

GUIDING OUR FUTURE

Engagement Summary and What We Heard

APRIL 2023



We respectfully acknowledge that we are on Treaty 8 territory, traditional lands of the Cree, Beaver, Dene and Métis people and their ancestors. As Treaty People, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, we share the responsibility of honouring what is agreed in the Treaty, of caring for and building equitable friendships with each other, and of our responsibilities in relationship to each other.

We are committed to ensuring Indigenous connections to this land are honoured and that the rights of those who have stewarded these lands for millennia are respected in all aspects of our work – as long as the sun shines, the grass grows and the river flows.

A large group of people, including students and staff, are gathered in a gymnasium for a community meeting. They are seated at long tables, and some are standing and talking. The room has a basketball hoop and a clock on the wall.





ENGAGEMENT PURPOSE

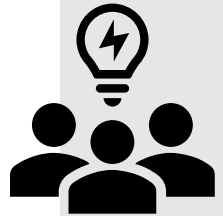
- What's working well in the current school configuration?
- What are the challenges and opportunities for change?
- As we move forward to determining how best to design junior high programming in the area, what would you like us to consider?

HOW WE ENGAGED & WHO RESPONDED



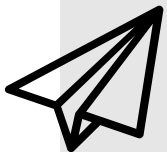
ONLINE SURVEY

- ✓ An online survey was available from January 24 - February 24
- ✓ We received 683 responses to this survey.



BRAINSTORMING IDEAS WITH THE COMMUNITY

- ✓ 15,178 votes were received on a wide range of submissions between January 24 and February 3, 2023.
- ✓ We received over 450 idea submissions through this tool.



- ✓ Responded to 28 emails and 18 letters from engaged community members



COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

- ✓ In-person community conversations took place on February 14, 15 and 16 in Beaverlodge, Hythe and Horse Lake First Nation
- ✓ Over 185 community members participated in these events and/or by communicating directly with PWPSD.



STUDENT CONVERSATIONS

- ✓ PWPSD staff spoke to elementary, junior high and high school students
- ✓ Over 265 students participated



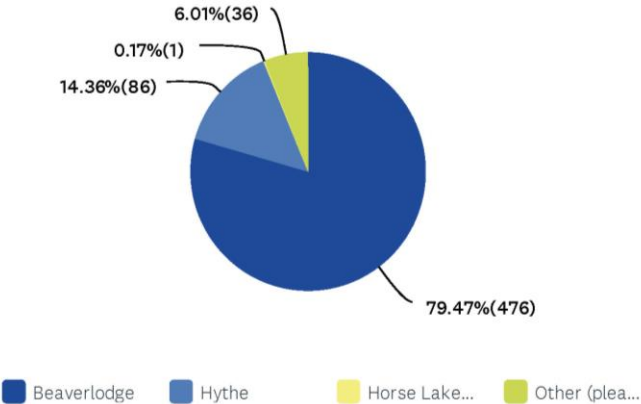
STAFF DELIBERATIVE FORUMS

- ✓ 2 Forums
- ✓ 58 school staff

WHO RESPONDED – ONLINE SURVEY

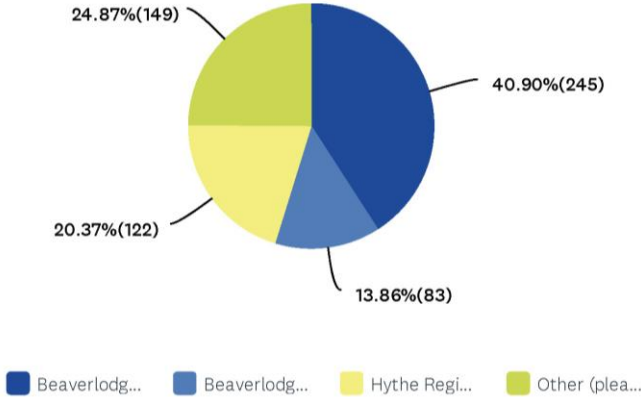
Q14 What community do you most associate with?

Answered: 599 Skipped: 84



Q13 What school(s) are you affiliated with?

Answered: 599 Skipped: 84



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Beaverlodge	79.47%	476
Hythe	14.36%	86
Horse Lake First Nation	0.17%	1
Other (please specify)	6.01%	36
TOTAL		599

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Beaverlodge Elementary School (BES)	40.90%	245
Beaverlodge Regional High School (BRHS)	13.86%	83
Hythe Regional School (HRS)	20.37%	122
Other (please specify)	24.87%	149
TOTAL		599



This is a complex conversation.

