



# Oxford South Elementary Panel Attendance Area Review

Final Attendance Area Review Report



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## Executive Summary

This report provides an examination of the current and projected enrolment across English track elementary schools in the southern part of Oxford County and specifically in the Town of Tillsonburg. The recommendations presented in this report are based on an analysis of the Thames Valley District School Board's current and long-term needs. 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 objective of this report is to analyze relevant demographic, enrolment, residential development, and facility data to identify schools that could be better utilized through attendance area changes. Select data, metrics, and on-the-ground capacities will highlight schools and boundaries that can accommodate both existing and projected enrolment.

The catalyst for this review is the residential development in Tillsonburg. Approximately 4,000 units are planned to be constructed in the next several years, with most of the residential development located within the South Ridge PS and Westfield PS attendance areas.

Extensive residential development across the Town of Tillsonburg is projected to exacerbate an enrolment imbalance throughout the elementary panel. To ensure that optimal learning environments continue to be available to students and that capital funding for an addition or a new school is secured, boundary changes are needed to make certain that existing spaces and resources are used effectively.

The potential boundary changes presented in this report are intended to outline a strategic approach to address current accommodation challenges, while also providing the flexibility to address further pressures that will arise over the next five to ten years.

The potential attendance area changes would assist in resolving the projected accommodation pressure at Southridge PS and Westfield PS by designating some existing and future students to Annandale PS, which has space to support the continued growth of the community.

The potential boundary changes outlined in this report would assist in balancing enrolment throughout Tillsonburg and the surrounding area. Based on current projections, the student growth within Tillsonburg supports the need for a building addition at Southridge PS. If student yields from new developments significantly exceed the projected enrolment, TVDSB will be prepared to submit a business case for a new school for the community to continue supporting this growth. TVDSB owns land in the north end of Tillsonburg that is being held to facilitate the construction of a new school when it becomes required.

# 1. Background

TVDSB provides educational services to the Counties of Oxford, Middlesex, and Elgin as well as the cities of St. Thomas and London. Prior to 2016, enrolment was generally stable at approximately 75,000 students. Currently, there are more than 84,000 students across the Valley. Enrolment growth is expected to continue due to sustained migration and immigration to the area and the rapid pace of development activity. These changes in population and migration patterns have significantly impacted Board enrolments. Over the next ten years, it is anticipated that the growth and development within the Board's jurisdiction will continue to increase rapidly, which will cause further enrolment imbalances if not addressed. Any future decisions must be made in the context of both Board and Ministry of Education initiatives and policies regarding boundary changes and requests for capital funding.

## 1.1 Analysis Parameters

The objective of this attendance area review is to balance enrolment and utilization of schools for both the short and long-term. The projected enrolments must support a sustained optimal utilization of schools' existing permanent capacities to maximize resources.

From a programming perspective, small grade cohorts can create challenges for organizing classes that meet Ministry class-size caps and can result in multi-grade classes. This can also result in other operational challenges such as having fewer teachers being available for supervision and reduced offerings of extra-curricular activities.

Residential development and municipal Official Plan direction can cause a disproportionate arrangement of students at schools. Schools in rapidly developing areas can experience higher enrolment and student yields than older neighbourhoods. Changing demographics, socio-economic perceptions of certain locales, as well as housing density can result in over-capacity pressures at one school and empty pupil places at other schools nearby.

The tool available to the TVDSB to manage enrolment in this area is the modification of attendance boundaries.

The schools reviewed as part of the preparation of this report are as follows:

- South Ridge PS
- Westfield PS
- Annandale PS
- Emily Stowe PS

## 1.2 Oxford South Elementary Panel Attendance Area Review

This report was developed to discuss the technical aspects of the current accommodation imbalances within southern Oxford County. The potential boundary changes provide options for how to best manage

enrolment in the short and long term. This will be achieved through the reconfiguration of school attendance areas.

As students continue to yield from housing developments, both Westfield PS and South Ridge PS are projected to become severely overutilized as most of these new projects are within these attendance areas. Based on current projections, capital funding in the form of an addition will be needed to accommodate future student enrolment. Should the number of projected students from new housing developments increase further, TVDSB may be able to seek Provincial funding for another school in the Town.

## **2. Current Situation**

### **2.1 Oxford South Study Area**

TVDSB operates four English track schools in the study area. The total English track elementary enrolment is under the collective On-the-Ground (OTG) capacity of schools in the area but there are imbalances throughout the panel. The enrolment imbalances are projected to worsen over the forecast term as most future housing developments are located within the Southridge PS and Westfield PS attendance areas.

