Prince Edward Island

Schools for Tomorrow: Building and Sustaining High Quality Education Programs

Final Report

Enrollment Analysis and Forecasts

Prepared by:

Ascent Strategy Group
118 Sydney Street
Charlottetown, PEI Canada C1A 7N3
(902) 628-8333
www.ascentstrategy.ca

A Report

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Global population changes brought on by changing demographic conditions, economic trends and migration patterns, coupled with declining and shifting enrollments, increased costs, and rapidly advancing technologies, have converged to stimulate a discussion about effects of these changes and the opportunities they provide. These challenges are not unique to our Island, nor are they confined to any of our three school districts.

Our Island faces many of the same demographic challenges as other Canadian provinces. We have a rapidly aging population caused by, among other things, declining births and low levels of in-migration. This combination has led to a school population that has dropped almost 10,000 students (-32%) since 1970. As a result, enrollment in the province has now dropped to 20,813 students, below levels recorded during the mid-1950s. Most schools are now experiencing enrollment decline – over half of them in the range of 3 to 7 percent annually.

This report is in response to the need for comprehensive, wide-ranging school organization plans by school districts. It is a collaboration between government and school districts to examine the effects of changing enrollments, learn from the experiences of others, identify a framework for change that maximizes the educational opportunities for students, and establish a focal point for dialogue.

The review on which this report is based, drew together existing data sources and information useful in developing a picture of the effects of enrollment change. The focus of the review was to gain an understanding of the issues and challenges surrounding enrollment change so that potential options for organizing schools in the future can be developed.

Guiding principles help ensure that future policy change is grounded to current research and evidence. The following guiding principles were identified to help frame a discussion about change and can be used as a guide by school boards in the development of their future plans:

- ▸ the quality and nature of programs offered in the school;
- ▸ the current and future enrollments of the school;
- ▸ the diverse nature of the school community;
- ▸ the grades offered in the school;
- ▸ the size of the school;
- ▸ the capacity and utilization of the school;
- ▸ the quality, scope and condition of the facility;
- ▸ the transportation of students; and
- ▸ the availability of and access to other facilities.

Enrollment projections were developed to help inform a discussion around potential options for organizing schools. Separate enrollment projections were completed for the province, school districts, each family of schools, and each school.

In the coming decade, enrollment is projected to decline at a pace equivalent to about two percent per year and reach 17,962 students by 2017. This is ***inclusive*** of kindergarten which is expected to be fully introduced into the province's schools within the next couple of years. That means that between 1970 and 2017, enrollment in the province will have dropped almost 13,000 students or an astounding 42 percent; the most rapid and dramatic enrollment decline in our history. For the most part, the next 10 years will see secondary schools decline faster than elementary schools, rural schools faster than urban schools, and Anglophone schools faster than Francophone schools. However, no school in the province is immune to the effects of declining births and migration.

It is important to understand that this report does not lay out specific options; it is intended only as a framework for discussion and future planning by school boards. The preparation of School Organization Plans is the responsibility of individual school boards.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

Global population changes brought on by changing demographic conditions, economic trends and migration patterns, coupled with declining and shifting enrollments, increased costs, and rapidly advancing technologies, have converged to stimulate a discussion about effects of these changes and the opportunities they provide. These challenges are not unique to our province, nor are they confined to any of our three school districts. The need for school organization planning is being discussed in most jurisdictions throughout North America and around the world. The most meaningful solutions will be found only when policy makers, administrators, teachers, parents, students, community leaders and others involved in education coalesce in understanding, accepting, and addressing these challenges and collaborate in building relevant, forward thinking, realistic strategies for change.

In today's world, few social, cultural or economic institutions are unaffected by change: political, demographic and economic. We find ourselves living in a complex and volatile global community where the pace of change is so rapid that it is difficult to predict future conditions or their consequences. Indeed, if one could predict the future, one would still have to deal with a vastly different world.

Among Canadian provinces, Prince Edward Island is small geographically, with over 55 percent of the population residing in rural areas, down from 66 percent in 1991.[1] Yet in a global labour market, graduates from small communities must compete with graduates from larger centres on an equal basis. Traditional occupations like fishing and farming have become increasingly more complex and require elaborate and sophisticated training. The global economy has made many of our citizens— particularly those under the age of 35 and well educated—more mobile than ever before. Improved transportation systems, emerging technologies, and increased opportunities lure young people away from their home communities and into the cities. Within this environment, participation in a global economy is not a matter of choice, but of survival.

Fifty years ago, there were 432 school districts in the province. In 1973 the number of districts was reduced to five.[2] Following the release in 1994 of a task force report on education entitled *Towards Excellence*,[3] the government of the time made a decision to further reduce the number of boards to two Anglophone school boards – representing the east and west regions – and one Francophone school board which existed since 1990.[4] Since that time, student enrollment in the province has dropped 15 percent. With few exceptions, school enrollments in the province have been declining for many years and most schools will continue to decline for some time.

With the primary resources available to districts being provided by government – based primarily on student enrollment – a key challenge for school districts has been to provide high quality programs and services to children and youth in an era of

student decline and scarce resources. This report is in response to the need for comprehensive, wide-ranging school organization plans by school districts. It is a collaboration between government and school districts to examine the effects of changing enrollments, learn from the experiences of others, identify a framework for change that maximizes the educational opportunities for students, and establish a focal point for dialogue.

Why is it Important to Understand Demographics?

Demography is the study of changes in the size and structure of populations and the causes and consequences of such change; it unlocks the key to understanding the past and forecasting the future.[5] Central interests of demography include the study of population change, fertility, marriage, mortality and migration. However, population phenomena and demographic events cannot be viewed in isolation. In fact, they are central to many of the issues and challenges that educators face today and will face in the future.

For example, the structural, organizational and educational challenges from enrollment pressures in schools located in growth areas such as Glen Stewart Elementary and Miscouche Consolidated, the programming needs of small, rural schools such as Eastern Kings Consolidated and St. Louis Elementary, and the social implications for children with long school commutes, are just some of the issues that educators struggle with daily. In the end, it is how we respond to these challenges that will pave the way for our children.

1.2   CHANGING DEMOGRAPHIC CONDITIONS

Prince Edward Island faces many of the same demographic challenges as other Canadian provinces. We have a rapidly aging population caused by, among other things, declining birth rates and low levels of in-migration. The combination of low birth rates, lack of significant immigration, high levels of out-migration among young people in the most fertile child-bearing age range, the tendency to postpone marriage, large numbers of *baby boomers* (currently between 40 and 60 years of age) quickly moving past their prime childbearing years, the growing incidence of family break-up, and increased life expectancy, has meant that the province has experienced a rapidly aging society; and one that is likely to continue to age well into the future.

How the population has changed over the years is illustrated in population pyramids for the province presented in Figures 1 and 2. Each pyramid shows the actual number of males and females in five year age groups. In 1966, the population was very young with 44.9 percent under the age of 20 years; showing clearly the effects of the baby boom. In the 40 year period between 1966 and 2006, the total population of the province increased over 27,000 or 25.2 percent. In the meantime, in addition to growing, the population was aging. The under 20 population in 1966 is the 40-59 population in 2006. While smaller in size, it is still the largest cohort, the baby

boomers. This group will continue to have significantly higher numbers than the younger age groups that follow; thus creating a mushroom-like pyramid in the future.

Figure 1: Population Pyramid, PEI, 1966 (n=108,535)

Figure 2: Population Pyramid, PEI, 2006 (n=135,851)
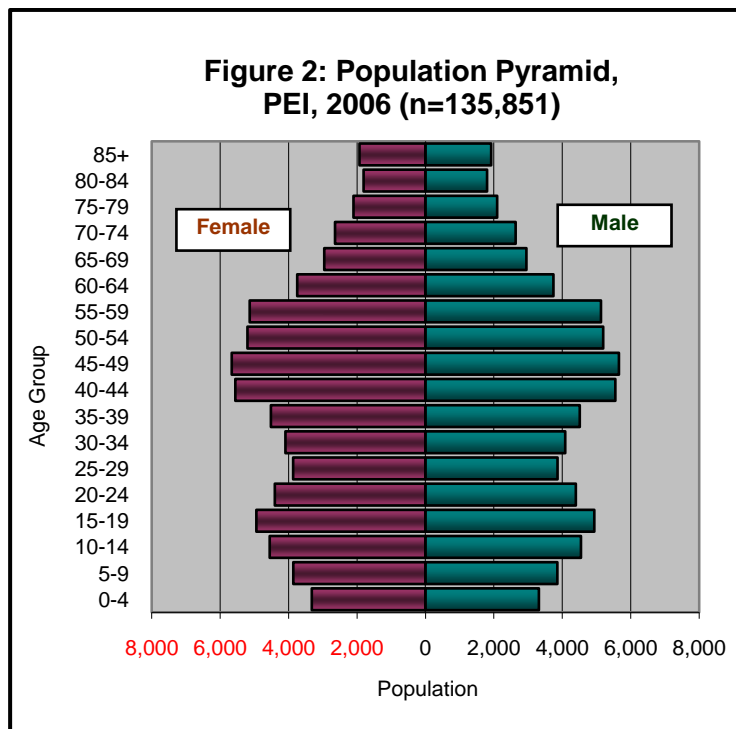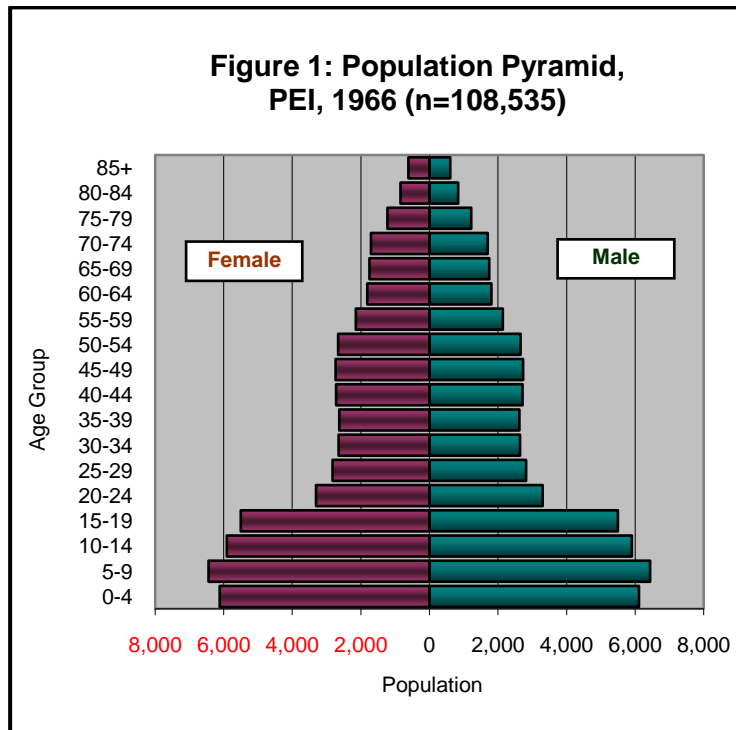
Table 1 further illustrates the extent to which the population has evolved. For example, in 1966, the pre-school population accounted for 11.6 percent of the total population and by 2006 had dropped to under five percent. The school-age population declined significantly as well. Both these populations declined as the total population was increasing. On the other hand, the population in its late working years (aged 35-54 years) increased from 20.0 percent to almost 30 percent of the total population.

Table 1: Percent of Population by Selected Age Groups and Median Age, PEI, 1966 – 2006

Cohort	1966	1971	1976	1981	1986	1991	1996	2001	2006
					Percent				
0-4 (pre-school years)	11.6	9.0	8.1	7.8	7.6	7.3	6.7	5.6	4.9
5-19 (school years)	33.3	33.1	30.9	27.5	24.1	23.0	22.4	21.7	20.0
20-34 (early working years)	16.6	19.1	22.2	24.2	25.0	23.1	21.3	18.6	17.5
35-54 (late working years)	20.0	19.1	18.8	19.7	22.4	25.1	28.0	30.6	29.8
55+ (senior years)	18.5	19.7	20.0	20.7	20.9	21.4	21.6	23.5	27.7
Total Population	108,535	111,640	118,230	122,505	126,646	129,765	134,557	135,294	135,851
Median Age	24.2	24.8	26.6	28.8	30.6	32.8	34.5	37.6	39.8

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, various years.

Median age is another indicator of just how rapidly the population has aged. The province's median age has gone from 24.2 years of age in 1966 (about one year younger than the median age for Canada) to 39.8 years in 2006 (about one year older than the median age for Canada).[6] By 2026, the median age for the province is projected to reach 46 years.[7]

Birth rates in the province – once quite high among Canadian provinces – are now among some of the lowest in the world.[8] For a variety of reasons, birth rates have declined at unprecedented levels. For example, in 1950 the birth rate in the province was 30.1 (births per thousand), compared to 27.0 for all of Canada. By 2006, the birth rate in the province had declined to 9.8, a drop of 67.4 percent. The birth rate for Canada had declined to 10.5 by 2002 and is now up to 10.8.[9] The question is whether the birth rate for the province will continue to drop or will it eventually level off and begin to rise.

Part of this pattern may be explained by examining births and the changing structure of the adult population. Figure 3 shows the number of births annually since 1961 against the female population 15-44.[10] Births in the province have been declining steadily since the early sixties. In 1963 they peaked at 2,949 and since then they have been declining annually.[11] By 2006 births had declined to 1,348; a drop of 54.3 percent

in just over 40 years. This dramatic drop in births took place at a time when the female population of childbearing age increased. Between 1961 and 1996, females aged 15-44 increased 62 percent. Since then it first levelled off and then began to decline. Projections indicate it will continue to decline for some years to come.

The consequences of a continued drop in both the birth rate and the adult population of childbearing age will be, among other things, a steady and significant decline in the annual number of births.[12] Furthermore, a consequence of decreasing births is that fewer children will enter our school system.

Figure 3: Live Births and Female Population Aged 15-44, PEI, 1961 to 2006

Sources: Statistics Canada, Census of Canada, various years; and Prince Edward Island, 2006 Annual Statistical
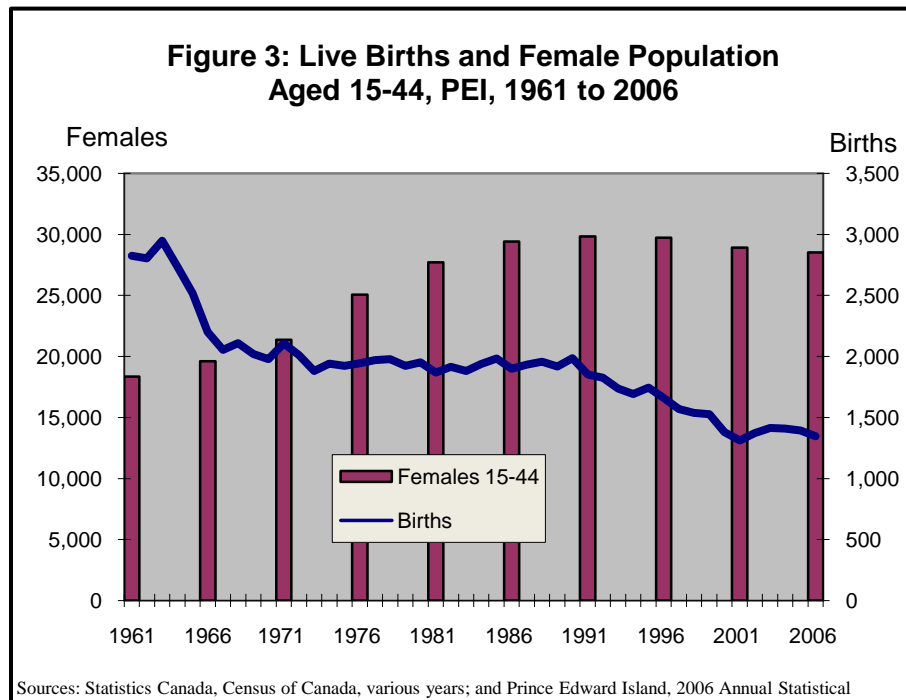
One of the factors that can offset declining births, at least to some degree, is migration. Migration refers to the movement of a person or people from one place of residence to another. It happens when people move to, or away from, the province, or move from one region of the province to another (e.g., from a rural community to an urban centre). After fertility, migration is the most significant demographic factor affecting schools. While provinces like Alberta and British Columbia deal regularly with a significant influx of people moving into the province, the Atlantic Provinces, with some exceptions, have to deal with a significant out-migration of its young, well-educated citizens.

Immigration will be a key driver of population and labour force growth in the coming years. In 2007, the annual net international migration into the province doubled over the previous year; from 395 in 2005/06 to 800 in 2006/07.[13] Furthermore, it is

estimated that over the next few years two to three thousand international students will enrol in Island schools, particularly in the Charlottetown area. While these numbers are small in proportion to other regions of Canada, they are large for a province the size of ours. They also indicate the extent to which policy can have a significant impact on school enrollment. It will be informative to follow the effects of increased immigration over time to see if immigrants continue to remain in the province and if it results in changes to fertility patterns. In the meantime, studies have shown that, because the average age of immigrants is quite high, immigration alone cannot change the aging trend.[14]

Interprovincial migration, or the movement of people to and from other provinces, shows a much different picture. In the last five years, our province experienced a net loss of 1,027 people moving to other provinces, or about 200 per year (see Figure 4). Of those who moved away in 2007, 68 percent were under the age of 35. Of those moving to the province in 2007, 18.2 percent were aged 50 or older and are likely former residents moving back to the province for their retirement. Studies have shown that, in Prince Edward Island, the proportion of individuals who leave but eventually return is relatively low when compared to other provinces. In other words, when individuals leave the province they are more likely to be gone permanently.[15]

Figure 4: Annual Net Inter-provincial Migration, PEI, 1990 - 2007

Source: 2006 Annual Statistical Review, PEI Department of the Provincial Treasury.
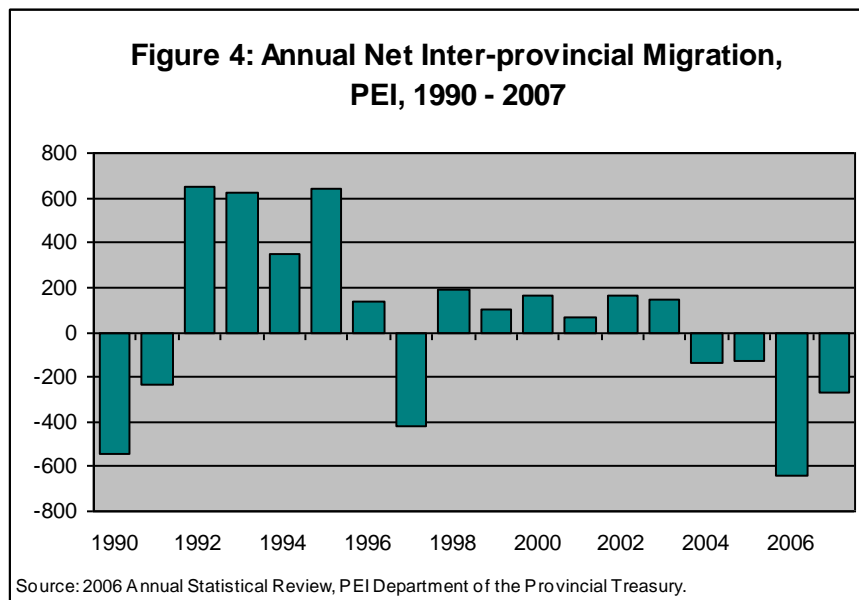
Studies have also shown that youth migrate no matter where they live, although youth in rural areas have higher rates of out-migration than youth in more metropolitan areas.[16] The reasons for youth out-migration are not exclusively economic. A certain number of youth will migrate to expand their life experiences and other non-economic reasons. In other words, they will move regardless of the educational or economic opportunities that are made available to them.