The background of the slide features a close-up, slightly blurred image of several hands of different skin tones raised in the air, palms facing forward. This gesture typically signifies agreement, support, or a collective decision. The hands are layered, with some in the foreground and others slightly behind, creating a sense of depth and unity. The lighting is soft and even, highlighting the textures of the skin.

A NOTE FROM THE PROJECT TEAM

WHAT WE ASKED

SCENARIO 1

Realignment: BES K-7 and BRHS 8-12

Add Beaverlodge Grade 7 students
to BES

Add Beaverlodge Grade 8 and 9
students to BRHS
HRS remains K-9

SCENARIO 2

Realignment: BES K-8 and BRHS 9-12

Add Beaverlodge Grade 7 and 8
students to BES

Add Beaverlodge Grade 9 students
to BRHS
HRS remains K-9

SCENARIO 3

Leave school configuration as is

No changes to school configurations
or possible teaching assignments.

QUESTIONS

What are the benefits of this scenario?

What are the drawbacks of this scenario?

IF the school district were to move forward with
this scenario, what would you like them to consider?

WHAT WAS ON THE HEARTS & MINDS OF COMMUNITY

Declining enrollment at Beaverlodge Elementary School

Programming, extracurricular activities, diversity and relational considerations

Decision-making considerations and supporting the needs of all communities involved

Opportunities and challenges of delivering K-12 education in Beaverlodge

Transportation, bussing and commuting considerations

Creating community for our children

Considerations regarding regional schools



WHAT STUDENTS SHARED

What do you enjoy about attending Beaverlodge Elementary School (BES)?

Do any concerns or worries about attending Hythe Regional School (HRS) for junior high? If so, what are they?

What do you enjoy about attending Hythe Regional School (HRS)?

What are you most excited about in attending junior high at Hythe Regional School?

If a change was made to junior high programming what would that mean to you as a student?

If things stayed the same at Hythe Regional School, what would that mean to you as a student?



SCENARIO 3:

