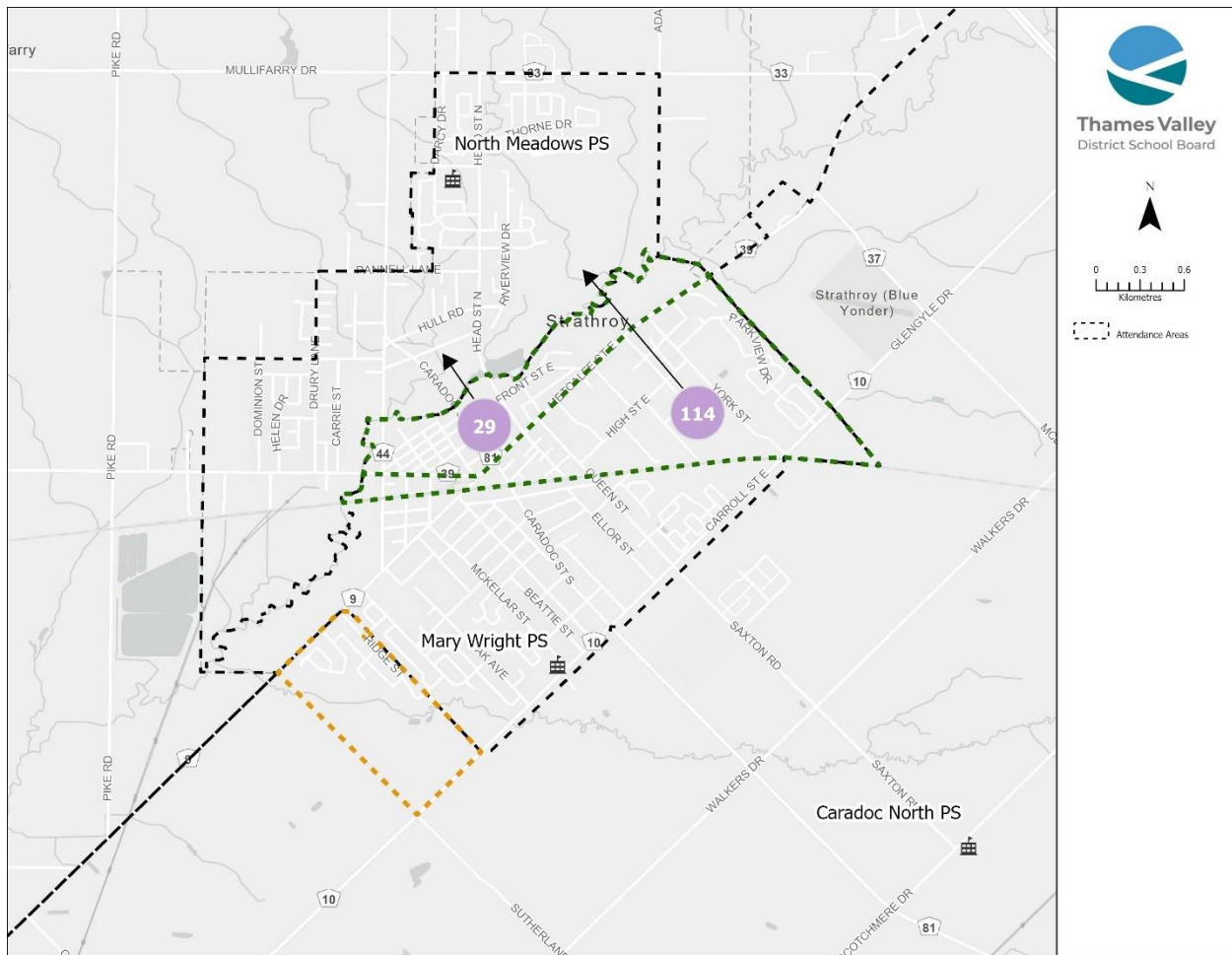
School	Capacity	Portables			Enrolment			Utilization		
	OTG	2023	2026	2031	2023	2026	2031	2023	2026	2031
Mary Wright PS	534	0	0	0	502	524	530	94%	98%	99%
North Meadows PS	518	0	0	0	426	452	493	82%	87%	95%

#### 4.2.2 Phase 2: Option 2

In Option 2, a larger portion of the Mary Wright PS attendance area is designated to North Meadows PS. This area is between the Thames River and the rail corridor and will contain approximately 143 students at the recommended time of implementation.