In 2023-2024, the enrolment imbalance necessitated a total of 4 portables: 3 at Westfield PS and 1 at Southridge PS. Within the next 5 to 10 years, approximately 18 portables will be required to manage the number of projected students.

Enrolment at Emily Stowe PS was also reviewed as part of preparing this report. Based on its current utilization and projected enrolment, the school will remain near full capacity in the years ahead, and thus no boundary changes are recommended. Modifications to its attendance area will likely increase the reliance on school bus transportation.

### **2.2 Issues Under Review**

Official 2023-2024 enrolment figures were used for this review. Enrolment in 2023-2024 remained under the collective OTG capacity of English track schools across the study area but the student population is not evenly distributed. In general, utilization is projected to be severely above capacity at both South Ridge PS and Westfield PS as both schools are located in areas of Tillsonburg where the majority of development is designated. Annandale PS is projected to remain underutilized. This trend is expected to intensify over the next several years as housing developments will continue to build-out in high growth areas.

Table 1 presents utilizations for the elementary panel in Oxford South. It illustrates the 2023-2024 enrolment data as well as projections for 2026 (proposed implementation year for potential boundary changes) and 2031. Substantial growth is projected beyond this planning horizon as students will continue to substantiate from expected housing developments. Existing imbalances are expected to worsen over the coming decade if boundary adjustments are not implemented.

Southridge PS will continue to experience growth-related pressure. The school is above capacity at 108% utilization; which is projected to grow to 137% by 2026 and 185% by 2031 without any interventions. There is an opportunity to relieve some of this pressure through the attendance area adjustments detailed in Section 4 of this report.

Westfield PS is also above capacity and will continue to grow in enrolment due to approximately 1500 units planned to be constructed within its boundary. The school is above capacity at 108% utilization and projected to grow to 113% in 2026 and reach 120% by 2031 without any intervention. To balance enrolment at this school, the potential attendance area changes would reassign a portion of its boundary to Annandale PS.

Annandale PS is projected to remain underutilized. The school is currently at 73% utilization and forecasted increase slightly to 76% in 2026 and reach 84% by 2031. There is an opportunity to increase the school's enrolment through potential attendance area adjustments and ensure the long-term viability of the school.

Emily Stowe PS is well utilized and is projected to remain so. The school is currently at 99% utilization and would remain close to 90% through to 2031. As such, no boundary changes are recommended to this school.

Replace Map Figure 1 – Study Area Projected Utilization (2026)