The effects of these changes can be quite different depending on where one resides. In urban areas, for example, in-migration has offset, to some degree, declining fertility. In those areas, it is not uncommon to notice increased housing starts with little or no significant impact on population; people have simply moved from one area of the province to another, or people have retired and moved back to the province. On the other hand, in many rural communities younger people relocate to urban centres to find work and gain access to more comprehensive services.

One of the consequences of these population changes is that the overall population will soon begin to decline and likely continue to decline for some time. In projections provided by the Division of Economics, Statistics and Federal Fiscal Relations, with the Department of the Provincial Treasury, the population of the province will continue to feel the effects of the post-war baby boom and increase for several more years. However, the population will eventually peak around 2013 at 139,476, and then will begin a moderate and steady decline for some years (see Figure 5).

Figure 5: Actual and Projected Population, PEI, 1993 - 2022

Source: Division of Economics, Statistics and Federal Fiscal Relations, Department of the Provincial Treasury
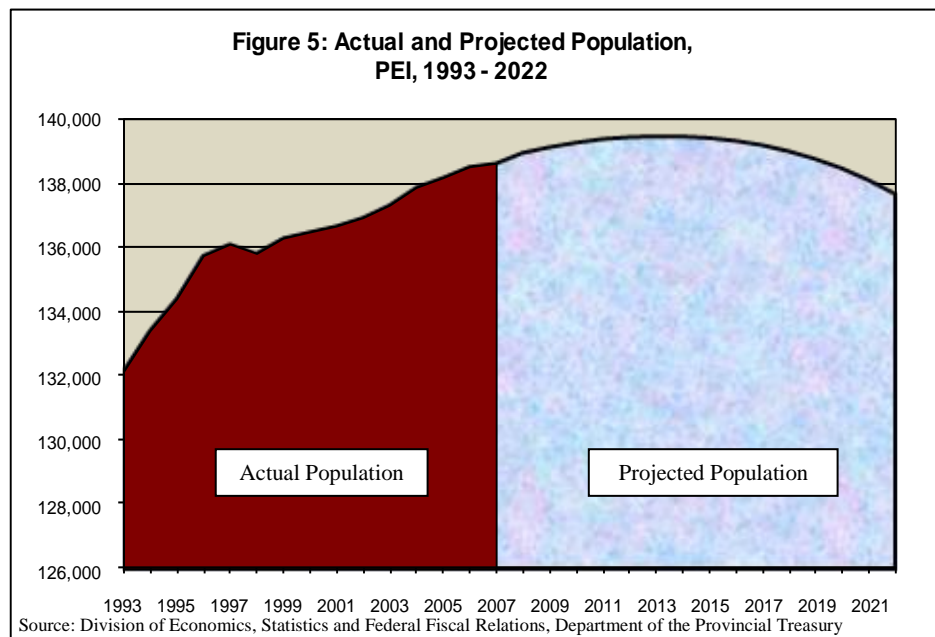
1.3   EMERGING ENROLLMENT PATTERNS

The previous discussion is important because it sets the context for the changes that are likely to affect the province's education system. Prince Edward Island has 70 schools spread over 5,684 square kilometres. The Eastern School District has 43 schools clustered in six families and the Western School Board has 21 schools clustered in four families. La Commission scolaire de langue française has six schools distributed in areas of the province with significant Francophone populations.

Figure 6 compares the number of students entering grade one each year against the number of students in the graduating class each year for the last 50 years. The numbers of students entering grade one grew during the 1950s and 1960s as a direct result of the post-war baby boom. However, since then, the numbers have been declining steadily. For example, the size of the September, 2007 grade one cohort in the province was just 1,295; down from 3,040 in 1970 (-57.4 percent).

On the other hand, the size of the grade 12 cohort increased significantly until the 1980s and, since then, has remained relatively constant; declining only moderately in the last 10 years. While many of these gains were due to increased numbers entering the school system, a great deal was due to government, district and school level strategies aimed at encouraging students to remain in school through to graduation. It should be noted that this cohort will begin declining significantly as smaller numbers continue to enter school and move through the grades.

Figure 6: Grade 1 vs Grade 12 Enrolment, PEI, 1957 - 2007

Source: Department of Education, Annual Report, various years.
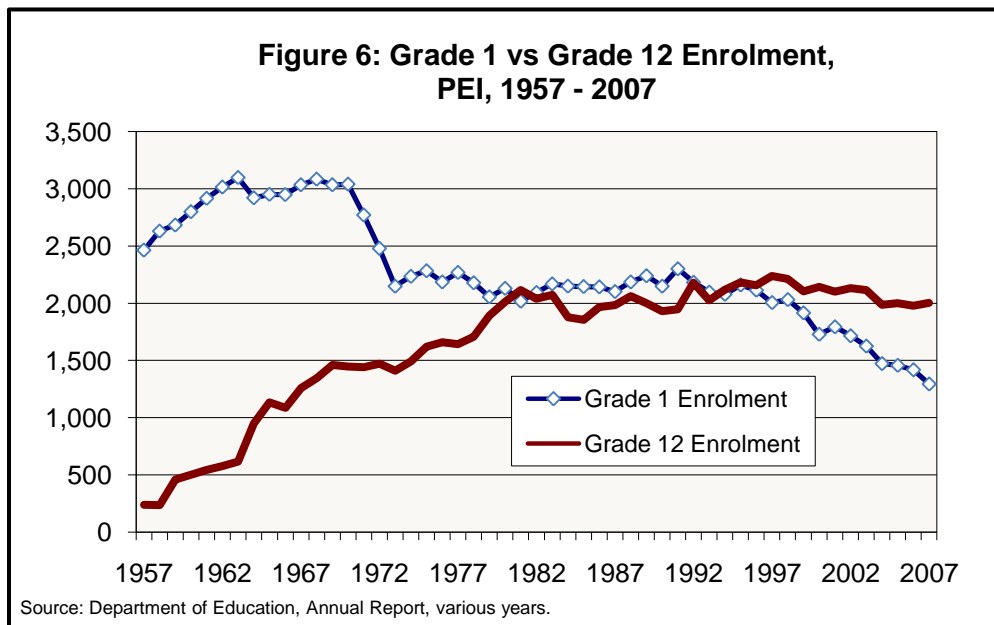
The implications for schools in the province are demonstrated by startling declines in enrollment over the last 35 years. As demonstrated in Figure 7, the post-war baby boom saw enrollment grow from 21,544 in 1957 to 30,748 by 1970, but since then enrollment has declined steadily and has now reached 20,813 students; a drop of almost 10,000 students (-32.3 percent) since 1970. Stated another way, enrollment has now dropped below levels recorded during the mid-1950s.

Figure 7: Elementary-Secondary Enrolment, PEI, 1957 to 2007

Source: Department of Education, Annual Report, various years.
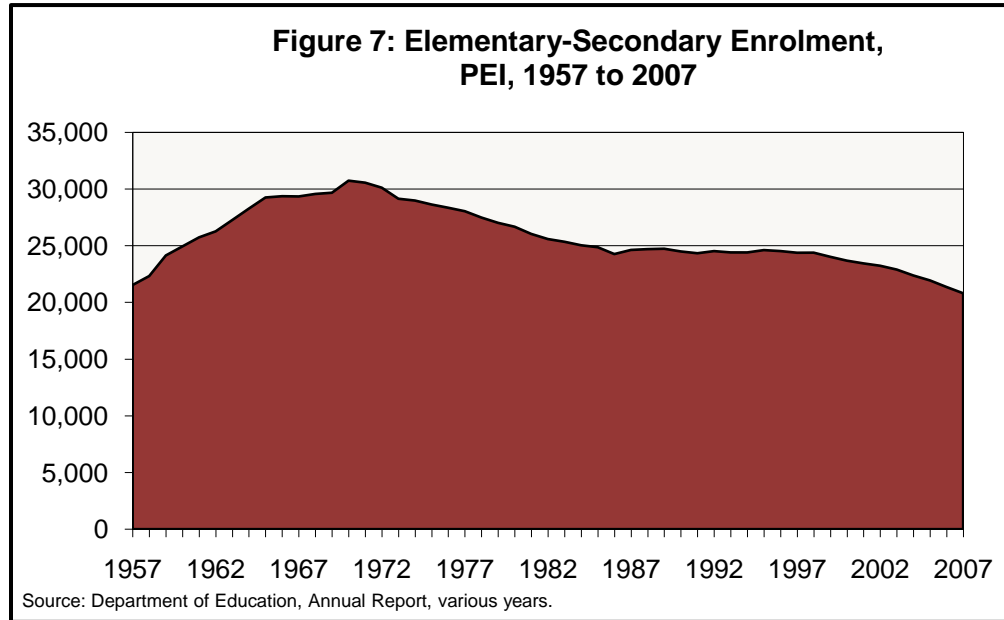
Table 2 shows how enrollment in all grades has changed in the period since 1999/00. While total enrollment declined 13.4 percent, entry level enrollment (Grade 1) declined an astounding 32.4 percent, or about four percent per year. Junior and senior high school grades had the smallest declines in that period. However, as fewer students enter the early grades and move through the system, enrollment in junior and senior high school grades will decline more significantly.

Table 2: Enrollment by Grade, Prince Edward Island, 1999/00 to 2007/08

Year	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
1999/00	1,916	1,913	1,914	1,986	2,021	1,939	1,982	2,084	2,086	2,011	2,072	2,105	24,029
2000/01	1,729	1,864	1,883	1,932	1,991	2,023	1,939	1,978	2,087	2,100	2,019	2,146	23,691
2001/02	1,794	1,711	1,857	1,898	1,924	2,000	2,047	1,953	1,988	2,104	2,069	2,104	23,449
2002/03	1,716	1,782	1,711	1,859	1,909	1,928	2,037	2,050	1,976	2,035	2,105	2,134	23,242
2003/04	1,626	1,711	1,784	1,712	1,871	1,923	1,958	2,043	2,057	2,045	2,058	2,117	22,905
2004/05	1,473	1,641	1,690	1,796	1,719	1,884	1,936	1,981	2,068	2,147	2,060	1,988	22,383
2005/06	1,458	1,456	1,637	1,708	1,805	1,726	1,912	1,948	1,987	2,186	2,123	2,002	21,948
2006/07	1,419	1,449	1,462	1,634	1,716	1,804	1,751	1,919	1,945	2,143	2,142	1,981	21,365
2007/08	1,295	1,431	1,452	1,493	1,650	1,736	1,854	1,755	1,921	2,119	2,103	2,004	20,813
% change	-32.4	-25.2	-24.1	-24.8	-18.4	-10.5	-6.5	-15.8	-7.9	5.4	1.5	-4.8	-13.4

Source: Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Annual Report, various years.

1.4　THE CHALLENGE OF LARGE-SCALE ENROLLMENT CHANGE

When school enrollments are fairly constant, it is somewhat easier for school administrators to plan. That is not to say that they still do not have to deal with issues such as overcrowding or split classes. However, large-scale enrollment change over a short period is more difficult to manage and presents more challenges. Many schools are facing significant enrollment change; both in terms of growth and decline (see Figure 8 for a list of all schools showing the percentage change in enrollment in the last five years).

Many schools in La Commission scolaire de langue française have experienced significant growth. With the exception of Ecole Évangéine, which had a 29.0 percent drop in enrollment in the last five years, all other schools in la Commission Scolaire had significant increases.* There are Anglophone schools that are increasing as well. West Kent Elementary is an example. High schools also seem to have more stable enrollments. For example, Charlottetown Rural High School, Kinkora Regional High, Three Oaks Senior High, Colonel Gray High, Bluefield High, and Westisle Composite High all had modest increases.

On the other hand, over three-quarters of the schools in our province (75.7 percent) lost students in the last five years. Some schools declined only marginally, but most had declines in the range of 10 – 35 percent. Schools like Mt. Stewart Consolidated, Cardigan Consolidated, Belfast Consolidated and Vernon River Consolidated all had enrollment declines in excess of 30 percent in the last five years; or more than five percent per year.

For the most part, fertility patterns are similar throughout the province and have a similar effect on all schools. Why the number of students in some schools declined more rapidly than in others has more to do with the effects of migration; people moving out of or into communities. For some schools, the effects of declining births have been offset, to some degree, by the in-migration of families with children from other areas. It is not uncommon, however, to notice increased housing starts in a particular area with no significant impact on school enrollments.

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* Note that four schools had increases that ranged between 50 and over 200 percent; however, each of these schools had fewer than 100 students and small increases in enrollment can translate into large percentage increases.

Figure 8: Schools by Percent Enrolment Change in Last Five Years

School	Percent Change
École la Belle Cloche	+207.7%
Ecole St-Augustin	+100.0%
Ecole-sur-Mer	+ 86.1%
École Pierre-Chiasson	+ 57.5%
West Kent Elem	
Ecole François-Buote	
Charlottetown Rural H	
Montague JH	
Stonepark JH	
Colonel Gray H	
Dundas Consolid	
Bluefield H	
Kinkora RH	
Westwood Pri	
Westisle CH	
Three Oaks SH	
Glen Stewart Elem	
Elm Street Elem	
Eliot River Elem	
Miscouche Consolid	
Queen Charlotte JH	
Morell RH	
East Wiltshire JH	
Montague RH	
Sherwood Elem	
Eastern Kings Consolid	
M.E. Callaghan JH	
Kensington I/SH	
Summerside Intermed	
Georgetown Consolid	
Southern Kings Consolid	
Donagh Reg	
Alberton Elem	
Montague Consolid	
SomersetElem	
O'Leary Elem	
Athena Consolid	
Souris Consolid	
West Royalty Elem	
Queen Elizabeth Elem	
Parkdale Elem	
Parkside Elem	
Greenfield Elem	
Englewood School	
Hearnewood JH	
Ellerslie Elem	
Souris RH	
St. Louis Elem	
Bloomfield Elem	
Tignish Elem	
Rollo Bay Consolid	
St. Teresa's Consolid	
Central Queens Elem	
Amherst Cove Consolid	
Gulf Shore Consolid	
Birchwood JH	
Tracadie Cross Consolid	
Fortune Consolid	
Grand Tracadie Elem	
Spring Park Elem	
Morell Consolid	
Prince Street Elem	
St. Peter's Consolid	
Ecole Évangéine	
St. Jean Elem	
LM Montgomery Elem	
Vernon River Consolid	
Belfast Consolid	
Cardigan Consolid	
Mt. Stewart Consolid	

Axis: 40.0 30.0 20.0 10.0 0.0 10.0 20.0 30.0 40.0

Another challenge of large-scale enrollment change has to do with economies of scale. It has been shown, for example, that the cost of running a school with fewer than 100 students is 29 percent higher on a per student basis than the cost of running a school with 300 or more students.[17] This occurs because certain fixed costs exist regardless of school size and thus some efficiencies and program advantages cannot be achieved in smaller schools.

1.5   DIFFERENCES AMONG SCHOOLS

Almost one-half (48.6 percent) of the schools in the province have fewer than 200 students (see Figure 9); and these schools for the most part are getting smaller. While total enrollment in the province declined 9.1 percent (2,092 students) between 2003 and 2007, an average of 2.3 percent per year, Anglophone schools currently with fewer than 200 students declined 19.6 percent (958 students), or about five percent per year. Many small elementary schools have fewer than ten students entering grade one and many invariably deliver programming in split classes.

On the other hand, Francophone schools with under 100 students increased 92.9 percent over the same period. It should be noted that the enrollment growth in French language schools has been due to increased migration and programming changes. The demographic changes resulting in fewer students entering the province's schools are being felt equally in urban and rural, small and large, and Anglophone and Francophone schools. The differences have more to do with the effects of migration and program.

Aging school infrastructure is a challenge. The number of schools in the province decreased from 250 in 1970 to 70 presently. The condition of school facilities around the province is, for the most part, quite good. While there are issues of ventilation, air quality, acoustic and noise control, accessibility, technology integration, and physical security, they are not widespread. In some schools, roofs, windows and siding need attention. This is not unusual as all facilities, whether public or private, need regular preventative maintenance. In all cases, capital needs worsen

Figure 9: Schools by Size, PEI, 2007/08 (n=70)

Number of Students	Number of Schools
1000+	1
900-999	2
800-899	2
700-799	1
600-699	2
500-599	4
400-499	3
300-399	11
200-299	10
100-199	20
< 100	14
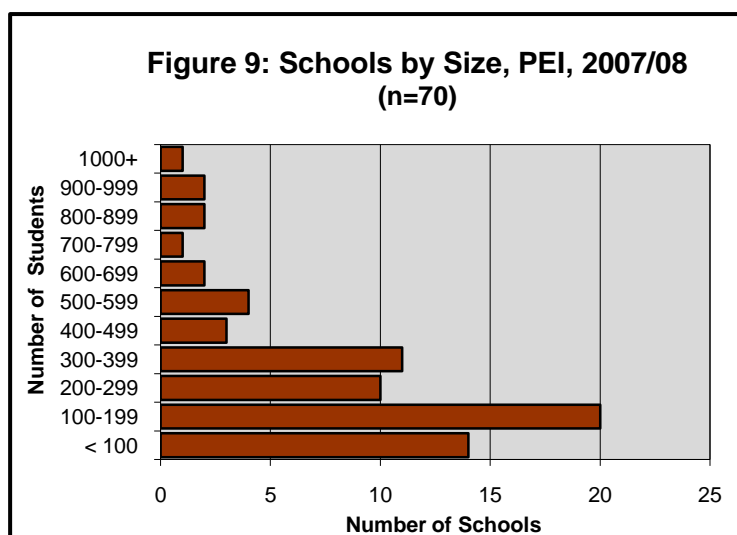
if unattended. A $150,000 roof repair this year will potentially prevent a multi-million dollar retrofit in the coming years.

The province has a variety of schools. It has large urban high schools such as Charlottetown Rural High School with 1,116 students in grades 10-12 and small schools such as Grand Tracadie with fewer than 40 students in grades 1-6. It has schools in growth centres such as Stratford, in the Capital region, where Glen Stewart Elementary grew 5.6 percent in the last three years. In contrast, there are schools with rapidly declining populations, like Cardigan Consolidated and Mt. Stewart Consolidated, which declined over 33 percent in the last five years.