Figure 6 illustrates the potential change in green.

**Figure 6: Phase 2 Option 2**



<b>Moving From</b>	<b>Students (26/27)</b>	<b>Receiving School</b>
Mary Wright PS	143	North Meadows PS

**4.2.2.1 Expected Outcomes**

If the option to designate approximately 143 Mary Wright PS students to North Meadows PS proceeds, utilization at Mary Wright PS will decrease to approximately 80 percent in the long term, leaving space for any new infill development that may occur in the attendance area. The utilization at North Meadows PS will increase to over 100 percent, but the site will be able to accommodate the additional students.

The table below shows the expected change in enrolment if this option was approved. Enrolment figures build on Phase 1: Option 1.

**Table 6: Phase 2 Option 2 Projected Enrolment**

School	Capacity	Portables			Enrolment			Utilization		
	OTG	2023	2026	2031	2023	2026	2031	2023	2026	2031
Mary Wright PS	534	0	0	0	502	410	429	94%	77%	80%
North Meadows PS	518	0	2	3	426	566	593	82%	109%	114%

### 4.3 Phase 3: Creating an attendance area for a future Strathroy Elementary School

The North Meadows Secondary Plan area in Strathroy is expected to generate many new housing units contribute to enrolment growth in the community. An addition at an existing Strathroy school will not be sufficient to support the projected student population without the use of portables. TVDSB plans to submit a Capital Priorities business case to the Ministry of Education to secure funding for a new elementary school in Strathroy in the long-term. To build a case that the Ministry will support, TVDSB needs to first demonstrate that existing schools are being used efficiently; meaning that all proximal facilities must be operating close to or over 100 percent utilization within five years of a new school opening.

It is important to note that the following recommendation builds upon Phase 1: Option 1 and Phase 2: Option 1. This phase would come into effect upon the opening of the new school.

### 4.3.1 Phase 3 Recommendation

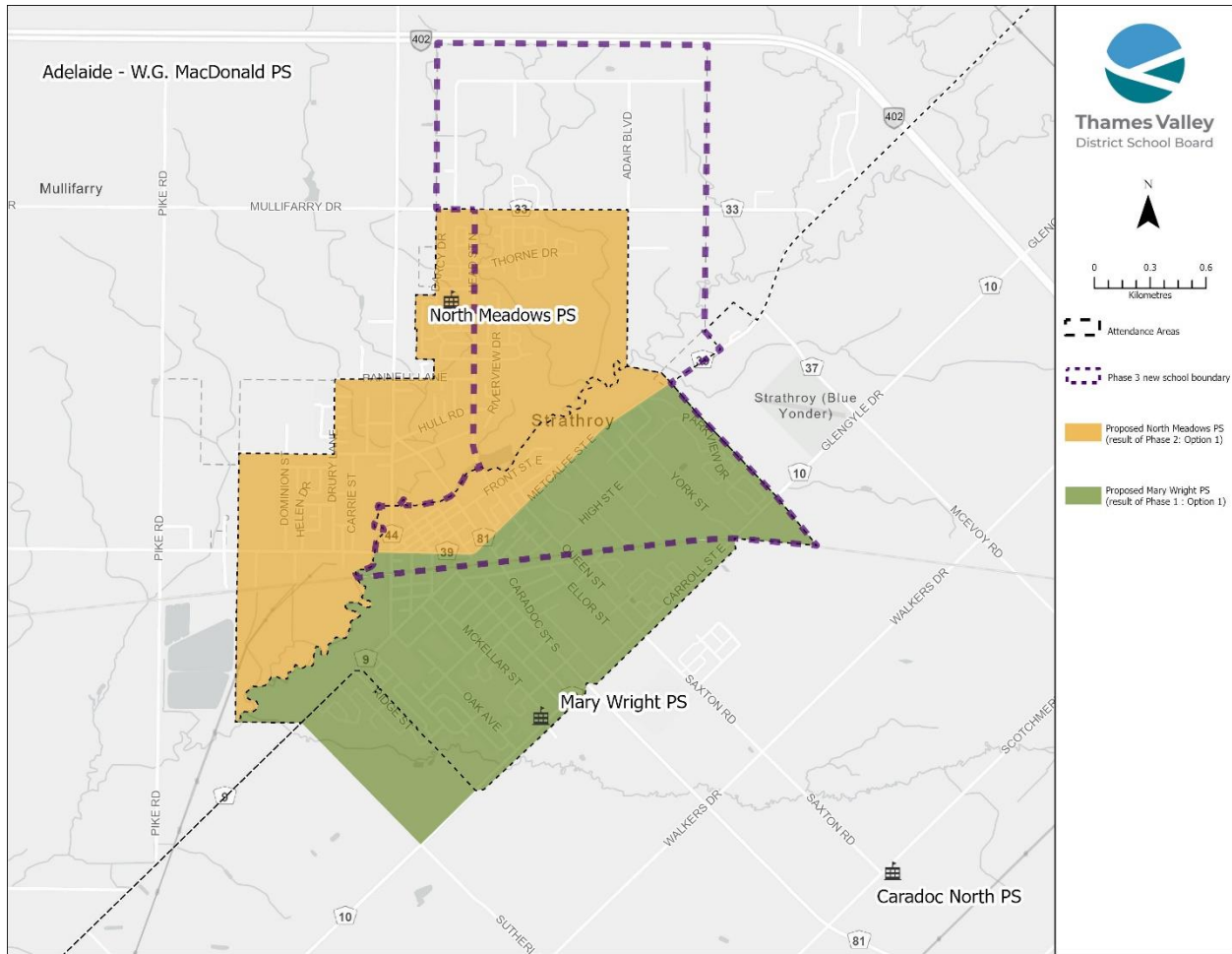
This recommendation proposes that an attendance area be created around the North Meadows Secondary Plan area, the Strathroy settlement boundary north of Second Street, and a portion of the Mary Wright PS attendance area located between Metcalfe Street and the rail corridor. A portion of the current North Meadows PS attendance area would be designated to the new school once it opens. In this scenario, a new school with approximately 430 pupil places could be supported in the long-term and open as early as 2031. This could be accelerated depending on the pace and density of development in the North Meadows Secondary Plan area.