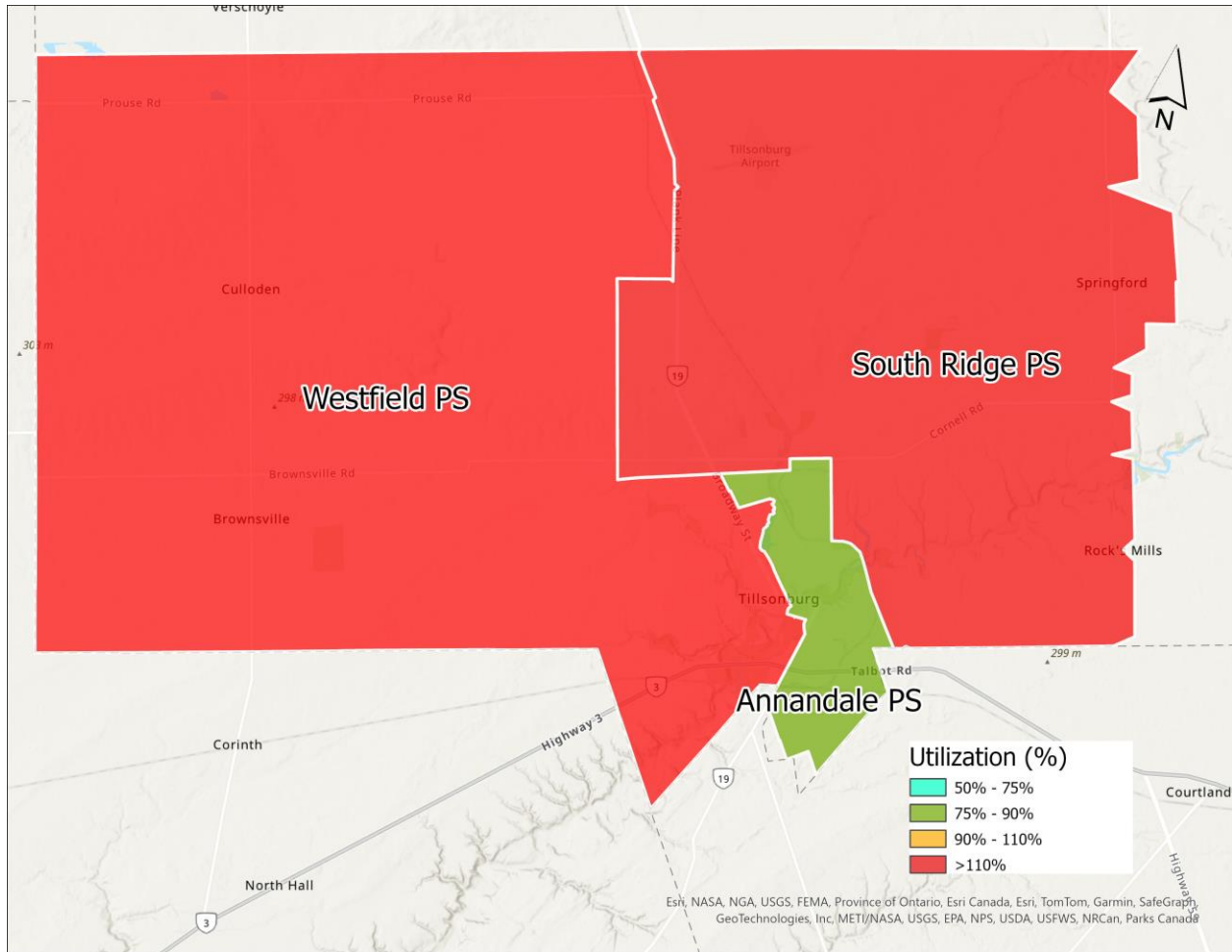


Table 1 – Study Area Enrolment and Utilization

Schools	Capacity	Portables			Enrolment			Projected Utilization		
Name	OTG	2023	2026	2031	2023	2026	2031	2023	2026	2031
South Ridge PS	400	1	6	15	431	546	740	108%	137%	185%
Westfield PS	602	3	3	3	655	682	725	109%	113%	120%
Annandale PS	580	0	0	0	421	440	490	73%	76%	84%

### 3. Current and Projected Residential Growth and Community Trends

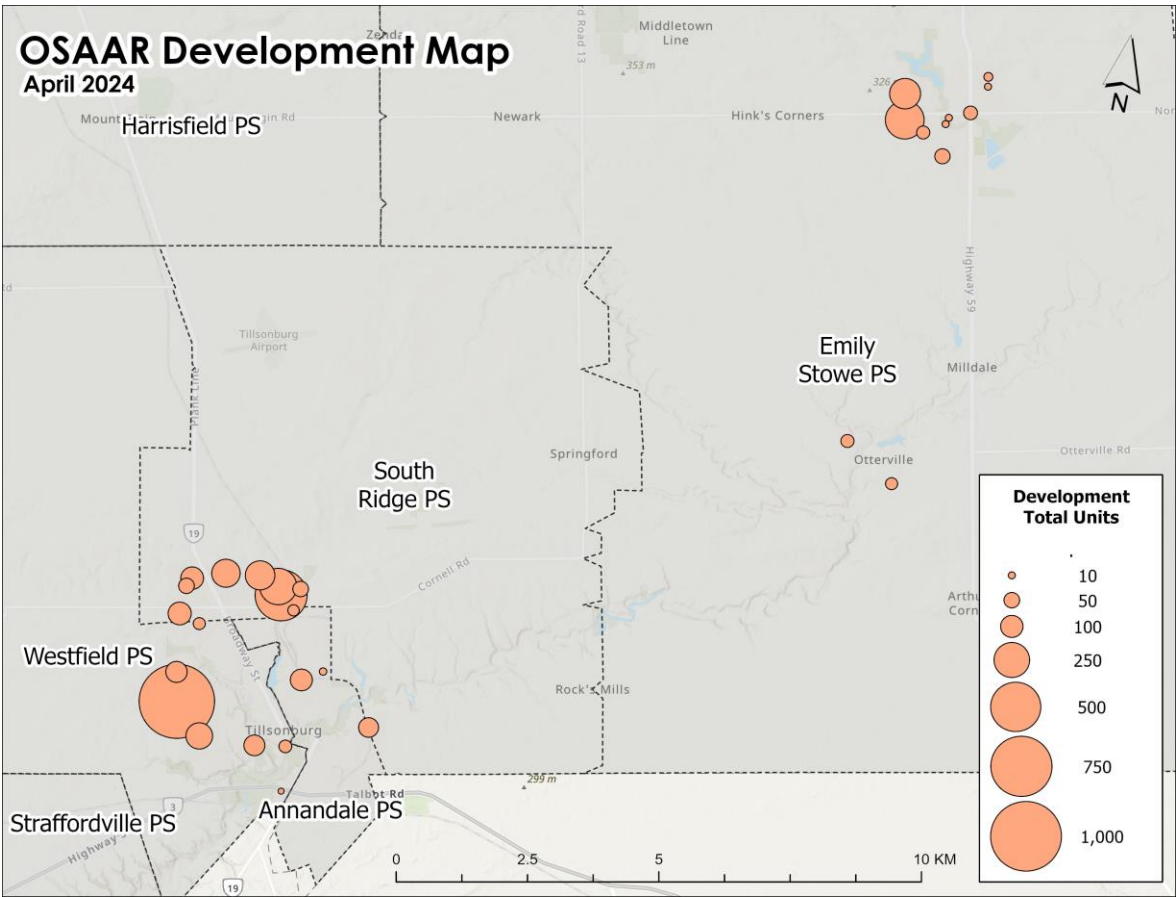
#### 3.1 Current and Projected Housing Developments