The province has schools with many different configurations: primary schools (1-3, 1-4), elementary schools (1-6, 1-8), consolidated schools (1-9, 5-8), junior high schools (7-9), regional and senior high schools (7-12, 9-12, 10-12), and all-grade schools (1-12). It has schools to which a significant proportion of students walk to school and others where almost all students are bussed. It has schools where students are bussed a few kilometres and others where the bus travels over 100 kilometres each way. It has schools to which busses travel on low traffic roads and some on high traffic highways. It has schools to which access is extremely difficult to navigate during harsh winter conditions. On the surface, the province may look like a small, uni-dimensional school system; the reality is that it is made up of many different types of schools, each with its own unique challenges, expectations and demands.

1.6   PROGRAM DELIVERY

A challenge for schools is their ability to offer appropriate programs to children of different levels, abilities and interests and in a wide variety of school settings. Indeed, the goal of education is to provide for educational programs and school facilities where all students receive the highest quality educational experiences possible. A symbiotic relationship exists between the ability of schools to offer broad-based programming and a provincial teacher resource allocation formula based on a population that is, with few exceptions, declining. Unfortunately, some schools are located in small, isolated areas where there are insufficient numbers to offer a broad-based curriculum. Larger schools benefit from a broader-based curriculum because of the efficiencies and economies of scale that can be attained; however, there are trade-offs, such as higher class sizes and longer travel times to and from school. Smaller schools do not have the student numbers to justify employing the range of specialist teachers that are typically available in larger schools. Their ability to attract and retain specialist teachers is also impeded.

French Language Programming

Of the 64 Anglophone schools in the province, 29 (45.3 percent) offer French immersion programming. This is quite an accomplishment. The province now has the highest French immersion participation rate of any province in Canada. Figure 10

shows the percent of the total population participating in French immersion by province. For the 2007/08 school year participation had increased to 20.8 percent. A summary of French immersion programming by school is provided in Table 3.

Some schools are also pursuing other French language options. These include core French, expanded core French, and intensive core French. Intensive core French is an enrichment of the core French program by the creation of a period of intensive exposure to French which enables students to receive close to five times the number of hours of instruction devoted to French they would ordinarily get in one semester. Interest in intensive core French is growing rapidly.

Figure 10: Participation in French Immersion by Province, 2005/06

Source: Canadian Parents for French. *The State of FSL Enrolment for 2006-2006.* Provincial Tables. CPF website.
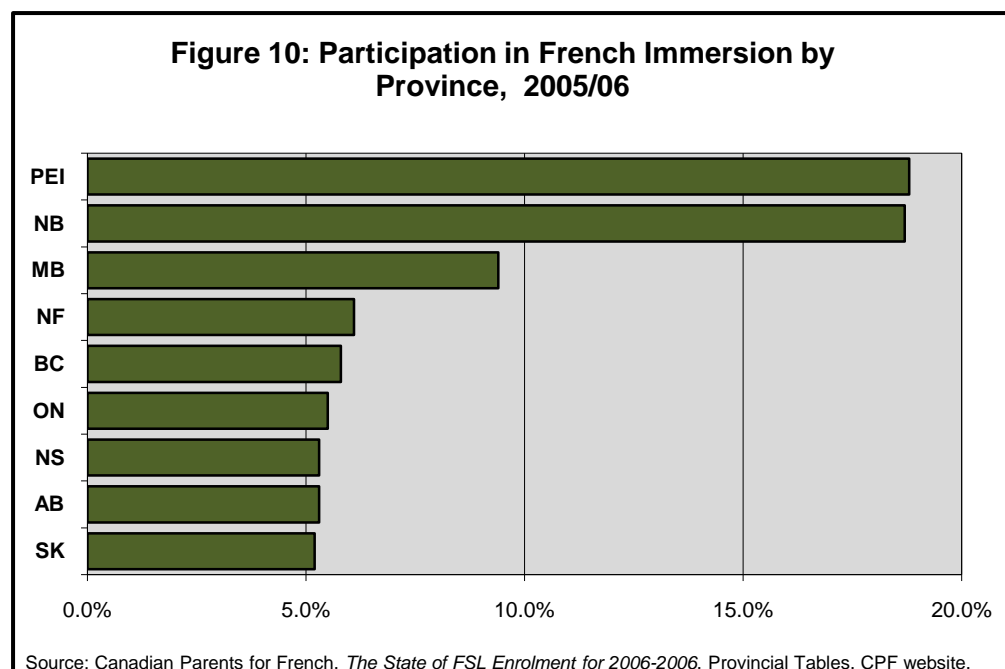
Table 3: French Immersion Programming by School, 2007/08.			
School/Program	Immersion Students	School Enrollment	% of School Enrollment
Early Immersion			
Glen Stewart Elementary	202	619	32.6
Westwood Elementary	128	396	32.3
Sherwood Elementary	150	524	28.6
Spring Park Elementary	199	409	48.7
Montague Consolidated	131	428	30.6
Eliot River Elementary	107	427	25.1
Bloomfield Elementary	106	165	64.2
St. Louis Elementary	68	129	52.7
Tignish Elementary	91	214	42.5
Elm Street Elementary	275	462	59.5
Greenfield Elementary	146	340	42.9
Mid Immersion			
Gulf Shore Consolidated	101	249	40.6
Late Immersion			
Queen Charlotte Intermediate	151	573	26.4
Birchwood Intermediate	99	443	22.3
East Wiltshire School	142	606	23.4
Stonepark Intermediate	296	862	34.3
Continuing Immersion – Intermediate			
Queen Charlotte Intermediate	94	573	16.4
East Wiltshire School	83	606	13.7
Montague Intermediate	56	344	16.3
Stonepark Intermediate	87	862	10.1
Hernewood Intermediate	44	337	13.1
M.E. Callaghan Intermediate	69	294	23.5
Summerside Intermediate	160	570	28.1
Continuing Immersion – High School			
Montague Senior High	35	720	4.9
Bluefield Senior High	229	831	27.6
Colonel Gray Senior High	272	931	29.2
Charlottetown Rural Senior High	432	1,001	43.2
Westisle Composite High	115	739	15.6
Three Oaks Senior High	116	920	12.6
Total	**4,184**	**13,533**	**30.9**

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this report is to create a forum for engaging in a dialogue about changing enrollments and the impact on the education system. The review, on which this report is based, drew together existing data sources and information useful in developing a picture of the effects of enrollment change. The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and school districts have a great deal of relevant and reliable demographic, program, transportation, physical plant, and infrastructure information. Information from Statistics Canada and the Department of the Provincial Treasury were used as well.

The focus of the review was to gain an understanding of the issues and challenges surrounding enrollment change through consultations with key informants and a review of the experiences of other jurisdictions. A comprehensive review of the current literature and related research in the field, along with an examination of provincial and district level documents and policies, was completed. In addition, in-depth interviews and focus groups, which have several strengths uniquely suited to policy research, were used.[18] Flexibility of approach is consistent with the methodological research in this policy arena.[19]

Following an analysis of the findings presented of this report, enrollment projections were completed. Forecasts were completed for the province, school districts, families of schools and individual schools. The forecasts help open a window into the future by identifying the direction and magnitude of enrollment change. A summary of the enrollment forecasts is presented in Section 4 and individual school forecasts are presented in the Appendices.

Finally, a set of guiding principles to help guide the development of future options for organizing schools were developed for consideration. When developing options, it is recognized and understood that more than one opportunity for change is frequently available. In some cases, the only realistic and appropriate option may be the rezoning of students to other schools or even the closure of the school. In other cases, current conditions will have to be examined in relation to future consequences. For example, immediate changes in a particular school may not be necessary or possible but, because of continuing enrollment decline in the school, changes will have to be considered for the future. A set of guiding principles can help ensure that different circumstances are treated equally across the district and that a focus on students is maintained.

Summary data for each school are presented in Appendix B of this report. The summary data are intended only as a capsule of some of the key indicators of each school.

2.2 RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

Specific research activities included the following:

▸ conduct interviews and focus groups with key informants about current conditions, trends, and future potential;

▸ collect and analyze data at the provincial, school district, school family, and school levels;

▸ develop enrollment projections at the provincial, school district, school family, and school levels;

▸ conduct a comprehensive review of the literature and research related to changing enrollments, optimal/effective school size, and grade configuration;

▸ research the trends, anticipated impacts of, and responses to changing enrollments in other jurisdictions; and

▸ identify the principles and key factors for school boards to consider when planning for changing enrollments.

2.3 ENROLLMENT PROJECTION METHODOLOGY

To gain a more complete understanding of how enrollments may change in the future, a critical step in the project was the development of enrollment projections. Grade level enrollment projections were developed for the province, school districts and each family of schools. Five and ten year total projections were developed for each school. It should be noted that projections are simply best estimates of future enrollments based on past trends and current conditions. Unforeseen events can quickly change future enrollments (e.g., new housing developments, new business development, out-migration, policy changes, etc.). The further into the future the projection period, the less reliable the enrollment projections.

Projections are derived based on statistical estimates known as the cohort survival or grade progression method. A cohort survival ratio is the proportion of students enrolled in one grade in a specific school year (e.g., grade 3, 2004/05) relative to the number of students enrolled in the next incremental grade level and school year (e.g., grade 4, 2005/06). For example:

$$S_{g,g+1} = (E_{(g+1)(t+1)})/E_{gt}*100 \qquad \textit{where,}$$

$$t = \text{subscript denoting year}$$

$$g = \text{subscript denoting grade}$$

$$E_{gt} = \text{enrollment in grade g, year t}$$

$$S_{g,g+1} = \text{survival rate from grade g to grade g+1}$$

Survival ratios are a reliable method of estimating projections, particularly for the short term (in this case 5-8 years).[20] *Grade specific survival ratios* are used to apply to

historical data for students in grades 2 through 12 inclusive. Ratios are then projected based on these trends, related information, assumptions and observations about future conditions including fertility, migration, housing, economic growth, etc. While qualitative in nature, these assumptions and observations are an important step toward improving the reliability of the ratios and, ultimately, the projections.

Most of the ratios will be linear in nature and projected using various least-squares regressions. While the actual data may fluctuate from grade to grade or from year to year, the ratios surrounding the data for the most part will maintain linearity.

To project incoming students, historical birth data were collected and compared against the grade 1 enrollment six years later. Figure 11 shows the match between births and entry level students for the years 1997 through to 2007. The data show little variation in the direction of the two variables, particularly in the last eight years.

Correlation analysis involves the measurement of the closeness of the relationship between variables. In this case, the correlation between births and Grade One enrollment six years later is quite high (.971 at the 0.01 level). This is important when projecting future Grade One enrollment, and eventually kindergarten enrollment.

Figure 11: Live Births and Grade One Enrolment Six Years Later, PEI, 1997 - 2007
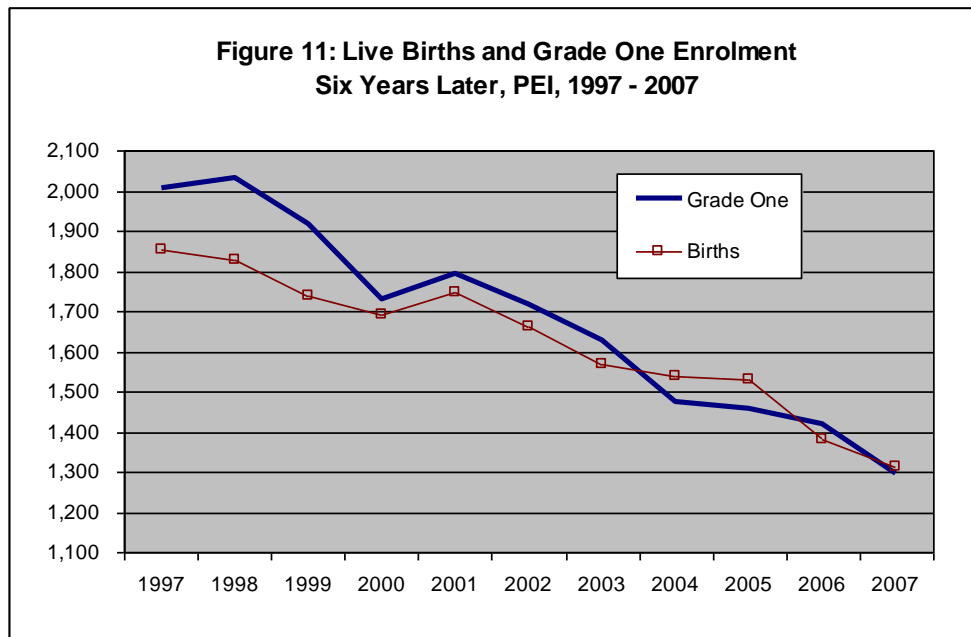
Birth to school entry survival ratios – defined as the ratio of the number of births in one year compared to the number enrolled in Grade One six years later – are then projected using available information and similar assumptions as used above. The predictability of *birth to school entry survival ratios* can be seen in Figure 12. The relationship between the two variables is almost linear in nature.

Actual births are used for the first six years of the projection model. In projecting births beyond that point, the research team relied on established projection models in place by the Department of the Provincial Treasury and Statistics Canada.[21] Data were assembled on five projections using different scenarios as well as our own. There was little variability among the six projections. The average of the six projections was then used to calculate the *birth to school entry survival ratios* for both grade 1 and kindergarten.

Figure 12: Ratio of Births to Grade One Enrolment, PEI, 1997 - 2007
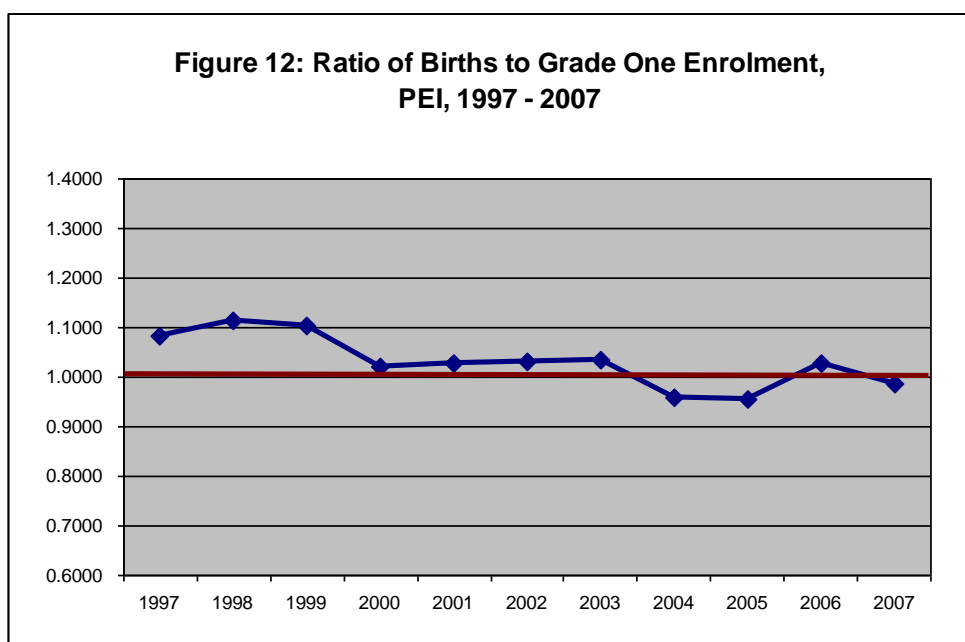
It is recognized that there are limitations to these methods, particularly when applied to schools with small enrollments. In smaller schools, the movement of small numbers of students has the tendency to alter the survival ratios more so than in larger schools. This increased variability can result in less reliable results when projecting enrollments over the long term. Because future enrollment is dependent more upon migration of persons of French heritage and their desire to attend Francophone schools, alternative assumptions are required for *La Commission scolaire de langue française* (e.g., federal government expansion, etc.). Furthermore, reliable projections may only be achieved for the shorter term (3-5 years).

The reliability of the projections over time will be measured by error rates; that is the difference between the actual and projected enrollment. Typically, an error rate of one percent for each year projected forward is acceptable.[22] In other words, a five year projection should be within 5-6 percent of the actual enrollment. The further into the future projections are made, the higher the error rate.

3. FOCUS AND FINDINGS OF THE REVIEW

3.1 FOCUS OF THE REVIEW

Throughout this school review process, the goal has been to keep as close as possible to the mission of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and the three school boards. At the end of the day we want educational programs and school facilities where all students receive the highest quality educational experiences possible. Keeping this focus serves to ground and sustain school organization planning. Without it, potential changes regarding the organization of schools would be vacuous.

3.2 WHY A REVIEW IS NECESSARY

Today's students are facing a vastly different and rapidly changing world. The amount of technical information is doubling every two years and by 2010 it is predicted to double about every three days.[23] That means we are currently preparing students for jobs and technologies that don't yet exist and to solve problems that are yet to be recognized as problems. In order to be successful global citizens, they will need skills beyond reading, writing and mathematics; they must be able to solve complex problems, work cooperatively with others, apply sophisticated skills in a variety of settings, connect learning across disciplines, and develop a habit of life-long learning.

> "Prince Edward Island is a place where learning is highly valued; a place where all individuals have the opportunity to develop their full social, intellectual, economic, cultural and physical potential."
> **Department of Education and Early Childhood Development Government of PEI**

Students are already using many of these skills outside the school. They compose music with their friends and integrate the music into videos they produce. They create virtual businesses, cities and governments in their games. They create web sites that include animation and digital photography. They connect with people around the world through instant messaging, blogging, text messaging and video conferencing. As both consumers and producers of news, information and entertainment, these students have become the quintessential multi-taskers in a digital age. And they will need these skills to participate in today's world of work. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, today's learners will have 10 to 14 jobs before their 38th birthday.[24]

> "The Western School Board is a supportive and progressive community committed to providing quality educational experiences focusing on the total development of all students for life long learning and responsible community membership."
> **Western School Board**

Since the early 1970s, enrollment in the province has been declining at unprecedented levels; dropping almost one third from over 30,000 to almost 20,000. While there have been school consolidations and closures over the years, headlines increasingly appear speaking about the potential impacts of "declining enrollments."[25] Yet a focus on declining

and shifting enrollments is not new. Issues related to enrollment decline date back thirty years. In November, 1978, a two-day seminar entitled "Problems Associated with Declining Enrollment" was held in the province.[26] The seminar, sponsored by the Department of Education and PEI Association of School Administrators, discussed the impacts of continued enrollment declines that were projected last until the mid-1980s.[27]

Schools have been closed as a result of declining enrollments in jurisdictions beyond Canada. Headlines like "Rural Schools Closing a Sign of the Times" have been seen in many parts of the world.[28] They are indicators that declining births and migration are world-wide phenomena that have resulted in declining enrollments in many parts of the world, particularly in rural areas. While Beihai (China), Ghaziabad (India), and Brasilia (Brazil) may be some of the fastest growing cities in the world, for the most part they draw people to their cities from the surrounding rural areas not unlike much of the world. China, India and Brazil are also dealing with the effects of declining enrollments in their rural, isolated communities.