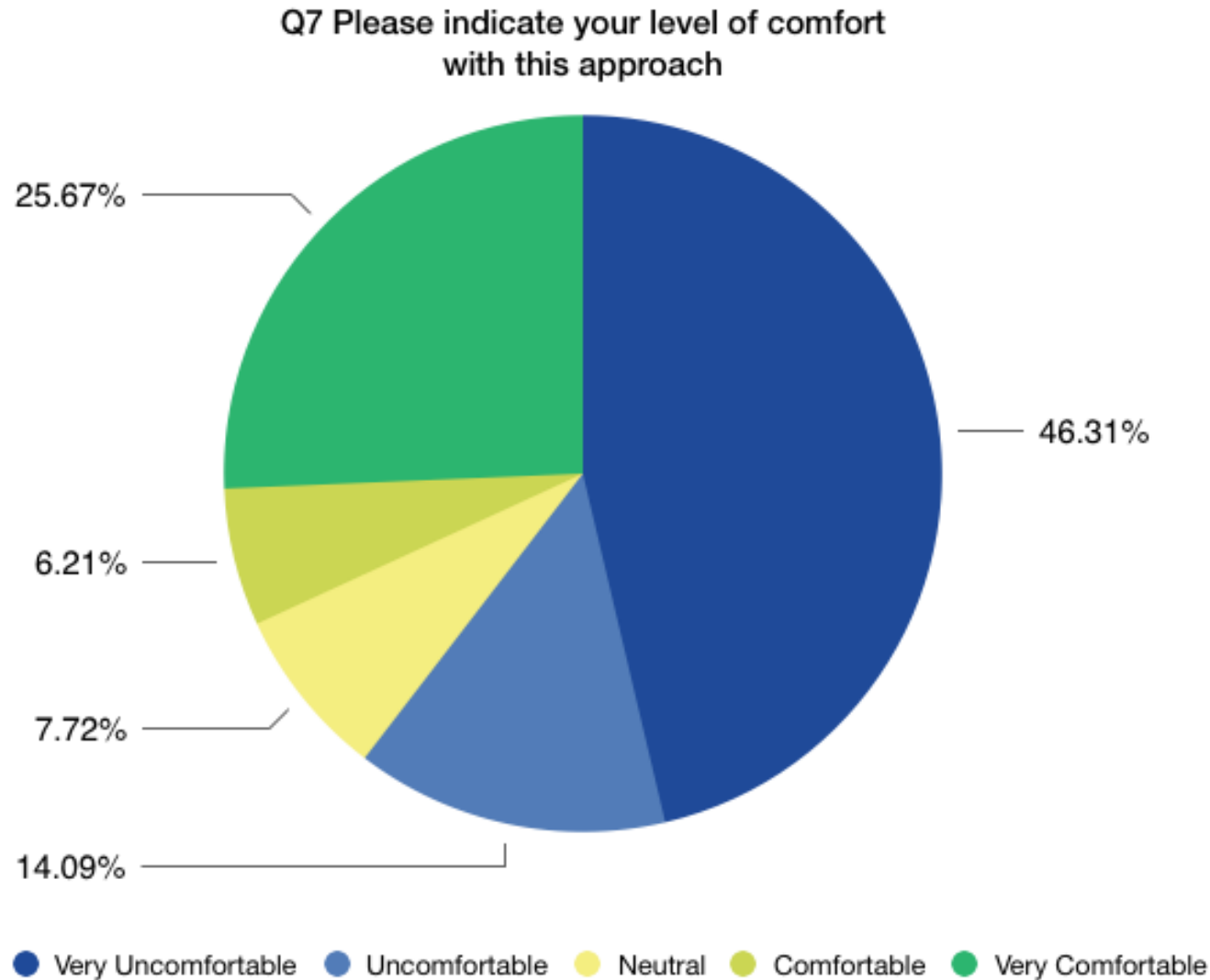
LEAVE SCHOOL CONFIGURATION AS IS



THE THIRD SCENARIO SHARED FOR COMMUNITY FEEDBACK INVOLVED NO CHANGES TO SCHOOL CONFIGURATION. IF APPROVED, THIS APPROACH WOULD INVOLVE:

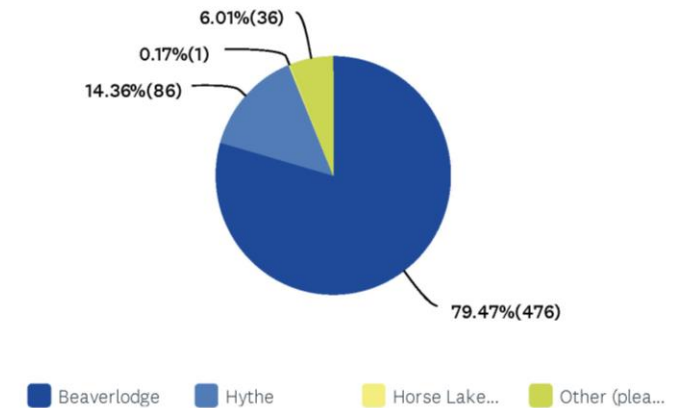
- LEAVING SCHOOL CONFIGURATION AS IT IS CURRENTLY (BES K-6, HRS REMAINS K-9 WITH BES GRADES 7-9 ZONED TO ATTEND HRS, BRHS GRADES 10-12)
- NO CHANGES TO SCHOOL CONFIGURATIONS OR POSSIBLE TEACHING ASSIGNMENTS

SCENARIO 3: LEAVE SCHOOL CONFIGURATION AS IS



Q14 What community do you most associate with?

Answered: 599 Skipped: 84



In the online survey, respondents shared their overall comfort level with this scenario for junior high programming. It is important to note that the majority of survey respondents shared that they associate most with Beaverlodge, and also that voices in any engagement process expressing inequity will always be less than a majority. As such, it is important to understand that this quantitative data provides an incomplete story without the added context of participant stories, perspectives and experiences.

SCENARIO 3: LEAVE SCHOOL CONFIGURATION AS IS - BENEFITS



As shared by broader community & respondents

- ✓ Benefiting Hythe and Horse Lake students, potentially over Beaverlodge students.
- ✓ Continued socialization between communities and bringing people together; students and parents alike.
- ✓ Everything can remain the same.
- ✓ Students continue to create new friendships, meet new people, and start fresh while receiving a specialized junior high program that suits their age group and maturity level.
- ✓ Leveraging available infrastructure and accommodating long-term growth potential.
- ✓ Saving the school division from short-term investment costs to accommodate a new program configuration across the schools.

As shared by high school students

- ✓ Less stress on teachers
- ✓ Beaverlodge and Hythe students can meet and form bonds before high school
- ✓ More option classes
- ✓ Better sports programming
- ✓ Minimal impact on teachers (e.g. hiring, firing)
- ✓ Students will be in classes with others at their maturity level
- ✓ More community involvement in schools
- ✓ Things will stay the same
- ✓ Schools will be used well
- ✓ The school board won't have to find extra money or resources
- ✓ Less stress on school board - No need to find funding for transition/resources
- ✓ Hythe will still get funding
- ✓ This works and is easy
- ✓ Small changes will happen more often and be consistent.