TVDSB is experiencing increased enrolment from new developments across Oxford County. These changes in population and migration patterns have impacted school board enrolment and produced both accommodation pressures and surplus spaces at schools across Tillsonburg.

Oxford County initiated a Development Charge Background Study to provide up-to-date growth forecasts to inform County and local municipal growth management policies. The findings of the initial investigation by Watson and Associates indicated that the County is expected to grow in population by over 26,000 persons between the period of 2024-2034. Within this same time frame, approximately 6,800 units are forecasted to be constructed. This substantial growth is driven largely by migration from the Greater Golden Horseshoe and the neighbouring economic centres of Kitchener-Waterloo and the City of London.

In terms of specific development activity, the following map shows the distribution of residential development within the study area. As shown, most of the development is located within the Westfield PS and South Ridge PS attendance areas.

Figure 2 – Housing Developments





## **4. Potential Attendance Area Changes**

The following section presents potential boundary adjustments for English track elementary schools within the Town of Tillsonburg. Boundary adjustments were developed to balance enrolment across schools. While these interventions are designed to balance facility utilizations in specific geographic areas, each proposed boundary adjustment considers the broader impacts on the community. For example, boundaries have been designed to follow major roads or topological features wherever possible and to avoid dividing neighbourhoods. Attention was also paid to modes of transportation, preferring boundary adjustments that reduce reliance on school bus transportation.

In both options, additional capital will be needed to support the growth of the community. TVDSB will be submitting a business case for a building addition at South Ridge PS following the completion of this attendance area review given the anticipated growth in this attendance area. If student yields from new developments significantly exceed the projected enrolment, TVDSB will be prepared to submit a business case for a new school for the community to continue supporting this growth.

### **4.1 Option 1**

#### **South Ridge PS**

South Ridge PS is above capacity, and projections indicate it will continue to grow and experience significant enrolment pressure. If interventions are not taken, increasing enrolment will necessitate additional portables and may cause operational challenges at the school. While the following measures do not eliminate the need for portables altogether, they allow for a significant reduction in the number of temporary classrooms required.