Proceeding with this option would also change the current Adelaide-W.G. MacDonald PS attendance area by designating the portion that is located in Strathroy, specifically the area north of Second Street and the North Meadows Secondary Plan area, to the new school. Currently, there are approximately five students living in this area who will have graduated from elementary school by the time the new school opens.

Timing for submitting a business case depends on how quickly housing development progresses in the North Meadows Secondary Plan area and when new pupils substantiate.

Figure 7 illustrates the recommended change in pink. Please note that the green and yellow shaded areas represent the resulting Mary Wright PS and North Meadows PS attendance areas, respectively, if Phase 1: Option 1 and Phase 2: Option 1 were approved.

**Figure 7: Phase 3**



<b>Moving From</b>	<b>Students (31/32)</b>	<b>Receiving School</b>
North Meadows PS	151	New Strathroy PS
Mary Wright PS	114	New Strathroy PS
Adelaide-W.G. MacDonald PS	53	New Strathroy PS

**4.3.1.1 Expected Outcomes**

In this option, utilization at all affected schools will be close to or above 80 percent in the long term, leaving some space for any new infill development and additional pupils as growth continues in the area.

The table below shows the expected change in enrolment if this recommendation were to be approved. Enrolment figures build upon Phase 1: Option 1 and Phase 2: Option 1.

**Table 7: Phase 3 Projected Enrolment**

School	Capacity	Portables			Enrolment			Utilization		
	OTG	2026	2031	2036	2026	2031	2036	2026	2031	2036
Adelaide-W.G. MacDonald PS	256	0	0	0	172	195	231	67%	76%	90%
Mary Wright PS	534	0	0	0	410	429	466	77%	80%	87%
North Meadows PS	518	0	0	0	302	364	499	58%	70%	96%
New Strathroy PS	430	0	0	0	271	290	327	63%	67%	76%

## 5.0 Implementation

Administration is recommending that the Phase 1 and Phase 2 changes take place following the completion of this review, with implementation planned for September 2026:

- Phase 1: Option 1 – designate a portion of the Caradoc North PS attendance area to Mary Wright PS to relieve enrolment pressure at Caradoc North PS; and
- Phase 2: Option 1 – designate a portion of the Mary Wright PS attendance area to North Meadows PS to balance enrolment between the two schools.

Timing for submitting a business case for a new Strathroy elementary school will depend on the volume and pace of housing development that takes place over the next several years. TVDSB will continue to monitor development and student yields through ongoing discussions with Strathroy-Caradoc and Middlesex County staff to ensure that enrolment projections continue to factor in development in the community.

It is recommended that Phase 3 come into effect when the new Strathroy elementary school opens.

## 6.0 References

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