In Canada, all provinces have experienced declining enrollments. Newfoundland and Labrador has experienced sharper decreases in enrollment than any other province. Enrollment has declined almost 18,000 students (20 percent) since September, 2000 and is projected to decline a further 24 percent in the next ten years.[29] Over 50 schools have been closed in the province since 2000. Enrollment in British Columbia has declined by about 42,500 students since September, 2000 and is projected to decline by another 30,000 students in five years. It declined 12,300 students in 2007 alone. Because of enrollment declines, 139 schools closed in that period.[30] The steepest declines tend to occur in small, rural and remote school districts. In Ontario, the effects of declining enrollment on school viability have been even greater, with an average of 52 schools being closed annually between 1999 and 2005.[31]

Like many other jurisdictions, the challenges for organizing schools on the Island are varied and complex. Enrollments are declining in all types of schools; from small to large schools, from schools in rural areas to schools in urban communities, and from elementary schools to secondary schools. Schools with the most rapidly declining enrollments tend to be in rural areas that have small populations to begin with. At the same time, enrollments in a few schools located in growing communities are increasing.

Declining enrollments present many challenges, not the least of which is the ability of smaller schools to offer the breadth and depth of programming that can be achieved by larger schools. A major misconception of declining enrollment, however, is a general perception that as enrollments decline, so should expenditures. Education expenditures, though, are notoriously inelastic and cannot, for a variety of reasons, be reduced in proportion to enrollment. In the meantime, there are program and operational efficiencies, such as the merger of programs or the consolidation of schools, that can be attained.

3.3   WHAT TYPES OF RESPONSES ARE REQUIRED

One of the objectives of this review was to develop a framework for discussion to assist in the development of school organization plans. For the purposes of this report, a *school organization plan* includes: 1) the assignment of students to particular schools in such a way as to allow for the broadest and most substantive educational programs as possible for the most optimal number of students, taking into account present and future enrollments, the capacity and utilization of the facility, the age and condition of the facility, the transportation impacts on children, etc.; and 2) the most cost efficient allocation of school district resources for its physical plants so as to permit the greatest possible expenditure of board financial resources to be applied to the program needs of students.

It is understood that potential options for change may involve the reassignment of students from their current school to a different school, as follows:

▸ the reassignment of some students in a school to another school (e.g., between two schools in the same community or between two or more schools in different communities);

▸ the reassignment of an entire grade or multiple grades in a school to one or more schools (e.g., grade 9, grades 7-9, etc.);

▸ the reassignment of all students in a school to one or more schools; or

▸ the reassignment of all students in a school to a new school.

Following the release of this report each of the school districts will develop its own unique school organization plan. Each plan will likely contain options similar to the following:

▸ no change;

▸ change to the existing school zones to reassign some students to one or more schools;

▸ consolidation of two or more schools resulting in the closure of one or more schools;

▸ upgrades and/or renovations to an existing facility to accommodate additional students or programming;

▸ construction of an extension to a school to accommodate additional classrooms, other instructional areas, or non-instructional components; or

▸ construction of a new facility to replace a school.

3.4 FACTORS THAT IMPACT SCHOOL ORGANIZATION PLANNING

Regardless of how optimal the current organization of schools is, the social, economic, demographic, environmental and technological realities facing the schools are in a constant state of change. Thus, optimal school systems today may not be optimal tomorrow. The value lies in planning the future by identifying and analyzing the influencing factors and using them as part of a comprehensive decision-making process. The outcome is more likely to include a long term plan that provides a framework for action, clarifies future direction, and helps focus resources on the highest priorities.

There are many factors which influence the ability to meet this goal. The factors outlined below help ensure a strong link between the information and data collected and analyzed, and the type of school organizational changes that are required for the future. Each is only part of an important set of indicators that give light to the decision process.

Program Delivery

For the most part, school consolidation is a mechanism for maintaining or building on existing programs, recognizing that the *status quo* will lead eventually to a reduction in programs or services. Despite efforts to adjust to demographic change through restructuring, there remain significant challenges associated with delivering a responsive education program to a population dispersed in a large number of small communities and a small number of larger metropolitan areas. As is the case in other jurisdictions, the need to operate within a context of finite financial resources is a reality. In short, such declines create challenges for accessibility, quality and affordability, particularly in rural settings and for particular program areas.[32]

Much of the literature on small and rural schools is philosophically biased; that is, it is explicitly or implicitly based upon the belief that maintaining rural communities should be a primary goal of education.[33] While research on rural schools is available, much of it centres on school size, the merits of small schools, and student achievement. Less research has focused on curricular and programming needs and challenges. One prominent researcher, Stanford University professor Linda Darling-Hammond, found that a challenging curriculum was one of four factors that consistently influence student achievement (the others being highly qualified teachers, elementary schools in the range of 300-500 students, and smaller class sizes in the early grades).[34]

Small rural schools are different from their urban and suburban counterparts in that they tend to be smaller and more isolated, but rural schools also differ from one another in terms of needs, resources and capacities.[35] These differences preclude the implementation of generic responses. An examination of the strengths and

challenges of the programming needs of each school on its own merits is an approach more likely to lead to successful implementation.

Small schools tend to have combined or split classes. Combined classes group children from two or more consecutive grades in one classroom. Schools combine classes for a number of reasons. This includes organizing classes to meet student learning needs and combining grades to balance class size. Typically, classes include students with a range of skills and abilities. Combined classes are neither better nor worse than single-grade classes. They are simply one of many ways schools use their collective resources to respond to the needs of students.

It is important to point out that despite significant enrollment decline, particularly in rural schools, an adequate basic program is being maintained at both the elementary and secondary level. At the same time, delivering a quality education program in a small school is not without its challenges. The B.C. Task Force on Rural Education summarized some of the challenges as including multi-grade classes, teacher training, professional development, teacher recruitment and retention, support for special needs students, and course selection at the high school level. Some or all of these may apply to rural schools in our province.

Over the years, the education system has undergone numerous positive transformations. As a result, significantly more students now remain in school through to graduation and, in turn, go on to college and university. This is a direct result not only of broader and more diverse curriculum options for students, but also of enhanced social and cultural experiences for students, a better understanding of the importance of education and the link between education and employment, better qualified teachers, outstanding leadership, and more involved parents and support givers.

Enrollment Trends

Declining fertility and migration have contributed to a 15 percent drop in enrollment in the province in the last 10 years. While some of the most significant declines have occurred in small rural schools, intercity schools have seen dramatic declines as well. At the same time, new housing developments and movement between neighbourhoods and towns have resulted in increases in a number of schools; most notably in the suburban growth areas of Charlottetown.

Enrollment projections are an essential ingredient in planning, organizing and administering schools and school systems. Projected enrollment is one of the most important factors in planning for the future. One-year projections are important

because they provide a guide for budget planning, hiring of new teachers and allocating classes. Longer-term projections are used to help understand the changes that are likely to take place in the future, to plan for the best possible responses to them, and to make informed decisions when the time is right. Without enrollment projections, educators and policy makers have no way of knowing, understanding and maximizing teaching and learning opportunities.

The demographic indicators presented in the school profile sheets presented in the appendix of this report include, among other things, enrollment trends and projected enrollments (5 and 10 years out).

Diversity

Increasing diversity within our schools is a positive and practical example of an increasingly global society. Children today come from a variety of family situations, income strata, and cultural backgrounds. Schools are faced with unique challenges as they strive to provide equal educational opportunities for all students.[36]

Canada is a country of many communities and cultures. The 32 million inhabitants reflect a cultural, ethnic and linguistic makeup found nowhere else on earth.[37] Our province is a reflection of that same diversity.

Nowhere is that diversity more evident than in our schools. Increasingly, our classrooms are made up of children with a variety of languages, cultures, exceptionalities, resources, learning styles and talents. Meeting the needs of a diverse student body is one of the most persistent and daunting challenges facing educators at all levels.[38]

There are many dimensions of diversity, including differences in ability, age, ethnicity, home language, family make-up, gender, physical attributes, race, religion, and socioeconomic status. Schools that reflect these dimensions enrich the learning of all students and promote global understanding and citizenship. Schools have to be prepared to address the substantial diversity in experiences that students bring with them, and to recognize that they have a moral, strategic and pragmatic imperative to create school communities that are diverse and inclusive.[39]

Who one goes to school with makes a difference. Willms concluded that while socially segregated schools accentuate differences in student achievement, policies of inclusion and integration help eliminate some of those differences.[40] A diverse school community is one which prepares students to work and live in a global and multicultural world. The ability to work with and understand people of backgrounds different than your own is not only a sound educational goal but a democratic goal as well. In the final analysis, policies of inclusion and integration can go a long way in raising the achievement levels of students from lower income families and do not negatively affect the achievement levels of other students.

Grade Level Configurations

A school's grade span is an important consideration for planning. Depending upon the size and location of a school, the grades offered can influence the social and educational dynamic. Various grade level configurations can optimize program offerings and resources for students.

Knowing the grade levels taught at a particular school is critical to knowing and understanding other things about the school. For primary schools, as an example, class size and access to music programs are important issues. On the other hand, proponents of middle-level education favour the educational separation of young adolescents to best accommodate their developmental needs and characteristics.[41] In other words, they would believe that a grades 7-9 junior high school is more desirable than a grades 1-9 consolidated school. Still others believe that a completely different set of organizational conditions exists for grades 1-9 and all-grade schools which have to care for and provide programs for very young children right up to adolescents taking senior high courses, all within one facility.

While little is known about the effects of grade level configuration on student learning performance, the span of grades available in a particular school is an important consideration for educators when trying to optimise programming and resources. It is perhaps more important to attempt to lessen the adverse effects on students of school-to-school transitions. Every transition potentially disrupts the social structure in which learning takes place. It is argued that in school systems with multiple transitions (e.g., 1-3 primary school; 4-6 elementary school; 7-9 junior high school; 10-12 senior high school) it is best to have articulation and transition activities in place for students.[42]

School Size

One area where much research exists has to do with school size. The first challenge has to do with defining what we mean by *small schools* and *optimal school size*. The best empirical literature has focused its efforts simply on school size. Yet small schools exist everywhere, as a feature of the variability of school size. Some jurisdictions maintain proportionally more small schools – sometimes far more – than do others. However, no literature prevails, even among small-school advocates, about what defines a small school. Small schools in this province are apt to differ sharply from small schools elsewhere. For example, Bishops Park School in Essex, England – a school of 250 students – is considered a "pioneer of the small schools movement" in the UK.[43]

Identifying optimal school size is equally hard to define. However, a number of studies on school size have arrived at similar conclusions, that is, schools in the range of 300-500 students for elementary schools and 600-900 students for high schools are most effective.[44] In Canada, several jurisdictions have parameters defining small

and optimal schools. For example, some define small schools as having fewer than 100 students and define optimal schools as having between 250-400 students.[45]

Perhaps the more enlightened question has to do with what the benefits and challenges are to schools that fit outside the optimal range. Very small schools – often referred to as *micro schools* – by their very nature have fewer student discipline problems as students have a greater sense of belonging. Typically, these schools tend to have a better understanding and knowledge of individual student needs, better school attendance, more active parental involvement, and more flexible school scheduling.[46]

Though small schools offer many advantages for learning and supporting communities, "small is not synonymous with successful."[47] In small schools, teachers are often burdened with particularly heavy workloads; teaching several different subject areas (some of which are outside their teaching specialties) and contending with classrooms split between two or more grade levels.

Within the current model of schooling, the key to optimizing educational opportunities for students is their aggregation into larger school settings. Larger schools offer economies of scale in terms of programs and services and are generally located in communities which have the greatest level of infrastructure available to enrich educational experiences. As well, larger schools offer greater levels of administrative and secretarial support and provide greater opportunities for collaboration among staff members. Generally, students in larger schools are assigned to single grade classes and have greater access to trained specialist teachers and the programs and services they offer (i.e., physical education, music, art, drama, guidance, resource centres, computer studies, etc.). These schools also provide greater numbers of student role models and increased academic competitiveness, both of which have been demonstrated to increase overall student achievement.

At the senior high level, perhaps the most significant advantage of large student cohorts is the broad range of programs from which students can choose. Course offerings increase proportionately with enrollment. This advantage for students cannot be underestimated, particularly in terms of acceptance into one's choice of post secondary program.

Large population densities in urban areas easily permit the creation of medium to large size schools without the constraint of long bus runs. By contrast, low population densities in rural areas require the collection and pooling of many students from surrounding communities spread over large geographic areas. In many instances, reasonably sized catchment areas, even when including students across a wide range of grades, will not permit the large aggregation of students necessary to benefit from economies of scale. In other instances, catchment areas are extremely limited (i.e., remote or isolated communities), in which case school enrollments may be exceptionally low.

Can schools be too small? Undoubtedly, there are merits to very small schools. However, in a study for The World Bank, it was concluded that the very small scale of some schools suggests that the cost savings from consolidation are substantial. On balance, they conclude the benefits of small school consolidation appear to outweigh its drawbacks.[48] In the end, it is argued that "there is no reason for policy makers to be hopeful of advantageous affective outcomes, nor fearful of deleterious ones, by forming larger schools."[49]

School Capacity and Utilization

The extent to which school buildings support education is a topic of concern for educational administrators and policymakers. One challenge is that buildings may become less suitable as enrollments increase leading to over-capacity. Typically, this is seen in suburban areas where immigration is leading to growth in enrollment. On the other hand, the effects of long term enrollment decline often lead to below-capacity enrollment in many schools.

It should be noted that capacity is not a *de facto* measure of the maximum population that can be accommodated in a school. It is simply an *estimate* of the cumulative capacity of the instructional rooms in the school. For elementary schools, instructional rooms are limited to classrooms. Gymnasia, libraries, and special education/challenging needs rooms are not counted. Science laboratories and other specialty areas are included as part of the capacity of secondary schools. Without knowing what goes on in individual rooms it is difficult to assess individual classroom capacity. The total instructional capacity of a school can vary by how it is used. That said, capacity is a useful indicator in helping to understand the current and potential usage of a school. What is important is to determine, from a pedagogical perspective, the optimal number of students where quality instructional learning can take place.

Measuring the number of students in the school against the capacity of the school is an indicator of how much the school is being utilized. On the one hand, if a school is 90 percent utilized, one could conclude it is at the high end of the capacity limit. On the other hand, if a school is 50 percent utilized, one could conclude there is potential for alternative uses of space within the school. As schools are used in different ways at different times, it is understood that utilization provides only a broad measure of the extent to which a school is used. Nevertheless, with

enrollments declining at significant rates in most schools, over time efficiencies emerge and the amount of unutilized space increases.

Capacity and utilization are not intended as measures for comparative purposes. For example, comparing a school with 95 percent utilization against another school with 85 percent utilization serves little useful purpose without knowing the broader context of both schools. School capacity and utilization are intended to be used along with other indicators in helping to build and understand school potential.

The number and size of classrooms and other instructional areas are significant factors in a school's ability to offer a full and complete program. Older schools tend to have larger classrooms but significantly more maintenance and safety issues. Newer schools, on the other hand, have fewer capital deficiencies but tend to have smaller classrooms. The ability to utilize classroom space for special projects, laying out instructional resources and providing individualized instruction is an important consideration, particularly for primary and elementary teachers.

Some jurisdictions have mandated utilization thresholds. The Government of British Columbia, for example, has established minimum percentage utilization requirements that influence the approval of capital funding. Depending on its size, a district average of greater than 95 percent must be attained using existing schools before new capital funding is approved.[50] Regardless of the extent of underutilized space in a particular building, the fact remains is that it is costly to maintain facilities that are not being fully utilized.

Quality of Buildings

The province has a patchwork of new and old buildings. Having said that age, on its own, is not an indicator of the quality of a facility. The size, quality and circumstances of schools vary. Some schools are too small to be efficient and some schools may be too big to be most effective. Some school buildings are new and others are approaching (or past) the end of their useful life. Some school properties are located in areas where the highest and best use of the land may be commercial, civic or some other non-school function. All of the variables associated with each school need to be considered in evaluating the most appropriate future roles for each facility and site.

A number of characteristics about school facilities are indicators of their ability to function fully to their intended use. It could be argued that there is already sufficient space (3.6M square feet) relative to the number of students (174 sq ft per student). The problem is that classrooms are not always located where the students are; people move, schools don't. Additionally, the size of the classrooms does not match the demand for programming. Finally, the nature of the instructional spaces does not always fit the purpose and type of curriculum taught at school. Suffice to say, overcrowded, underutilized, outdated and poorly laid out classrooms create significant challenges for teachers and present barriers to learning for students.

It is important that mechanisms are in place to conduct, and regularly update, school facility audits that evaluate the physical and functional adequacy of the facilities in each of the districts. The audits can then be used to determine the overall condition of school buildings at a point in time, to plan future maintenance and to determine priorities. Physical deterioration, whether small or large, is a measure of the health, safety and structural condition of a school and may include structural problems, deteriorating surfaces, failing services or safety deficiencies. Functional deterioration is a measure of the school's adaptability, efficiency of space and utilities usage, and the cost of refurbishing the building for its intended use.

In addition, it is important that an accessibility strategy be in place to remove and prevent barriers for people with disabilities, who work in, use or attend school or school board facilities and events. It is important to consult with people with disabilities, ensure that policies and procedures are consistent with the principles of accessibility, and improve access to facilities, programs and services for students, staff, parents/guardians, volunteers and members of the community. For some schools, it may not be economically feasible, or physically possible, to make them fully accessible. However, it is important that each family of schools have at least one fully accessible feeder system that will allow students who require accessible buildings to start with a group of students in primary schools and stay with them through to their completion of high school.

In the end, regardless of size or condition, schools need to be efficient, welcoming, flexible and responsive organizations, they need to promote personalization of learning, they need to provide opportunities for community engagement, and they need to be adaptable to shifts in population.

Transportation of Students

Transportation by school buses is available for most students in the province. In fact, 88 percent of the student population is bussed to school each day. As a result, many students spend long periods of time on school buses travelling to and from school. While bus routes range in length from about 20km to over 100km in length, the average bus route in the province is about 45km.[†] Many factors come into play when considering the effects of bus transportation on children. These include time and distances traveled by students, types of roads and highways, traffic patterns, road conditions, safety, and regulations. A critical issue for policymakers is defining reasonable commute distances and times for students.