SCENARIO 3: LEAVE SCHOOL CONFIGURATION AS IS - **DRAWBACKS**



As shared by broader community & respondents

- Things will stay the same.
- Decreased funding and enrollment for Beaverlodge schools.
- Negatively impacting Beaverlodge schools (BES and BRHS) and disappointing Beaverlodge parents.
- Not using BES to its full potential.
- Result in lost public trust in PWPSD due to inaction on this decision.
- Continuing to divide the communities as inaction will foster continued rivalry and resentment.

As shared by high school students

- Parents in Beaverlodge parents will still be upset
- Students will still need to take the bus, but it will be manageable
- HRS will be crowded
- BES may have less funding due to lack of enrollment
- It will be more challenging for Beaverlodge parents
- Students from other areas may feel excluded
- Fewer options for schooling
- The school may need to spend more on equipment
- Siblings may have to go to different schools



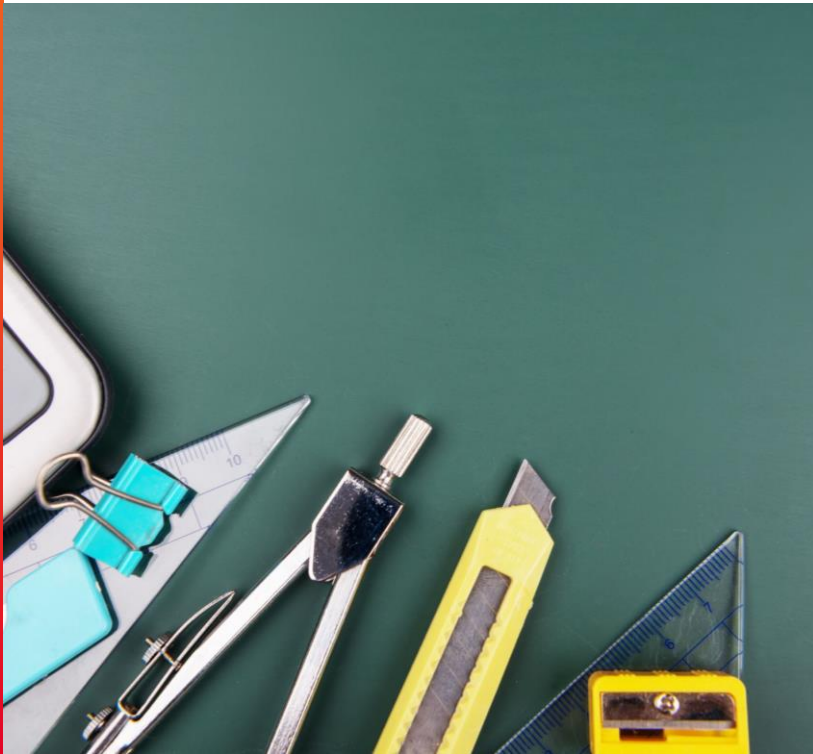
SCENARIO 2:

**BES K-8 AND BRHS 9-12,
HRS REMAINS K-9**

THE SECOND SCENARIO CREATED FOR COMMUNITY INPUT INVOLVED REALIGNING STUDENTS SO THAT GRADES K-8 ATTEND BES AND GRADES 9-12 ATTEND BRHS.