#### **Annandale PS**

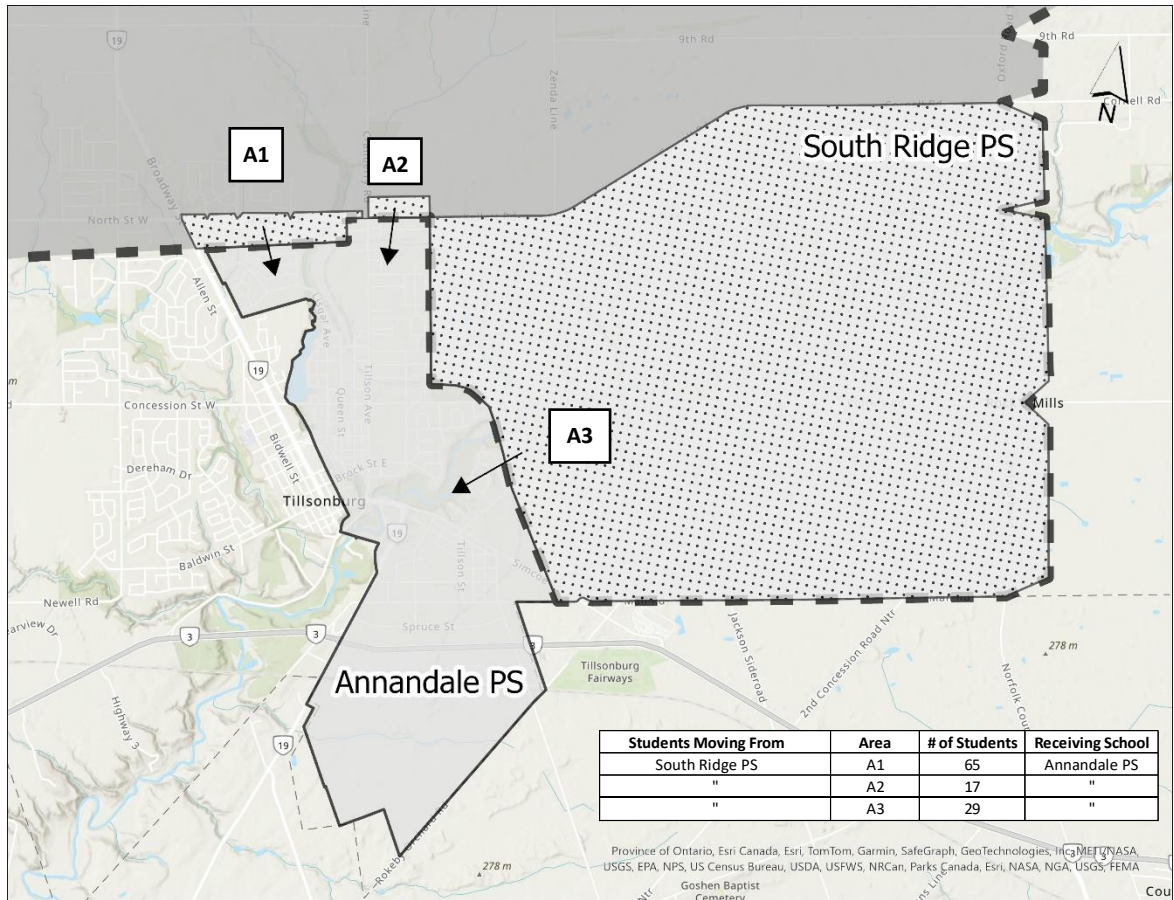
Annandale PS is underutilized and is projected to remain so. Without any intervention, enrolment is forecasted to remain under capacity with a utilization of 83% in 2030. The following measures would increase the school's utilization.

##### **4.1.1 Potential Changes**

To relieve the projected enrolment pressure at South Ridge PS, the following portions of its attendance area were proposed to be reassigned to Annandale PS:

- Area A1, located south of North Street (65 students)
- Area A2, located north of Kellett Road (17 students)
- Area A3, located between Cornell Road and Mail Road (29 students).

**Figure 3 – Option 1: Potential Changes**



#### 4.1.2 Expected Outcomes

As a result of the potential changes, South Ridge PS would decrease from 137% utilization in 2026 and 185% in 2031 to 107% and 155%, respectively. This would reduce projected portable needs from fifteen to nine. With respect to Annandale PS, the potential changes would increase utilization from 76% to 97% in 2026 and from 84% to 105% in 2031. The projected changes are illustrated below in Table 2.

Table 2 – Option 1: Enrolment and Utilization

Schools	Capacity	Portables			Enrolment			Projected Utilization		
Name	OTG	2023	2026	2031	2023	2026	2031	2023	2026	2031
South Ridge PS	400	1	0	9	431	427	618	108%	107%	155%
Westfield PS	602	3	3	5	655	682	725	109%	113%	120%
Annandale PS	580	0	0	1	421	561	610	73%	97%	105%

#### 4.2 Option 2

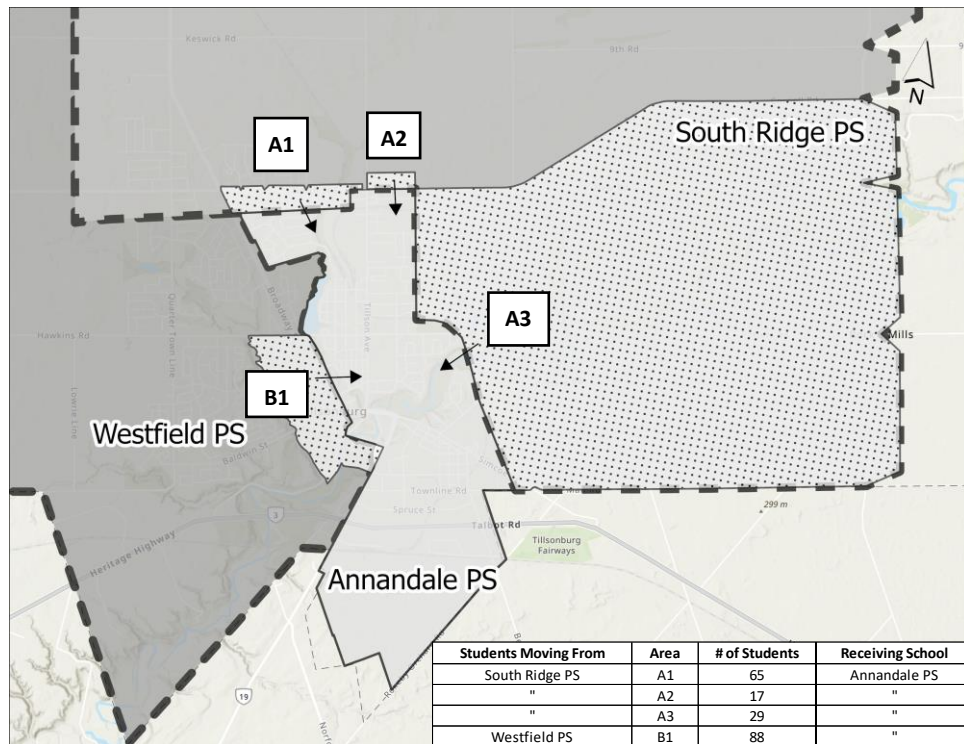
##### Westfield PS

Approximately 1500 units are proposed to be developed within the attendance area of Westfield PS. It is expected that this development will consist of low and medium density housing, with much of the student enrolment likely to substantiate beyond the current planning horizon. The potential boundary adjustment would help manage the anticipated accommodation pressures at Westfield PS.

#### 4.2.1 Potential Changes

In addition to receiving portions of the South Ridge PS attendance area, Annandale PS would also receive a segment of the Westfield PS attendance area (B1).

Figure 4 – Option 2: Potential Changes



#### 4.2.2 Expected Outcomes

As a result of the potential changes, Westfield PS would decrease from 113% utilization in 2026 and 120% in 2031 to 97% and 103%, respectively. With respect to Annandale PS, the potential changes would increase utilization from 76% to 114% in 2026 and from 84% to 122% in 2031. The potential enrolment and utilization changes are illustrated below in Table 3.

Table 3 – Option 2: Enrolment and Utilization

Schools	Capacity	Portables			Enrolment			Projected Utilization		
		2023	2026	2031	2023	2026	2031	2023	2026	2031
South Ridge PS	400	1	0	9	431	427	618	108%	107%	155%
Westfield PS	602	3	0	0	655	585	622	109%	97%	103%
Annandale PS	580	0	4	6	421	663	710	73%	114%	122%

## 5. Comparison Chart

Table 4 – Enrolment and Utilization Comparison Chart

Status Quo Table										
Schools	Capacity	Portables			Enrolment			Projected Utilization		
Name	OTG	2023	2026	2031	2023	2026	2031	2023	2026	2031
South Ridge PS	400	1	6	15	431	546	740	108%	137%	185%
Westfield PS	602	3	3	3	655	682	725	109%	113%	120%
Annandale PS	580	0	0	0	421	440	490	73%	76%	84%
Option 1										
Schools	Capacity	Portables			Enrolment			Projected Utilization		
Name	OTG	2023	2026	2031	2023	2026	2031	2023	2026	2031
South Ridge PS	400	1	0	9	431	427	618	108%	107%	155%
Westfield PS	602	3	3	5	655	682	725	109%	113%	120%
Annandale PS	580	0	0	1	421	561	610	73%	97%	105%
Option 2										
Schools	Capacity	Portables			Enrolment			Projected Utilization		
Name	OTG	2023	2026	2031	2023	2026	2031	2023	2026	2031
South Ridge PS	400	1	0	9	431	427	618	108%	107%	155%
Westfield PS	602	3	0	0	655	585	622	109%	97%	103%
Annandale PS	580	0	4	6	421	663	710	73%	114%	122%

## 6. School Community Feedback

An Attendance Area Review Committee meeting for this review was held on October 28, 2024. The Attendance Area Review Committee is comprised of parent and caregiver volunteers from the three school communities involved in this review. After the meeting, the subcommittees held meetings to gather feedback from their school communities, which was then used to prepare school-level reports to inform the final recommendations for this review.

Listed below are the key themes from the school community reports:

- The South Ridge PS Subcommittee is concerned that despite boundary changes the school will still require several portables.
- The South Ridge PS Subcommittee recommends the establishment of a holding zone as an alternative option.
- The Westfield PS and Annandale PS Subcommittees are concerned that Option 2, would overcrowd the school, and may require building modifications to Annandale PS.
- The South Ridge PS and Westfield PS Subcommittees request legacy agreement options to be offered to all students and their siblings, with transportation
- The South Ridge PS and Westfield PS Subcommittees are concerned about student well-being and recommend orientation events and transition opportunities for those relocating to Annandale PS.

- Subcommittees raised concerns that students may have to go through the attendance area review process again if a new school is approved.

Given the ongoing and planned development in Tillsonburg, portables will continue to be required until additional capital in the form of a building addition or a new school is approved by the Ministry of Education. Holding zones are intended to be temporary accommodation measures until a permanent solution is available. In this instance, an attendance area review is appropriate as there is space available at Annandale PS. As per TVDSB's practice, legacy agreement options are recommended to be offered to grade 8 students and their siblings, with transportation (if eligible), for the year of implementation only. Should the recommended changes be approved, school transition and orientation committees will be established in the year prior to implementation to welcome students to their new schools.

## 7. Recommended Changes

In response to the overall feedback received from school communities, Administration has prepared the following updated recommendations, including modifications to Areas A1 and A3. The specific changes are outlined below.

### 7.1 Modifications

A1 – Area now only includes students south of North Street East

A3 – Students residing on Cornell Road would remain at South Ridge PS. Proposed boundary adjustment limit moved to Potters Road.

### 7.2 Proposed Changes

Both Westfield PS and South Ridge PS are above capacity and projected to continue to increase in enrolment due to residential development in their attendance areas. To relieve the projected enrolment pressure at both schools, the following portions of the two schools' attendance areas are recommended to be reassigned to Annandale PS:

- A1 – South of North Street - Livingstone Drive Area (62 students)
- A2 – North of North Street - Beckett Boulevard Area (17 students)
- A3 – Between Potters Road and Mall Road (22 students).
- B1 – South of Concession Street West (88 students)

#### 7.2.1 Expected Outcomes

As a result of the recommended changes, the following outcomes are expected:

##### South Ridge PS

Utilization is projected to decrease from 137% to 111% in 2026 and from 185% to 158% in 2031. This would reduce projected portable needs from approximately fifteen to ten. An addition will be needed to provide permanent accommodations for students.

##### Westfield PS

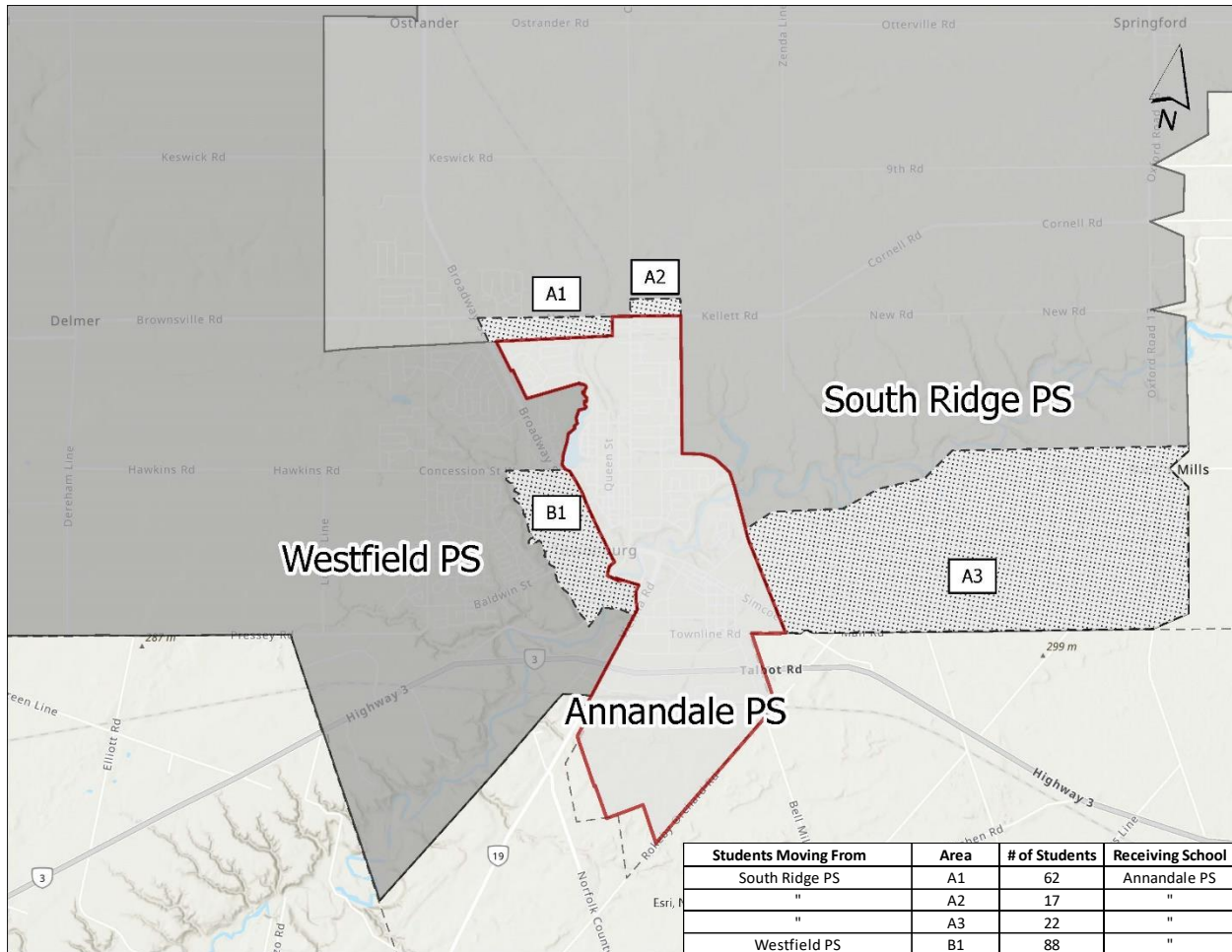
Utilization is projected to decrease from 113% to 99% in 2026 and from 120% to 103% in 2031.



## Annandale PS

Utilization is projected to increase from 76% to 108% in 2026 and from 84% to 118% in 2031.

**Figure 5 – Recommended Attendance Area Changes**



**Table 5 – Recommended Option Enrolment and Utilization Table**

Recommended Option with Grade 8 Legacy Agreements										
Schools	Capacity	Portables			Enrolment			Projected Utilization		
Name	OTG	2023	2026	2031	2023	2026	2031	2023	2026	2031
South Ridge PS	400	2	2	10	431	444	633	108%	111%	158%
Westfield PS	602	3	0	1	655	593	622	109%	99%	103%
Annandale PS	580	0	2	5	421	627	686	73%	108%	118%

## 8. Updated Comparison Chart

Table 6 – Updated Enrolment and Utilization Comparison

Status Quo										
Schools	Capacity	Portables			Enrolment			Projected Utilization		
Name	OTG	2023	2026	2031	2023	2026	2031	2023	2026	2031
South Ridge PS	400	1	6	15	431	546	740	108%	137%	185%
Westfield PS	602	3	3	3	655	682	725	109%	113%	120%
Annandale PS	580	0	0	0	421	440	490	73%	76%	84%
Recommended Option with Grade 8 Legacy Agreements										
Schools	Capacity	Portables			Enrolment			Projected Utilization		
Name	OTG	2023	2026	2031	2023	2026	2031	2023	2026	2031
South Ridge PS	400	2	2	10	431	444	633	108%	111%	158%
Westfield PS	602	3	0	1	655	593	622	109%	99%	103%
Annandale PS	580	0	2	5	421	627	686	73%	108%	118%