



**Sustainability Study Report and Recommendation
Policy 409
North South Esk Elementary School
And
North South Esk Regional High School
November 16, 2015**

Sustainability Study Final Report and Recommendation
North South Esk Elementary School
and
North South Esk Regional High School

The sustainability study done by the DEC looked at 3 options as recommended by District Office staff:

maintain status quo

or

relocate the grade 6 students from North and South Esk Elementary School to the high school
making NSEE a K-5 and NSER a 6-12

or

relocate all students from North and South Esk Elementary School to NSER creating a K-12
school

Criteria	Points to Consider
1. Low Declining Enrolments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enrolment at both schools has remained stable for the last few years and is projected to remain fairly stable over the next few years due to students transitioning from two First Nation Schools – Natoaganag and Metepenagiag- who are seeing increased enrolments in their schools.• The community has difficulty with the method for determining percentage occupancy and feel that there are too many unanswered questions about the process to be a viable indicator of available and usable space in a school. North and South Esk Elementary does not meet the target for below percentage occupancy but North South Esk Regional High School does, based on Office of Comptroller data from 2011.• Moving grade 6 students to NSER to increase their percentage occupancy would then target NSEE which would fall below the percentage occupancy number of 30% so fixing one problem to cause another does not seem prudent.

<p>2. Health and Safety</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both schools are in excellent shape, are accessible and require few upgrades at this time.
<p>3. Education Programs and Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment results at both schools are always well above district and provincial averages, speaking to the exceptional educational programming that has been developed at North and South Esk Elementary and North and South Esk Regional High School. Please note that the grade 8 math results shared by the district for 2013-14 school year were incorrect and the results were actually 65.2% and not 47% and were above the district and provincial averages. These results also speak to the engagement of the school community, over 800 of whom attended both public meetings on the sustainability studies. Students who have attended North and South Esk Regional High School go on to become community leaders with 4 Beaverbrook Scholars as past graduates, as well as business owners in the area. Both NSEE and NSER share a close collaborative relationship and connection, and work together to ensure consistency of effort in academics and sports. Students in grade 6 from NSEE travel to NSER for developmentally appropriate sports teams but then return to their school where they are valuable student leaders. NSEE has developed a strong student leadership team that depends on the grade 6 students. Many extra-curricular activities include community based activities like Girl Guides, Karate and Country Kids afterschool clubs that happen within the walls of the school.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Because of the close proximity of the schools, the gymnasiums are able to be shared and utilized by both schools when necessary. • NSEE was named one of the Top Twenty Five Schools in Canada through Parent Magazine in 2009 and continues to demonstrate the excellence that earned this distinction.
4. Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Busing is not affected with any of the options so is not an issue.
5. Operating Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital improvement costs are low and there are no emergency repairs required for either school. • Both schools' operating costs are in line with other schools in the district and they have comparable cost per student to other schools of similar size. • NSER is one of only a handful of schools of its size to have an active alumni. The alumni supports innovative projects in the school and has raised thousands of dollars to support activities. • The Home and School at NSEE is very active and they too, have supported many initiatives at the school that go above and beyond what operational budgets could support. • The schools also have their own cafeteria service that employs 4 employees with a combined 111 work hours per week. The service is also making a profit and moneys above and beyond operational costs go back to the schools to support initiatives. • To change NSEE to a K-5 would not require a financial output, however, the school deals well with the grade 6 students and they enjoy their time at NSEE.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To relocate all students to NSER and create a K-12 would involve additional costs and renovations to the school. As well, the loss of the gymnasium at NSEE would be felt throughout the community.
6. Impact on the Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The community of Sunny Corner where the two schools reside is a vibrant and active community. Members take great pride in the schools and attend special events even if they have no personal connections to the school. This was certainly seen in the large number of community members who came out to support the school during the sustainability studies. • The gymnasiums at both schools are well used by the community and represent important infrastructure in the community. • If NSEE closed, the taxes collected would no longer be available and this would put a further strain on the people of Sunny Corner. • The Royal Canadian Legion also works closely with the schools and have supported the schools with over \$120k in cash/in kind to assist the students. • The Sunny Corner arena is the only arena in the province not funded by a Local Service District. Minor hockey is vital to the survival of the arena and the school binds the local communities together. • The schools are seen as the hubs of the community and the community supports the schools wholeheartedly.
7. Impact on Other Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The biggest impact on other schools is the need to spend extra resources to support smaller schools. Academic results from North South Esk

	Elementary and North South Esk Regional High School however, show that this expenditure is warranted.
8. Economic Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are currently several businesses and community organizations in the Sunny Corner area that rely on the viability of both schools. With the construction of the new Payroll Center in Miramichi, people are seriously looking at Sunny Corner as a place to live, due to its community spirit, excellent schools and quality lifestyle. Two doctors have recently moved to the community based on the excellent reputations of the schools.

District Education Council Recommendation: North South Esk Elementary School and North South Esk Regional High School be given a 4 year exemption from further sustainability studies.