Despite the fact that generations of rural children have been riding school buses, educators know very little about that experience from the perspective of communities, families, or students. Empirical research on the effects of school bussing on school children is limited.[51] Important questions concern the length of

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[†] The length of the bus route applies to the first student(s) to be picked up. Subsequent stops by the bus translate into shorter distances traveled by the remaining students.

rides experienced by students, the effects of those rides on school participation and academic achievement, and the impact of widespread school bussing on rural ways of life.[52]

Few would doubt that young students riding a bus for two hours or more a day is unappealing. Many parents are troubled by the impact that early mornings and long days will have on their children. One of the biggest concerns of parents is that bussing frequently excludes their children from before and after school extra-curricular activities like tutoring, access to computer labs and libraries, games, etc.[53] In recent years, school boards and school administrators have become increasingly supportive of more flexible scheduling to allow for broader participation in extra-curricular activities.

A high quality student transportation system that affords students a safe and comfortable ride to and from school is an integral component in organizing school systems in this province and throughout Canada. The realities of distance and local geography are significant factors in consideration of how schooling is configured, organized and supported. Schools in cities, for example, tend to have fewer students bussed over shorter distances than schools in rural areas. The location of a school and its proximity to other schools of similar grade configurations can lead to efficiency gains in the form of revised grade configurations, resource sharing, etc. Fewer options exist for small schools in rural isolated areas.

Location and Access

A key consideration in any school organization plan has to do with location. The location of a school is important in relation to where its students and their families reside, where other schools are located, and its proximity to other facilities such as arenas, sports fields, parks, community centres, etc. Collaborating and sharing with other schools and access to other facilities creates options which can lead to increased efficiencies, more equitable distribution of available resources, and broader program opportunities for students.

Typically, schools are located within neighbourhoods or communities. As enrollments go down, opportunities to consolidate neighbourhood and community schools increase (in 1970 there were 250 schools in the province). Schools not only serve communities, they connect communities. Having students from different communities converge to a single school helps build character, collaboration, teamwork and fellowship. Schools are social institutions that bring together boys and girls from different backgrounds, religions, cultures, neighbourhoods, and communities.

This is true for urban schools as well. Schools built 30-40 years ago in once vibrant city neighbourhoods now bus in students from outlying neighbourhoods and communities. Urban schools too have experienced the downward effects on enrollment as a result of population shifts. The problem for educators is that schools

"Schools not only serve communities, they connect communities. Having students from several communities converge to a single school helps build character, collaboration, teamwork and fellowship."

are fixed assets and as people move to new locations it becomes increasingly more challenging to plan for schooling.

There are certain advantages to having a school in every community. Unfortunately, that is neither practical nor possible. Trustees often struggle to balance the need for schooling in a region with the decision as to where it ideally should be located. This is particularly true in an era of enrollment decline.

In the end, what is important is that children from similar communities and neighbourhoods be kept together through the course of their schooling. That is, children from the same communities and neighbourhoods should transition to the same schools. This is equally important for French immersion students.

3.5   GUIDING PRINCIPLES

An integral component in developing potential options for organizing schools is a set of guiding principles that can serve as a guide for the analysis. Such principles help align strategic thinking and acting. Following them ensures that future policy change is grounded to a set of principles that is based on the best available evidence. Guiding principles support decision-making; they do not replace it.

The following guiding principles are presented to help inform the development of options for organizing schools in the future.

Program Delivery. Consider access to high quality programs and services. Every student should have access to a broad-based curriculum led by highly qualified teachers and specialists. A minimum school program should include *at least* two teachers per grade as well as a full-time specialist in each of the following areas: special education, guidance, library, physical education, core French, music, and resource. French Immersion should be maintained, nurtured and enhanced. For students not pursuing a French Immersion stream, other options, such as Intensive Core French, should be considered.

Enrollment Trends. Consider current and future enrollment. Student enrollment trends have a significant impact on a school's ability to offer and sustain quality

programs due to a corresponding relationship to course offerings, teacher allocations, and support staff assistance. It is important to understand the implications of long term (5-10 years) enrollment change in the schools.

Diversity. Consider the diverse nature of school communities. Schools should be organized in a way that brings together students from different cultural backgrounds, income strata and family situations. Schools that reflect these dimensions enrich the learning of all students.

Grade Level Configurations. Consider grade level configurations. Alternative grade level configurations can help ensure that programming is optimized in each school. For example, a multi-age approach to teaching and learning is a viable option for a grades 1-6 school when class sizes are small. Grade level configurations have not been shown to have a significant impact on student achievement.

School Size. Consider the type and size of the school. Because there are different grade level configurations throughout the Island (e.g., 1-3, 1-6, 1-8, 1-9, etc.), it is difficult to identify a single ideal school size. For programming purposes, however, it is desirable that an optimal program have at least two teachers per grade. It is recognized there will always be exceptions. Some smaller schools may need to be maintained and reconfigured to accommodate unrealistic travel times. It is also recognized that some small Francophone schools may never be able to reach this standard.

School Capacity and Utilization. Consider the capacity and utilization of schools. While it is important to understand the extent to which additional students can be enrolled in the school, it is equally important to understand how the school is being utilized. Surplus capacity provides important flexibility for school administrators. On the other hand, excess surplus capacity places an undue financial burden on taxpayers.

Quality of Buildings. Consider the quality, scope and condition of school buildings. The age, condition and safety of the building, cost and efficiency of operation, potential for expansion, sufficient green space, accessibility for all individuals, adequate classrooms and specialized instructional spaces, and cost of unused and underutilized space are all important considerations about the quality of schools.

Transportation of Students. Consider the transportation issues for students. Many transportation factors are important considerations, including: distances traveled, time spent on the bus, road conditions, and safety. It is recognized that most students in the province are bussed to school. Buses today are much safer, drivers go through rigorous training, and they are governed by stricter policies and regulations. In the final analysis, however, the length of time spent on the bus by students must be reasonable.

Location and Access. Consider the school's location and the availability of and access to other facilities. The location of a school is important in relation to where its students and their families reside, where other schools are located, and its proximity

to other facilities such as arenas, sports fields, parks, community centres, etc. To the extent possible, it is important to serve students as close to their home as feasible.

Guiding principles similar to these can be used by school boards as part of their own planning and decision processes.

3.6   OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Typically, a review of this nature will have to examine other factors or events that are unique in some way and cannot be generalized. This study is no exception. There are three areas that are worthy of mention: the placement of kindergarten into the public school system; the extensive planning done by parents and others in the Souris school family; and the challenges and unique nature of running French language schools and La Commission scolaire de langue française.

Fully Integrated Kindergarten

Kindergarten is not a compulsory program in our province. Compulsory schooling for children begins at Grade One. Publicly funded kindergarten was first introduced in September of 2000. The additional year of schooling was intended to provide a community- based kindergarten system grounded in how children learn and develop.

Publicly funded kindergartens programs are delivered in both schools and a variety of other locations by private operators. Currently 20 kindergarten programs are housed in schools. While kindergarten remains a non-compulsory program, about 97 percent of eligible children attend.

Government has committed to bring kindergarten into the school system following a thorough, careful and sensitive consultation process.[54] This policy change will result in a fully integrated K-12 system of education in line with other jurisdictions throughout North America.

The quality of primary programs is strong overall, and most children are given a very positive start in their learning. Most learners are well supported and well taught. In primary schools, young people generally make sound progress in their learning, have good relationships with their teachers and ultimately achieve an appropriate range of curriculum objectives. Integrating kindergarten as part of the primary experience is seen as a positive, beneficial, pedagogically sound move by government.

While we know the purpose and objectives but not the details of the proposed new policy, we are not prevented from including kindergarten students into the enrollment forecasts. The assumption was made that, by 2010, kindergarten will be fully implemented into all elementary schools.

"What the best and wisest parent wants for his own child, that must the community want for all of its children."

John Dewey
The School and Society, 1907

Ongoing Planning in Souris

The power and effectiveness of community engagement is undeniable. In recent years, there are numerous examples of parents, neighbourhood residents, and students organizing themselves to improve the quality and equity of their schools. Researchers have shown that broad-based reforms in which communities, schools, school districts and government work together toward a shared vision of schooling are best positioned for success.[55]

One of the most progressive community-based school planning initiatives is currently taking place in Souris. Formed in April, 2006, a parent committee called *Parents for Learning* has been in place researching and working on a long term education plan for the area. The group received a small grant from the school board which enabled them to hire a researcher, do some of their own research, hold focused meetings at all the schools, and conduct a survey of families.

The Parents for Learning Committee spent a great deal of time and effort defining the problem, researching the issues, and developing potential solutions. The strength of their work lies in the breadth and depth of their investigation of the issues and challenges. Their work reflects extensive input from their community. They examined, among other things: the community use of schools, adult education, distance learning, early childhood programs, and after school programs. If nothing else, their work is extensive and forward thinking.

In the meantime, a new Partnership Committee comprising parents and educators from each of the schools, trustees, school district officials and government officials has already been established. They have gone on to establish sub-committees focusing on such things as multi-age classrooms, intermediate school programming needs, and distance learning and other high school challenges. This historic partnership of the community, schools, the school district, and government makes it already a candidate for success; not just provincially, but nationally.

La Commission scolaire de langue française

Of our Island's 135,851 inhabitants, Francophones make up about four percent (5,345 according to the 2006 census). About half that number, 2,680 indicate that the language spoken most often at home is French.[56] Such small numbers mask the commitment and desire of Islanders to be educated in French. While the growth in participation in French immersion programs has already been shown, growth in French language schooling has also grown significantly.

A French language regional school board was established on the Island in 1972. It was located in the Evangeline area where French language education already existed and had endured for many years. It was home to the first regional high school in the province, Evangeline High School, established in 1960.

Since then, significant developments have occurred within government which have enhanced the opportunities for French language services including education. Most significant among them was an amendment to the School Act where, as of July 1, 1990, Acadians and Francophones were granted the right to manage their own schools throughout the province. The Commission scolaire de langue française was then established as a provincial school board. To achieve its mandate, the province was divided into zones each with trustee representation. Interestingly, there have been times when some trustees did not have a school or students to represent.

When parents of rightholders register their children for French language education for the first time they must signify their desire to vote within the Francophone or Anglophone system at school board elections. This is to prevent people from voting for trustees in two different boards. The Commission scolaire encourages all those who are eligible to "exercise their constitutional right to French education in the province."[57]

Parents of rightholders have the right to choose to send their children to either English or French language schools. For that reason and because enrollment in some French language schools is very low, it is difficult to project future enrollment with certainty. That is not to say that reliable projections are not possible; it is simply to say that caution is advised. The projections are based on past trends and current circumstances, and if those change in any way it will alter the projections accordingly.

It is also important to understand that Canada has entrenched some education choices as group rights. Under the law, for example, parents whose first language is French have a constitutional right to have their children educated in French where there are enough students to warrant it. For any number of reasons, there are numerous francophone students whose parents have chosen not to enrol them in Francophone schools. For some families the choice to send their children to a francophone school is a difficult one; particularly when only one parent in the home speaks French, or in some cases when neither parent speaks French. Families that have made the choice believe that French language education gives them more than just language, it gives them culture, a sense of community, and a sense of identity.

For these reasons, the guiding principles articulated earlier might not apply to French language schooling.

4. ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS

4.1 PROVINCIAL ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS

Enrollment on the Island has declined significantly in the past three decades and is projected to continue to decline at unprecedented rates for the foreseeable future. Figure 13 illustrates how enrollment has eroded over the past four decades and how it is projected to change in the next 10 years. Since 1970, enrollment has declined from 30,748 to 20,813 students currently. In the next 10 years, enrollment is projected to decline at a pace equivalent to about two percent per year; one of the most rapid enrollment declines in our history. With the introduction of kindergarten expected to be completed by 2010, enrollment is projected to decline a further 13.7 percent (2,850 students) and drop below 18,000 students by 2017. As a result, between 1970 and 2017 enrollment in the province will have dropped almost 13,000 students or an astonishing 42 percent. Furthermore, without the introduction of kindergarten, that decline would likely have been in the order of 46 percent.

The rate of decline will begin to level off toward the end of the projection period; however, it will not stop declining. Our projections indicate that enrollment will continue to decline in the 2020s and begin to stabilize only toward the end of that decade.

Figure 13: Actual and Projected Enrollment, PEI, 1957 to 2017
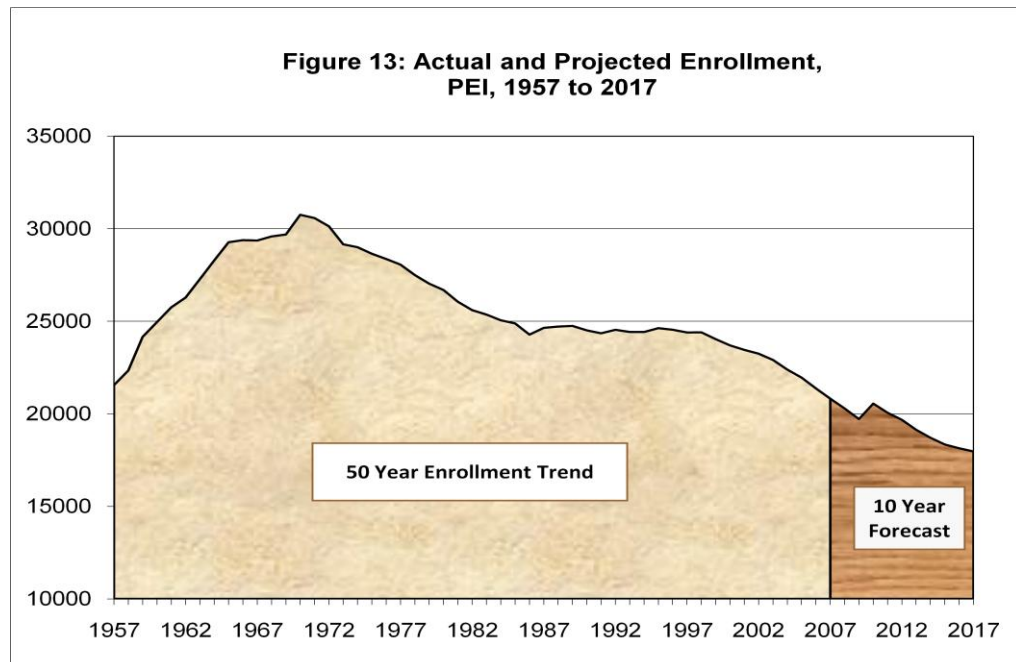
Figure 14 shows the projected enrollment for both elementary (grades k-6) and secondary (grades 7-12) levels for the next 10 years. With the introduction of kindergarten, elementary enrollment will increase 2 percent or about 180 students in that period. On the other hand, secondary enrollment will decline even more dramatically. By 2017, there will be 3,033 fewer students enrolled in secondary grades. That amounts to a loss of over one-quarter (25.8 percent) of the current secondary school enrollment; or 2.6 percent per year.

Figure 14: Elementary and Secondary Enrollment Forecast, PEI, 2008 - 2017
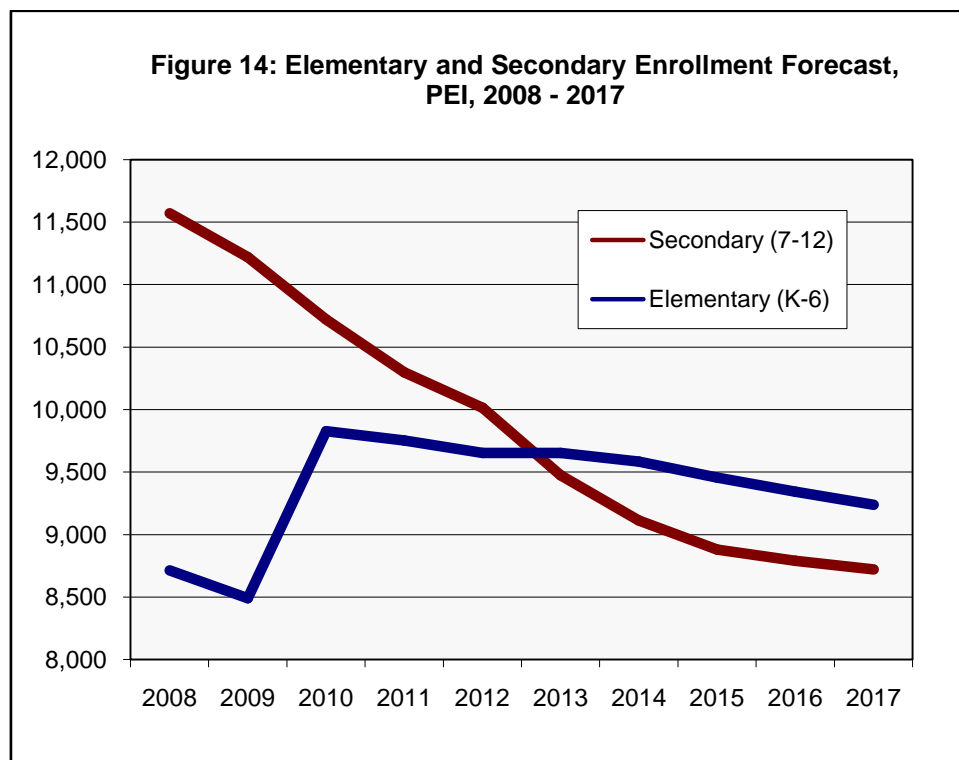
4.2   DISTRICT LEVEL ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS

The demographic impacts on future enrollment will have similar effects for the two Anglophone school boards. Over the projection period, enrollment in the Eastern School District is projected to decline about 15 percent and the Western School Board about 16 percent, while the Francophone school board will increase about 29 percent; all inclusive of kindergarten. Enrollment in La Commission scolaire de langue française will likely increase for several reasons: increased migration, such as the federal government presence in the province; and grade expansion as new or larger cohorts move through their schools. Figure 15 shows the relationship of the projected enrollment change among the three boards.

Figure 15: Enrollment Forecast by School District
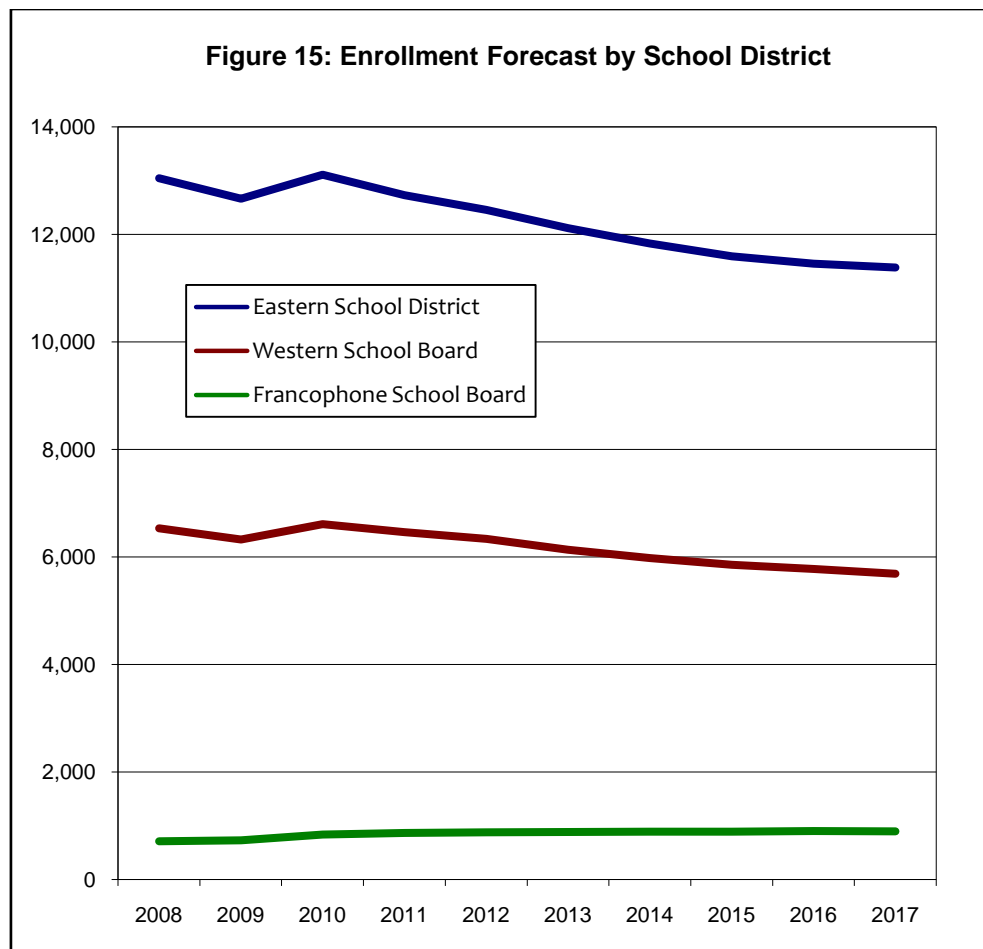
Enrollment in the Eastern School District is projected to drop about 2,000 students, or 14.7 percent in the next ten years (see Figure 16). This includes the full introduction of kindergarten by 2010.

Figure 16: Enrollment Forecast for Eastern School District 2008 - 2017
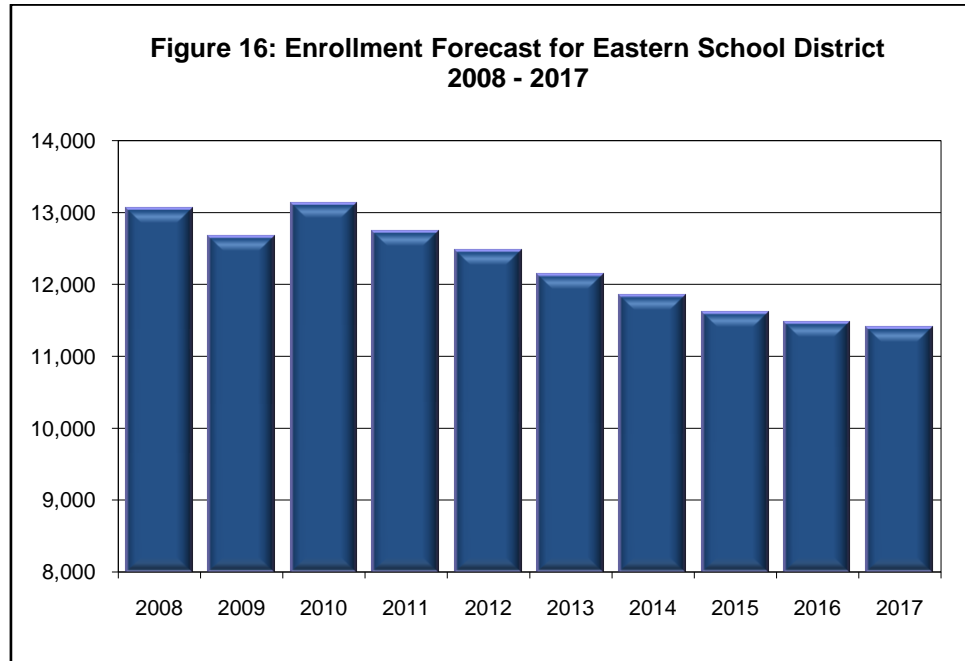
A summary of the enrollment forecasts for each family of schools is presented in Figure 17. Enrollment in all regions will decline: Charlottetown Rural (-7.3 percent); Colonel Gray (-14.7 percent); Bluefield (-8.0 percent); Montague (-25.6 percent); Morell (-31.0 percent); and Souris (-27.2 percent). However, the actual numbers of students lost to each region presents a different picture: Charlottetown Rural (260); Colonel Gray (472); Bluefield (229); Montague (582); Morell (230); and Souris (187).

Figure 17: Enrollment Forecast for each Family of Schools, Eastern School District
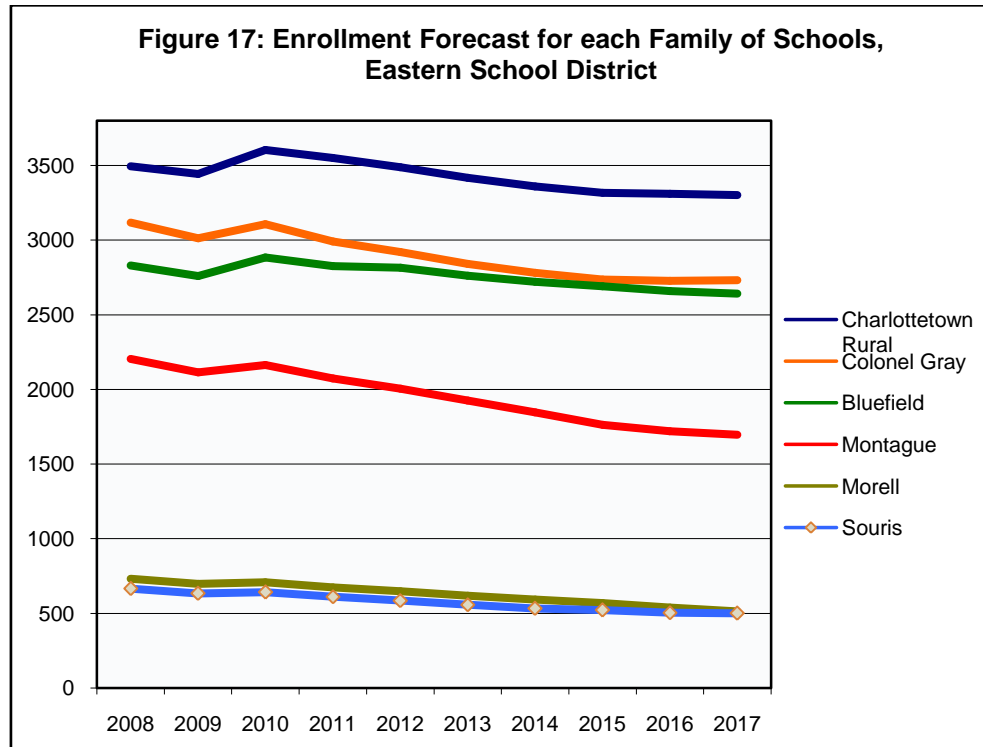
Enrollment in the Western School Board is projected to drop about 1,090 students, or 16.1 percent (inclusive of kindergarten) in the next ten years (see Figure 18).

Figure 18: Enrollment Forecast for Western School Board 2008 - 2017
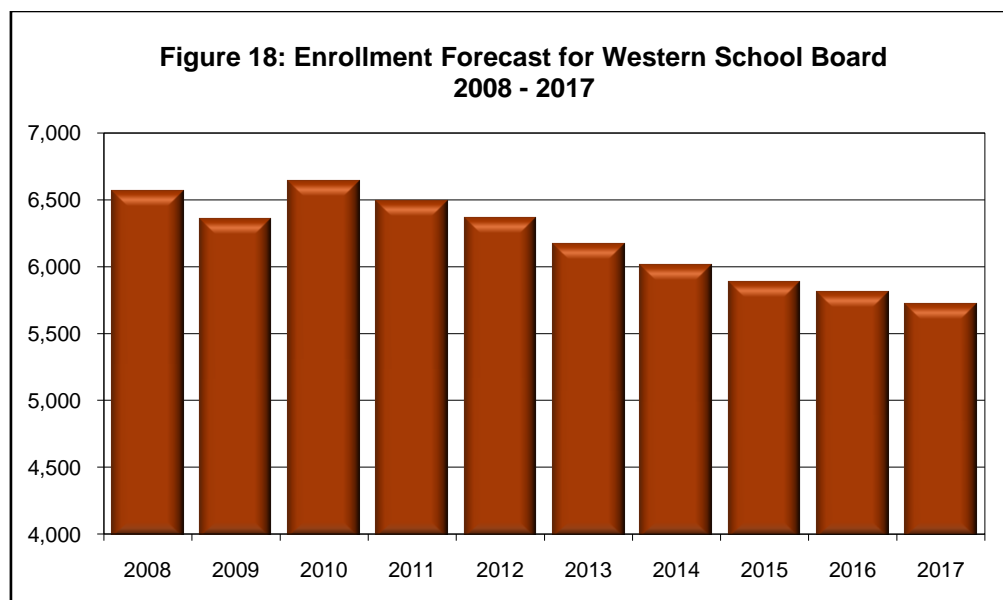
A summary of the enrollment forecasts for each family of schools in the Western School Board is presented in Figure 19. Enrollment in all regions will decline: Westisle 409 students (-17.0 percent); Three Oaks 435 students (-14.1 percent); Kensington 148 students (-19.0 percent); and Kinkora 99 students (-19.4 percent).

Figure 19: Enrollment Forecast for each Family of Schools, Western School Board
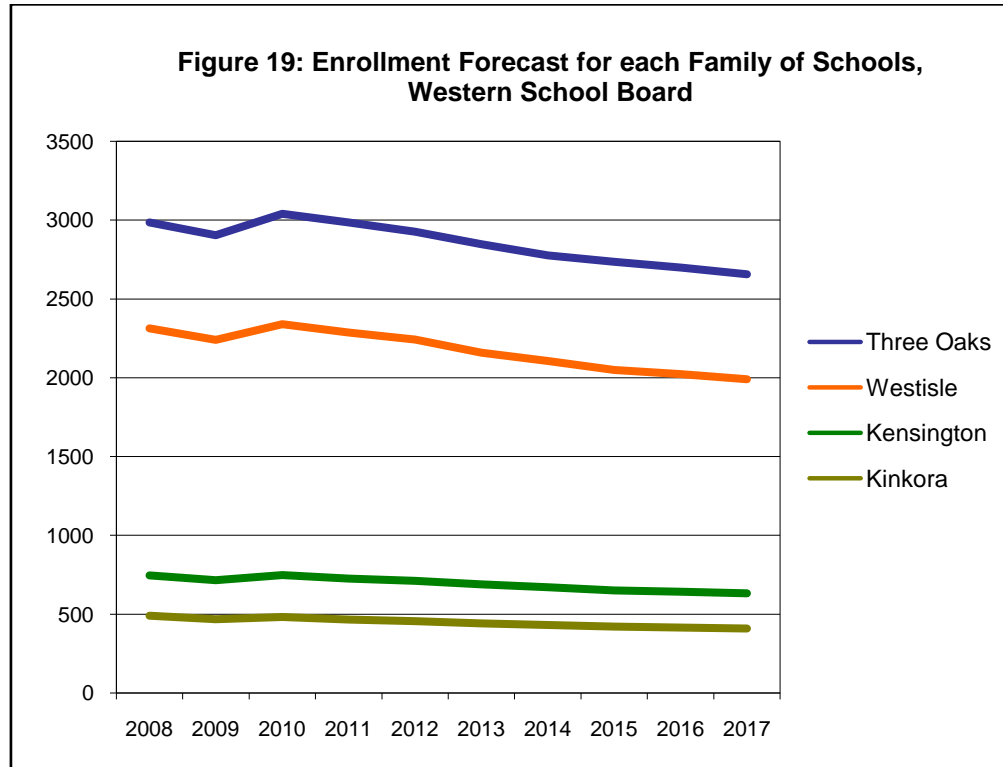
Enrollment in La Commission scolaire de langue française is projected to increase about 200 students, or 28.8 percent in the next ten years (see Figure 20).

Figure 20: Enrollment Forecast for La Commission scolaire de langue française, 2008 - 2017
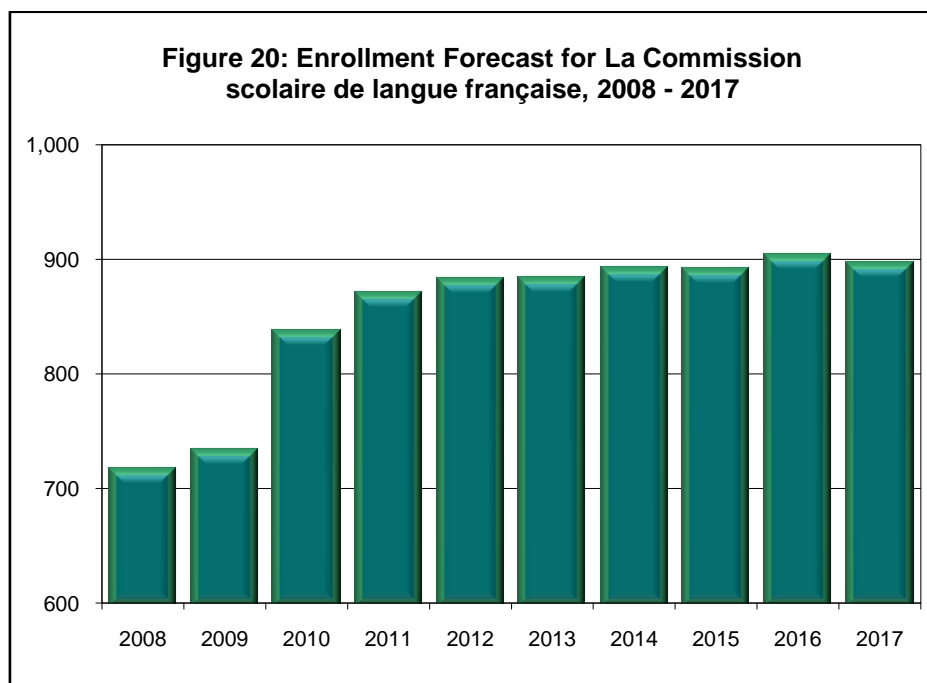
Charts containing enrollment projections for individual school families are presented in Appendix 1 of this report.

5. FINAL THOUGHTS

Important demographic trends are shaping the size, nature and composition of the education system on the Island. One of the most significant of these trends is the decline in births and the subsequent aging of the province's population. This has resulted in enrollments in our school system declining at rates never seen before in our history. It is difficult to project when enrollments will level off and perhaps begin to rise; however, it is not likely to be anytime soon.

At the same time, our young people live in an increasingly complex and uncertain social, political, technological and economic environment. It is clear that the future will require a population with the confidence and skills to meet the challenges posed by fast and far reaching change. As Thomas Friedman makes clear in his bestselling book, *The World is Flat*, students today are not competing with the student sitting next to them in class, or the rival school down the road. Today's students are competing in a global arena. The ability to source talent and skills across the globe is placing tremendous pressure on students to achieve at high levels so they can produce at those levels as adults.[58]

While the thrust of school organization change in other jurisdictions is toward larger schools, this is not to suggest that small schools are not capable of meeting students' needs. While small schools are particularly challenged in delivering programs, through various means they manage to offer, and in some instances extend upon, the basic program. The nature, breadth and pace of the changes here and around the world are such that doing nothing is not a particularly viable or sustainable option.

Our schools must serve the entire Island. Tignish and West Kent elementary schools are as much a part of the fabric of the school district and the province as they are their own school communities. Everyone profits from their success: students, parents, communities and citizens. School facilities provide positive learning environments for children and adults and serve as a source of deep pride for everyone. The challenge is to provide high quality instruction and diverse program opportunities in every school enabling every student to acquire the tools and confidence to meet his or her goals and aspirations.

APPENDIX A

School-Level Enrollment Forecasts

Figure 21: Enrollment Forecast for Bluefield Family of Schools

Legend:
- Bluefield
- East Wiltshire
- Westwood
- Eliot River
- Gulf Shore
- Englewood
- Central Queens
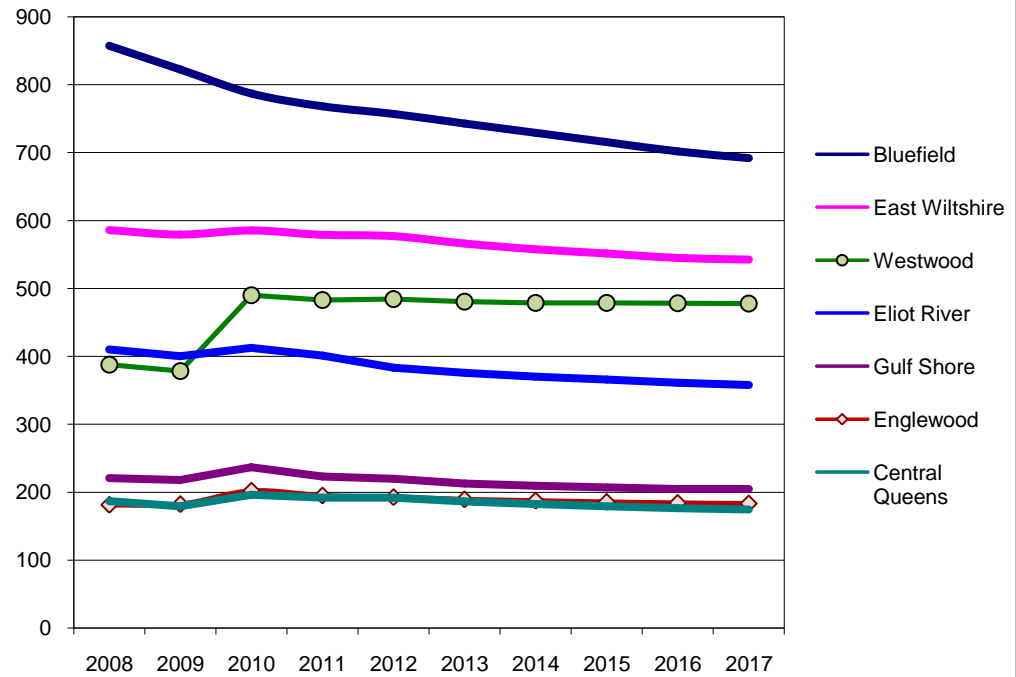
Figure 22: Enrollment Forecast for Charlottetown Rural Family of Schools