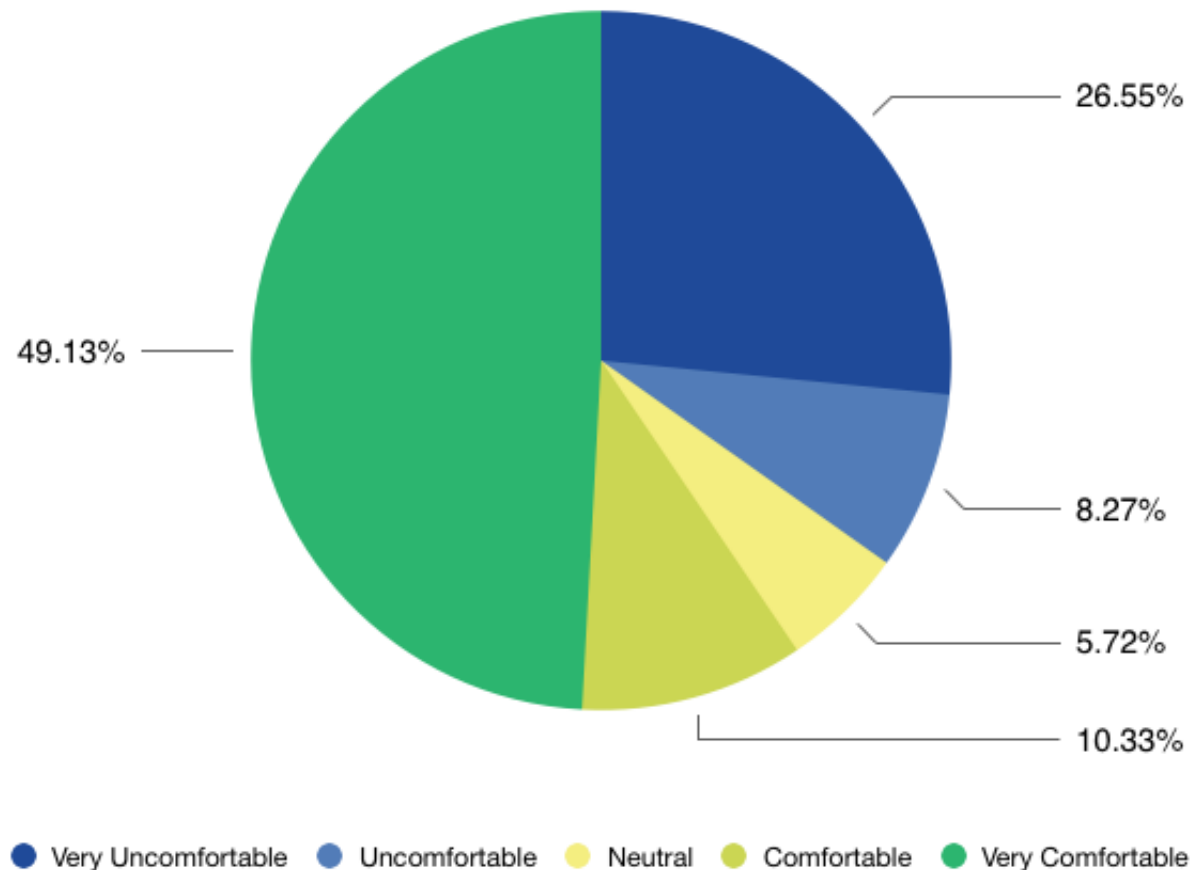
IF APPROVED, THIS APPROACH WOULD INVOLVE:

- ADDING BEAVERLODGE GRADE 7 AND 8 STUDENTS TO BES (BES BECOMES K-8)
- ADDING BEAVERLODGE GRADE 9 STUDENTS TO BRHS (BRHS BECOMES 9-12, WITH BEAVERLODGE GRADE 9 STUDENTS ZONED TO ATTEND BRHS INSTEAD OF HRS)
- HRS WOULD REMAIN K-9



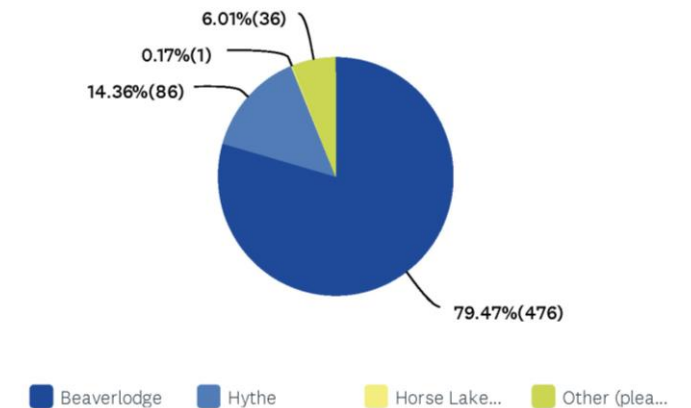
SCENARIO 2: BES K-8 AND BRHS 9-12, HRS REMAINS K-9

Q4 Please indicate your level of comfort with this approach



Q14 What community do you most associate with?

Answered: 599 Skipped: 84



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SCENARIO 2: BES K-8 AND BRHS 9-12, HRS REMAINS K-9 - **BENEFITS**



As shared by broader community & respondents

- ✓ Students can stay in their own community
- ✓ Students will bus less
- ✓ More appropriate age grouping than Scenario 1.
- ✓ potentially increasing overall funding leading to better programs
- ✓ More extra-curricular opportunities for students,
- ✓ Improved convenience for parents.
- ✓ Increased sense of safety for those who voiced concerns with bullying at HRS and/or student bus transit on the highway.
- ✓ Helping students build better relationships with other students and teachers.

As shared by high school students

- ