

### Why is this reconfiguration happening?

Our school system is growing and we are experiencing growth in our pre-primary and elementary school grades. To support this growth, we are expanding Maple Grove to become a Grade 6 to 8 school, in line with most middle schools in the province. This change will benefit Grade 6 students with additional learning, social, and extracurricular activities.

This reconfiguration ensures we have enough space at each of the affected elementary schools to have children from pre-primary to grade 5 in the buildings. Maple Grove has the space to become a grades 6-8 school.

### Why are we just finding out now?

As next year's Pre-Primary and overall projected enrollments began to take shape (based on registrations starting in January and into February), it became clear that some of our elementary schools did not have enough room for the 2020-2021 school year. There was not adequate space in two of our elementary schools, based on current projections for next year. A change to existing configurations was required.

A number of possibilities were examined. The decision to create the new configurations for September 2020 was based on keeping pre-primary students at the elementary school they will be attending in Grade Primary, and allowing Maple Grove to become the most common configuration for a middle school (grades 6-8).

### I feel as though my child is too young to attend Maple Grove Education Centre.

The vast majority of middle schools in Nova Scotia come in the form of Grade 6-8 configurations and there are many benefits to this alignment. In response to this reconfiguration, Maple Grove will be receiving several enhancements over the summer to support students. These include (but are not limited to):

- Classroom upgrades
- Technology upgrades
- The installation of new lockers
- Some new furniture (including new cafeteria tables)
- The installation of new, age appropriate outdoor play spaces
- Painting and upgrades to the exterior

### How will you address the safety concerns of families?

Maple Grove Education Centre is a school with a very positive environment for both students and staff. As part of the reconfiguration, each feeder school will be forming a *Transition Committee* composed of staff, students and families as a means to provide input and direction to the reconfiguration. In addition, the majority of Grade 6 teachers from the feeder schools are moving to Maple Grove and will provide valuable guidance as it relates to

creating a positive environment for Grade 6 students. Safe and Inclusive Schools remain a top priority.

#### **What are the benefits to making this decision?**

Maple Grove will become a grades 6-8 school, which is a very common grade configuration for a Middle School in Nova Scotia. This will assist MGEC in networking with other grades 6-8 schools across the province. It will also provide grade 6 students the opportunity to be in a Middle School environment, which increases opportunities for age appropriate learning, social, and extracurricular activities. It will allow all grade 6s in the MGEC feeder schools to be a cohort, which will assist in building social cohesion and belonging.

#### **What about year-end celebrations at the elementary schools?**

Between now and the end of the school year, staff from TCRCE will work with our School Advisory Councils and school communities to plan for a smooth transition as we consider important questions such as the leaving celebrations for grade 6 and grade 5 students. A transition committee is being formed to receive input on matters related to transitioning students to middle school. Transition committees may also wish to discuss how year-end celebrations could look in the current environment.

#### **Does my child's Grade 6 curriculum change as a result? Will they have subject teachers?**

There are no changes to the Grade 6 curriculum or how the Grade 6 taught as a result of the reconfiguration. Students will continue to have a homeroom teacher, in addition to separate teachers for Physical Education, Music and Core French (*English stream*). Some elementary schools do choose to have separate teachers for Literacy and Mathematics and this possibility could present itself at Maple Grove as well, depending on a number of factors.

#### **Do capacity restrictions due to COVID-19 change how this looks at Maple Grove?**

As we have throughout COVID-19, we will operate our schools following the direction of the Province and Public Health. Maple Grove will operate the same as every other school in the province as it relates to any potential changes resulting from Public Health directives next Fall. This direction will be consistent across all schools in the province.

#### **Will my child remain with their current teacher?**

With any change, consistency is always taken into consideration. The administration at Maple Grove, along with existing and incoming staff, will collaborate around ensuring a focus is kept on what's best for all students. Although keeping every child with their existing teacher may not be possible, individual circumstances will be considered in making these decisions.

#### **What does transportation look like for my child?**

Bus routes are already established, as the order of schools (elementary feeder school to Maple Grove to YCMHS) has not changed. TCRCE Transportation will ensure any updates to



**Tri-County**

Regional Centre for Education

routes reflect differences in student enrollment for any school. Any changes will be communicated.