Legend:
- Charlottetown RH
- Stonepark
- Glen Stewart
- Sherwood
- LM Montgomery
- Donagh
- Gd Tracadie
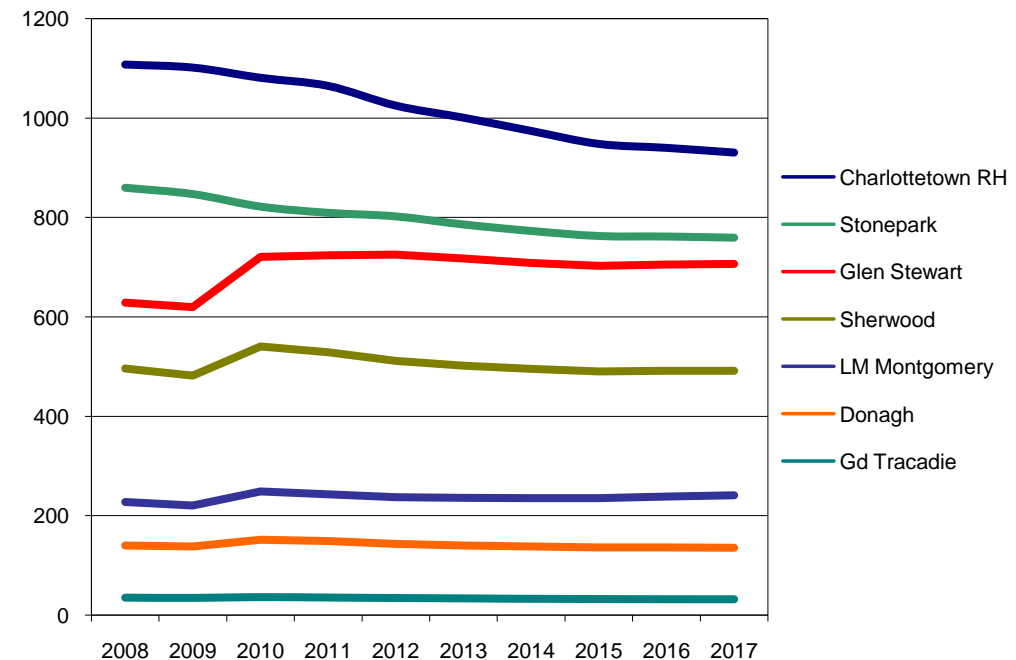
Figure 23: Enrollment Forecast for Colonel Gray Family of Schools

Legend:
- Colonel Gray
- Queen Charlotte
- West Royalty
- Springpark
- Birchwood
- Prince Street
- West Kent
- Parkdale
- St Jean
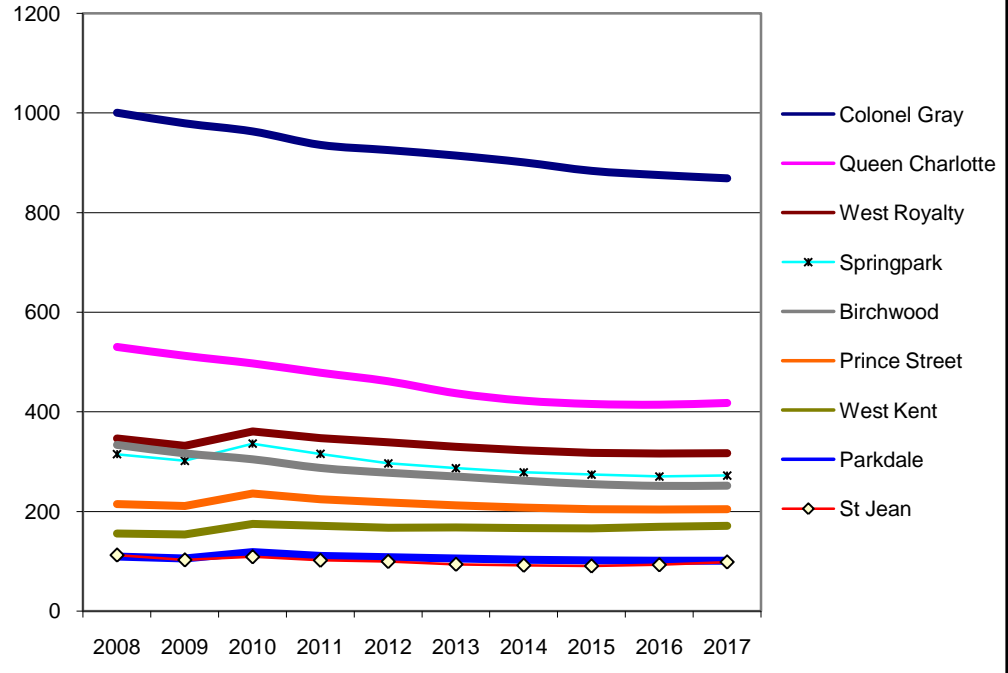
Figure 24: Enrollment Forecast for Montague Family of Schools

Legend:
- Montague H
- Montague C
- Montague I
- Southern Kings
- Belfast
- Vernon River
- Cardigan
- Georgetown
- Dundas
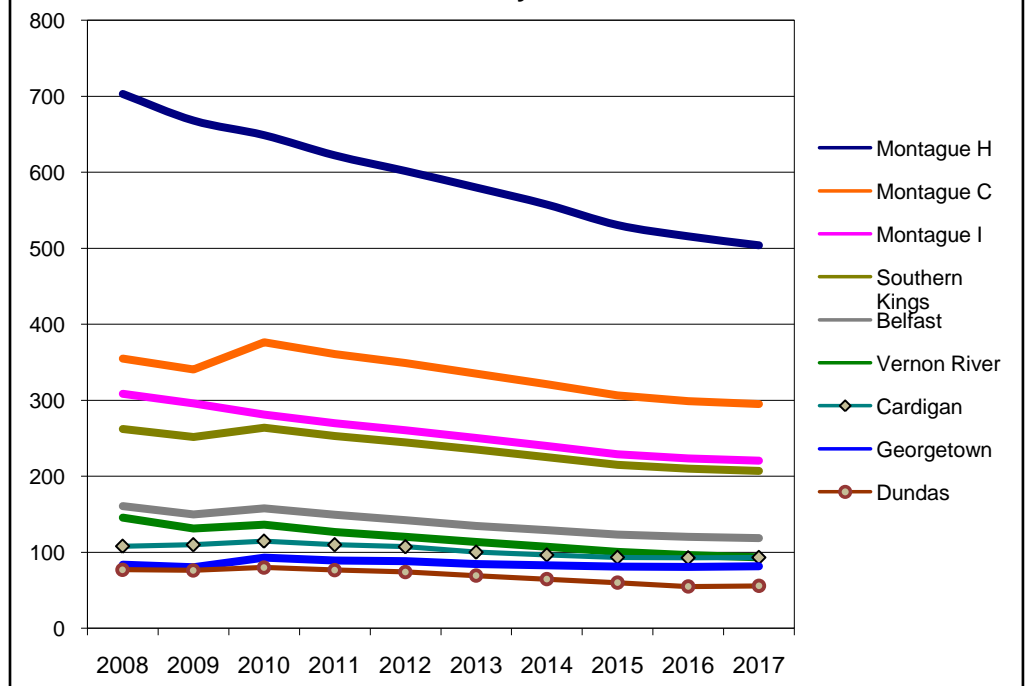
Figure 25: Enrollment Forecast for Morell Family of Schools

Legend: Morell RH, Morell Consol, Tracadie Cross, St Teresas, St Peters, Mt Stewart
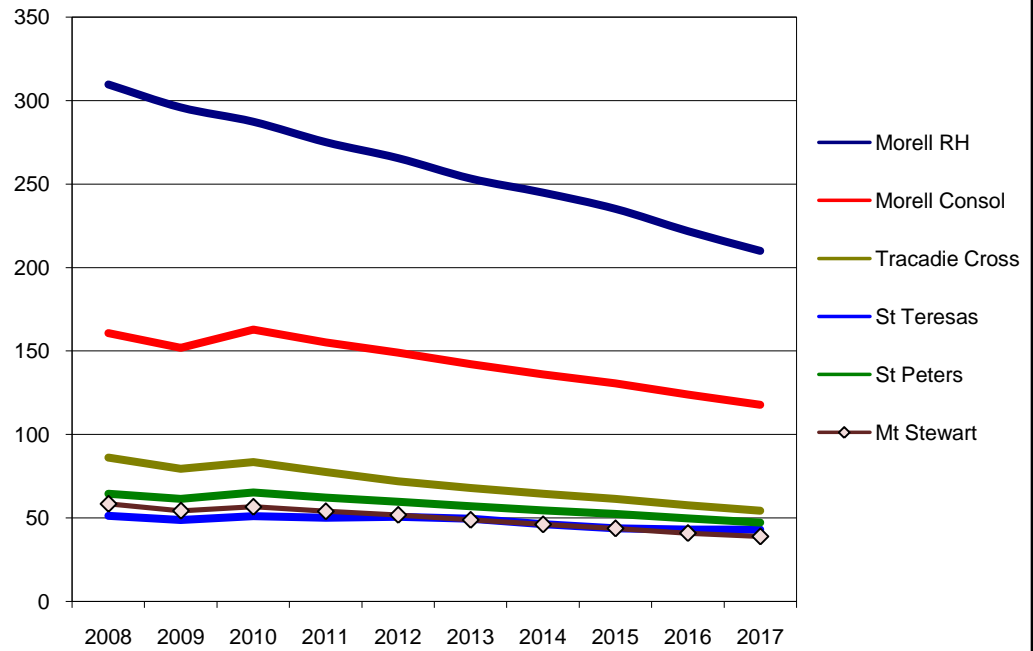
Figure 26: Enrollment Forecast for Souris Family of Schools

Legend: Souris High, Souris Consol, Rollo Bay, Fortune, Eastern Kings

Figure 27: Enrollment Forecast for Westisle Family of Schools

Legend: Westisle, Hernewood, Callaghan, Tignish, Alberton, O'Leary, Bloomfield, Ellerslie, St. Louis

Figure 28: Enrollment Forecast for Three Oaks Family of Schools

Legend: Three Oaks, Summerside I, Elm Street, Athena, Greenfield, Miscouche, Parkside

Figure 29: Enrollment Forecast for Kensington Family of Schools

Figure 30: Enrollment Forecast for Kinkora Family of Schools

**Figure 31: Enrollment Forecast for
La Commission scolaire de langue française schools**

Legend:
- École François-Buote
- École Évangéline
- École-sur-Mer
- École Pierre-Chiasson
- École St-Augustin
- École la Belle Cloche
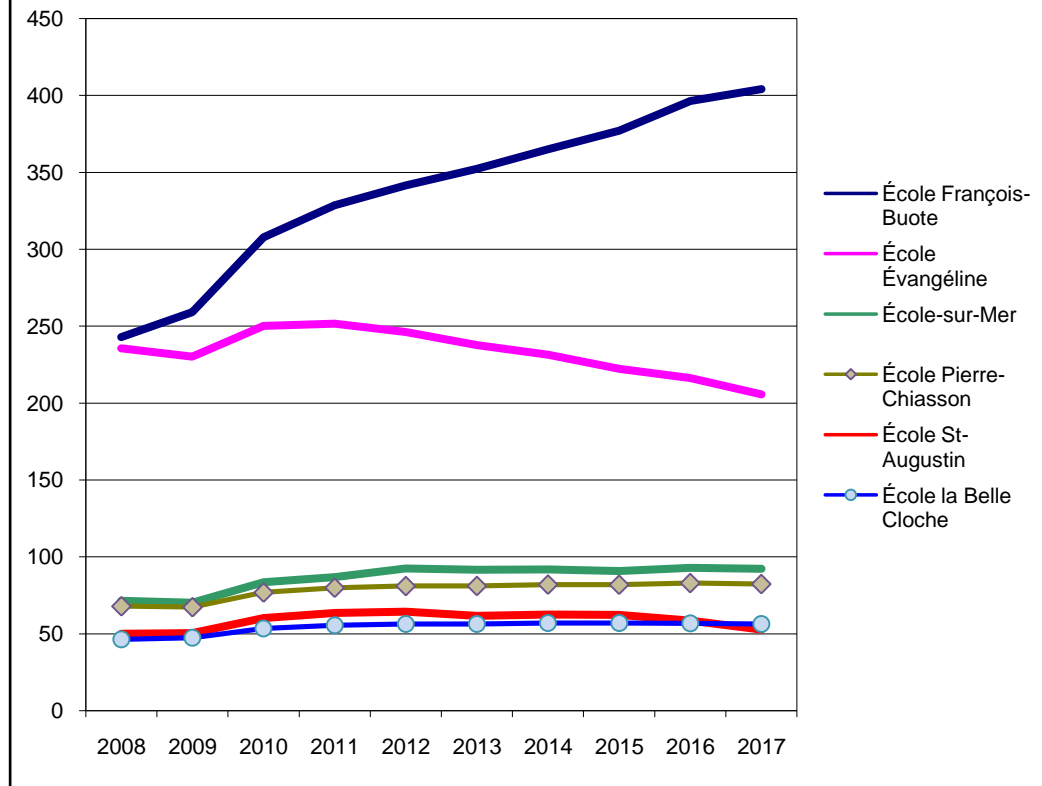
APPENDIX B

School Planning Information

APPENDIX: School Planning Information

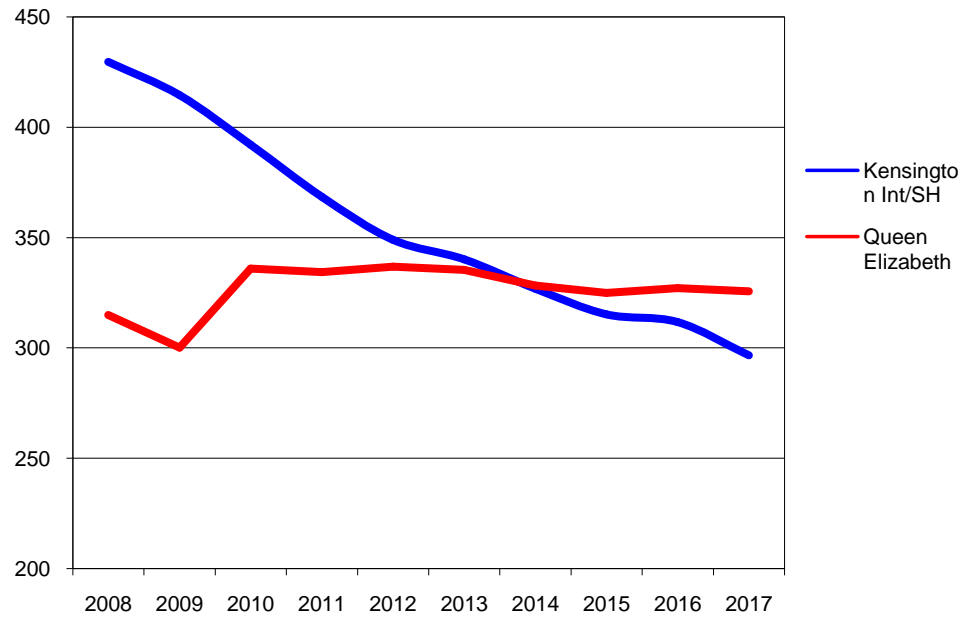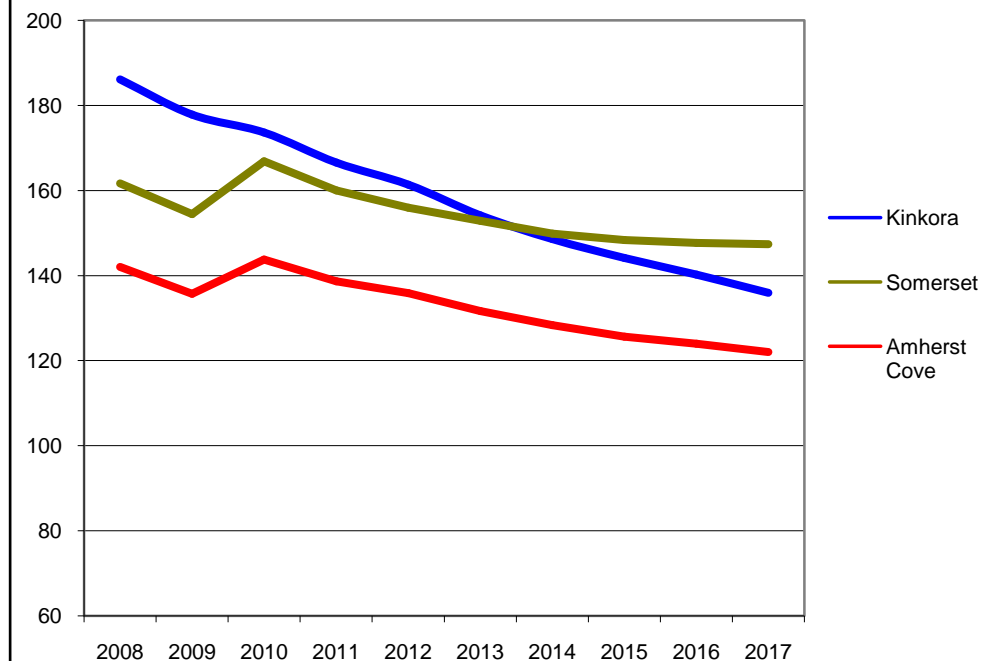| Eastern School District	Current Grades Offered	Students Bussed	Capacity	Enrollment					Utilization			Current Teachers		Instructional Areas		Facility				Notes
				1997	2007	2012	2017	percent change 2007 – 2017	2007	2012	2017	Number of Teachers assigned to School	Student Teacher Ratio	Classrooms	Other Dedicated Areas [1]	Year of Construction	Gross Area (sq ft)	Accessible	Condition of Facility	
Bluefield Family																				
Westwood Primary	1-3	95%	450	421	396	484	478	20.7%	88%	108%	106%	29.0	13.7	21	M,L, MP G,SE	1991	44,891	fully	very good	Four relocatable classrooms that, depending on enrollment, will need to be replaced or removed.
Eliot River Elementary	4-6	93%	480	408	427	383	358	-16.1%	89%	80%	75%	27.1	15.7	21	M,C(2), G,L,RA	1973	53,596	fully	very good	New handicap lift required.
Englewood School	1-9	99%	450	252	193	193	183	-5.1%	43%	43%	41%	15.7	12.3	11	M,LRC,C G	1962	39,209	fully	very good	Some upgrades required.
Gulf Shore Consolidated	1-9	99%	400	340	249	220	205	-17.8%	62%	55%	51%	20.1	12.4	17	RC,HE MPR,IA G,SR,C	1991	50,744	fully	excellent	Roof will need replacement. School offers Kindergarten.
Central Queens Elementary	1-6	96%	375	312	181	192	174	-3.7%	48%	51%	46%	15.1	12.0	15	F,M,L C,G	1960	41,986	fully	very good	School offers Kindergarten.
East Wiltshire Junior High	7-9	95%	670	588	572	577	542	-5.2%	85%	86%	81%	35.7	16.0	25	G,C,IA,M HE,LRC SE,CF	1980	83,637	fully	very good	Roof will need replacement.
Bluefield High School	10-12	98%	900	887	851	757	692	-18.7%	95%	84%	77%	45.8	18.6	16	V(2),GA M(2),C(2) HE(2),G SL(2),CF	1973	141,000	fully	excellent	
Charlottetown Rural Family																				
L. M. Montgomery Elementary	1-6	97%	375	388	242	237	241	-0.4%	65%	63%	64%	18.8	12.9	12	G,RC,C MPR,M	1983	43,998	fully	excellent	Roof will need replacement.
Glen Stewart Elementary	1-6	92%	600	695	659	725	706	7.2%	110%	121%	118%	42.2	15.6	31	C,M(2) RC,SE(2) F,L,G	1975	80,000	fully	good	Six relocatable classrooms which will need to be replaced.
Grand Tracadie Elementary	1-6	94%	80	54	36	34	32	-12.0%	45%	43%	40%	3.9	9.3	4	L,C	1955	7,198	poor	fair	No handicap access to upper and lower levels. No HV system, but large operational windows.

APPENDIX: School Planning Information

Eastern School District	Current Grades Offered	Students Bussed	Capacity	Enrollment					Utilization			Current Teachers		Classrooms	Other Dedicated Areas [1]	Year of Construction	Gross Area (sq ft)	Accessible	Condition of Facility	Notes
				1997	2007	2012	2017	percent change 2007 – 2017	2007	2012	2017	Number of Teachers assigned to School	Student Teacher Ratio							
Donagh Regional	1-9	95%	320	195*	139	143	135	-2.6%	43%	45%	42%	12.2	11.4	10	L,C,MPR IA,G	2001	31,710	fully	excellent	Has small IA shop
Sherwood Elementary	1-6	66%	625	614	504	512	492	-2.4%	81%	82%	79%	35.0	14.4	27	G,C(2) L,RC,SE MPR,M	1956	52,208	fully	very good	
Stonepark Intermediate	7-9	85%	1,000	784	865	802	759	-12.2%	87%	80%	76%	48.6	17.8	32	G,M,C(2) L,IA,CF SE(2),F,T	1974	114,949	fully	very good	Some upgrades required.
Charlottetown Rural High	10-12	89%	1,100	1,069	1,116	1,025	931	-16.6%	101%	93%	85%	58.7	19.0	33	C(3),L,CF B(2),V(2)G,SL (5)	1965	124,999	fully	excellent	Special needs area and roof need upgrades

*Prior to Donagh Regional School opening in 2001, students attended Fort Augustus Elementary.

Colonel Gray Family

	Current Grades Offered	Students Bussed	Capacity	1997	2007	2012	2017	percent change 2007 – 2017	2007	2012	2017	Number of Teachers assigned to School	Student Teacher Ratio	Classrooms	Other Dedicated Areas [1]	Year of Construction	Gross Area (sq ft)	Accessible	Condition of Facility	Notes
West Royalty Elementary	1-6	80%	450	163*	363	339	317	-12.7%	81%	75%	70%	26.3	13.8	18	F,M,MPR RC,CL,G	2000	48,495	fully	excellent	New school.
West Kent Elementary	1-6	26%	400	378*	169	167	171	1.2%	42%	42%	43%	14.3	11.9	14	L,M,RC,F SE,DPE	1963	36,896	fully	very good	No HV system. Parking lot needs upgrading.
Spring Park Elementary	1-6	63%	600	560	333	296	272	-18.4%	56%	49%	45%	27.1	12.3	21	C,L,G M,RC,O	1957	36,369	fully	fair	Two mobile classrooms. No HV system, but operational windows. Requires some interior renovations.
Parkdale Elementary	1-6	33%	300	220	112	108	101	-9.8%	37%	36%	34%	9.5	11.8	10	L,C,M G,RC,A	1956	26,000	no	very good	Requires handicap lift. No HV system in main school, but large operational windows. Little green space.
Prince Street Elementary	1-6	67%	500	367	231	218	204	-11.6%	46%	44%	41%	19.0	12.2	19	G,L,C RC,SE	1961	30,827	fully	very good	Gym is small. Little green space.
St. Jean Elementary	1-6	61%	500	236	125	99	98	-21.3%	25%	20%	20%	13.2	9.5	8	L,RC,C GA,O	1951	50,152	fully	very good	Other rooms include: dental clinic, ESL, teacher resource, visually impaired. Little green space. No HV system. Some upgrades required.

*1997 enrollments in both West Kent Elementary and West Royalty Elementary are not comparable with 2007 enrollments. Enrollments in both schools were significantly affected by the construction of a new West Royalty school in 2000.

APPENDIX: School Planning Information

Eastern School District	Current Grades Offered	Students Bussed	Capacity	Enrollment					Utilization			Current Teachers		Instructional Areas		Facility				Notes
				1997	2007	2012	2017	percent change 2007 – 2017	2007	2012	2017	Number of Teachers assigned to School	Student Teacher Ratio	Classrooms	Other Dedicated Areas [1]	Year of Construction	Gross Area (sq ft)	Accessible	Condition of Facility	
Birchwood Junior High	7-9	66%	600	542	354	277	251	-29.0%	59%	46%	42%	28.7	12.3	16	C(2),L,IA,HE G,M(2),GA, RC,A,CF	1957	96,367	fully	very good	
Queen Charlotte Jr. High	7-9	64%	600	549	553	461	418	-24.4%	92%	77%	70%	34.8	15.9	21	G,HE(2) IA,M,A C(2),SR	1953	83,616	fully	very good	Shares sports field with Colonel Gray High School. May soon require new roof on one section.
Colonel Gray Senior High	10-12	66%	1,100	976	964	925	869	-9.9%	88%	84%	79%	52.5	18.4	25	M,V(2),A B(2),C(2),C, F,G,HE	1968	123,751	fully	Vey good	
Montague Family																				
Dundas Consolidated	1-8	100%	225	77	77	74	56	-27.3%	34%	33%	25%	6.0	12.9	8	C,L,G	1966	20,390	some	very good	Not accessible to second floor. No HV system, but large operational windows. Upgrades required. Small gym.
Vernon River Consolidated	1-9	99%	400	226	156	120	93	-40.2%	39%	30%	23%	12.8	12.2	8	L,C,M,SR	1969	33,829	fully	very good	School offers Kindergarten.
Cardigan Consolidated	1-8	100%	300	235	127	107	93	-26.6%	42%	36%	31%	11.5	11.1	8	M,C,L,RC	1966	20,003	fully	very good	No HV system, but large operational windows.
Georgetown Consolidated	1-8	27%	200	110	84	88	81	-3.1%	42%	44%	41%	7.51	11.2	8	C,L,G	1954	19,400	fully	excellent	No HV system, but large operational windows. Some upgrades required. School offers Kindergarten.
Montague Consolidated	1-6	84%	575	458	366	349	295	-19.4%	64%	61%	51%	26.3	13.9	21	M,C,G,MP R L,SE,K	1971	65,776	fully	very good	School offers Kindergarten.
Southern Kings Consolidated	1-8	99%	450	370	272	245	207	-23.9%	60%	54%	46%	19.4	14.0	12	M,G,C LRC,F,RA	1973	41,383	fully	excellent	School offers Kindergarten.
Belfast Consolidated	1-9	97%	400	284	169	142	119	-29.8%	42%	36%	30%	12.8	13.2	15	C,LR(2),L M,G	1968	35,185	fully	very good	No HV system but large operational windows. School offers Kindergarten.
Montague Intermediate	7-9	90%	350	358	333	261	220	-33.8%	95%	74%	63%	20.5	16.2	15	C(2),HE,L,G SE,SL,M	1958	44,805	Fully	very good	School shares sports field with high school.
Montague Regional High	10-12	89%	800	705	694	602	504	-27.4	87%	75%	63%	39.5	17.6	19	M,G,SL(3) IA,HE(3),CF C(2),V(3)	1960	102,750	partially	average	Third floor not accessible.

APPENDIX: School Planning Information

Eastern School District	Current Grades Offered	Students Bussed	Capacity	Enrollment					Utilization			Current Teachers		Instructional Areas		Facility				Notes
				1997	2007	2012	2017	percent change 2007 – 2017	2007	2012	2017	Number of Teachers assigned to School	Student Teacher Ratio	Classrooms	Other Dedicated Areas [1]	Year of Construction	Gross Area (sq ft)	Accessible	Condition of Facility	
Morell Family																				
St. Peter's Consolidated	1-8	100%	300	119	70	60	47	-32.7%	23%	20%	16%	7.0	10.0	7	L,C,G,K	1967	20,175	poor	very good	Five levels with narrow stairs make it difficult to make accessible. School offers Kindergarten.
Morell Consolidated	1-8	93%	425	218	158	149	118	-25.4%	37%	35%	28%	13.9	11.4	14	G,C,L SR,RC,M	1967	36,778	fully	very good	No HV system, but large operational windows.
Mt. Stewart Consolidated	1-8	93%	240	117	58	52	39	-32.9%	24%	22%	16%	6.0	9.6	10	G,RC,M MPR,SR	1976	28,589	fully	very good	School offers Kindergarten.
Tracadie Cross Consolidated	1-8	74%	200	114	80	72	54	-32.1%	40%	36%	27%	9.0	8.9	6	RC,L	1956	9,996	fully	good	Wooden structure. No gym; uses Rec Centre next to school. May soon require new roof.
St. Teresa's Consolidated	1-8	98%	150	65	50	51	43	-14.0%	33%	34%	29%	5.2	9.6	4	C,L,F	1989	10,803	some	very good	Requires lift for accessibility to second floor. Has no gym, but access to Rec Centre.
Morell Regional High	9-12	93%	500	332	326	266	210	-35.6%	65%	53%	42%	22.9	14.2	7	HE(2),V,IA C(2),SL(5)	1962	63,000	fully	excellent	May soon require new roof.
Souris Family																				
Eastern Kings Consolidated	1-8	96%	150	110	70	63	55	-21.3%	47%	42%	37%	6.3	11.2	5	LRC,M,C G	1975	15,796	fully	very good	
Rollo Bay Consolidated	5-8	100%	200	139	89	73	63	-29.7%	45%	37%	31%	6.7	13.3	6	L,C,M	1966	14,397	some	excellent	Gym is small and not accessible. No HV system, but operational windows.
Fortune Consolidated	1-4	99%	250	128	69	67	57	-17.3%	28%	27%	23%	5.8	12.0	7	L,C,G	1968	17,603	poor	excellent	Three different levels with no handicap access between levels. No HV system, but large operational windows.
Souris Consolidated	1-8	59%	525	280	189	174	149	-21.3%	36%	33%	28%	14.8	12.8	19	K(2),C,M LR,G,L	1968	46,580	fully	very good	No HV system, but large operational windows. School offers Kindergarten.
Souris Regional High	9-12	80%	450	360	271	206	172	-36.6%	60%	46%	38%	20.4	13.3	7	CF,G,C HE(2),L SL(4),M	1965	62,978	fully	good	School has little available land. Requires some upgrades.

APPENDIX: School Planning Information

Western School Board	Current Grades Offered	Students Bussed	Capacity	Enrollment					Utilization			Current Teachers		Instructional Areas		Facility				Notes
				1997	2007	2012	2017	10 yr change	2007	2012	2017	Number of Teachers assigned to School	Student Teacher Ratio	Classrooms	Other Dedicated Areas [1]	Year of Construction	Gross Area (sq ft)	Accessible	Condition of Facility	
Westisle Family																				
Tignish Elementary	1-6	98%	320	294	214	224	199	-7.0%	67%	70%	62%	15.8	13.5	16	M,L,G,K SR	1989	34,458	yes	good	School offers Kindergarten.
St. Louis Elementary	1-6	100%	380	220	129	121	107	-16.7%	34%	32%	28%	10.3	12.5	19	M,L,G,K SR	1972	38,000	yes	good	School offers English and French Kindergarten.
O'Leary Elementary	1-6	97%	500	259	181	170	151	-16.4%	36%	34%	30%	13.3	13.6	25	M,L,G,K SR	1961	45,600	yes	good	School offers Kindergarten.
Ellerslie Elementary	1-6	100%	380	235	146	151	134	-8.1%	38%	40%	35%	11.9	12.2	19	M,L,G,C K,RR,SR	1972	38,000	yes	good	School offers Kindergarten.
Bloomfield Elementary	1-6	100%	340	245	165	166	147	-10.7%	49%	49%	43%	12.3	13.4	17	M,L,G,K SR	1970	36,800	yes	good	School offers Kindergarten. Playground needs to be upgraded
Alberton Elementary	1-6	98%	320	262	194	193	171	-11.8%	61%	60%	53%	13.8	14.0	16	M,G,K,SR	1960	35,680	yes	good	School offers Kindergarten.
M.E. Callaghan Junior High	7-9	100%	460	374	294	249	221	-24.8%	64%	54%	48%	21.0	14.0	23	M,L,G,IA C(2),SR	1976	81,695	yes	good	
Hernewood Junior High	7-9	100%	460	416	337	296	262	-22.2%	73%	64%	57%	24.5	13.8	23	M,L,G,IA C,SR	1976	81,695	yes	good	Classroom space used for special needs students
Westisle Composite High	10-12	100%	680	773	739	642	562	-23.9%	109%	94%	83%	45.5	16.4	34	M,L,O	1979	154,311	yes	good	Some upgrades required. Some classrooms used by Holland College.
Three Oaks Family																				
Athena Consolidated	1-9	99%	460	448	356	351	337	-5.3%	77%	76%	73%	24.6	14.5	21	M,L,IA,SL LR,SR	1999	58,423	yes	good	
Miscouche Consolidated	1-9	98%	260	203	247	272	251	1.6%	95%	105%	97%	17.5	14.1	13	M,L,G,SR	1962	34,640	yes	good	Classroom space tight
Elm Street Elementary	1-6	65%	460	516	462	456	430	-6.9%	100%	99%	94%	30.5	15.1	23	M,L,G,SR	1961	41,327	yes	fair	Portable classroom. Major renovations required in future.
Greenfield Elementary	1-6	91%	440	479	340	374	349	2.6%	77%	85%	79%	26.5	12.8	22	L,G,RC,SR SE(2)	1977	47,450	yes	good	
Parkside Elementary	1-6	61%	440	306	196	191	169	-14.0%	45%	43%	38%	15.0	13.1	22	L,G,RC,SR	1987	59,547	yes	good	

APPENDIX: School Planning Information

Western School Board	Current Grades Offered	Students Bussed	Capacity	Enrollment					Utilization			Current Teachers		Instructional Areas		Facility				Notes
				1997	2007	2012	2017	10 yr change	2007	2012	2017	Number of Teachers assigned to School	Student Teacher Ratio	Classrooms	Other Dedicated Areas [1]	Year of Construction	Gross Area (sq ft)	Accessible	Condition of Facility	
Summerside Intermediate	7-9	77%	660	614	570	510	467	-18.0%	86%	77%	71%	35.5	16.1	34	M,L,G,SR	1966	93,950	yes	good	
Three Oaks Senior High	10-12	96%	1,020	841	920	743	624	-32.2%	90%	73%	61%	54.0	17.0	51	M,L,T,G SL,V,SR,O	1976	159,275	yes	good	Some upgrades required
Kensington Family																				
Queen Elizabeth Elementary	1-6	97%	380	471	341	337	326	-4.5%	90%	89%	86%	22.9	14.9	19	G,SR,L,O	1976	51,395	yes	good	
Kensington Intermediate/Senior	7-12	96%	520	448	438	349	297	-32.3%	84%	67%	57%	30.5	14.4	26	G,SR,C,L	1955	92,392	yes	good	
Kinkora Family																				
Somerset Elementary	1-8	99%	180	212	166	156	147	-11.2%	92%	87%	82%	11.9	13.9	9	M,SR,G SL	1984	29,000	yes	good	
Amherst Cove Consolidated	1-8	98%	280	185	147	136	122	-17.0%	53%	49%	44%	12.3	12.0	14	M,L,G,SR	1992	41,345	yes	good	School offers Kindergarten
Kinkora Regional High	9-12	100%	160	178	195	161	136	-30.3%	122%	101%	85%	14.3	13.7	8	M,L,G,SR	1962	37,204	yes	good	Currently, teachers move frequently due to limited classroom space.

[1] M = Music, L = Library, RC = Resource Centre, LRC = Library Resource Centre, MPR = Multi-purpose Room, SE = Special Education Area, F = French, SR = Science Room, SL = Science Labs, K = Kindergarten Room, C = Computer Room/Lab, DE = Distance Education Room, RR = Reading Recovery, RA = Remedial Area, A = Arts Room, B = Business Room, V = Vocational Area, IA = Industrial Arts, HE = Home Economics, GA = Guidance Area, G = Gym, T = Theatre, LR = Lunch Room, SR = Staff Room, CF = Cafeteria, O = Other Areas.

APPENDIX: School Planning Information

La Commission scolaire de langue française	Current Grades Offered	Students Bussed	Capacity	Enrollment					Utilization			Current Teachers		Instructional Areas		Facility				Notes
				1997	2007	2012	2017	Percent Change 2007-2017	2007	2012	2017	Number of Teachers assigned to School	Student Teacher Ratio	Classrooms	Other Dedicated Areas [1]	Year of Construction	Gross Area (sq ft)	Accessible	Condition of Facility	
École St-Augustin	1-6	100%	60	0	48	64	53	9.9%	80%	107%	88%	4.9	9.8	3	C,G	N/A	9,500	poor	poor	
École-sur-Mer	1-6	100%	150	0	67	92	92	37.5%	45%	62%	61%	5.8	11.6	6	L,C,MPR G,M	2002	45,350	yes	good	
École Pierre-Chiasson	1-12	100%	100	0	63	81	82	30.6%	63%	81%	82%	8.2	7.7	7	L,C,SL,MPR G,M,DE	2006	39,452	yes	good	
École la Belle Cloche	1-11	100%	60	0	40	56	56	40.8%	67%	94%	94%	6.2	6.5	5	MPR,C,G	N/A	9,500	limits	N/A	
École Évangéline	1-12	100%	525	455	247	246	206	-16.7%	47%	47%	39%	23.1	10.7	17	L,IA,SL(4) CF,G(2),A M(2),C,O	1964	90,100	limits	solid	School offers Kindergarten. Facility needs upgrades.
École François-Buote	1-12	100%	150	169	229	341	404	76.5%	153%	228%	269%	20.6	11.1	13	L,C,SL,M,C FG,T,DE	1991	61,877	yes	good	Facility needs upgrades

[1]M=Music, L=Library, RC=Resource Centre, LRC=Library Resource Centre, MPR=Multi-purpose Room, SE=Special Education Area, F=French, SR=Science Room, SL=Science Labs, K=Kindergarten Room, C=Computer Room/Lab, DE=Distance Education Room, RR=Reading Recovery, RA=Remedial Area, A=Arts Room, B=Business Room, V=Vocational Area, IA=Industrial Arts, HE=Home Economics, GA=Guidance Area, G=Gym, T=Theatre, LR=Lunch Room, SR=Staff Room, CF=Cafeteria, O=Other Areas.

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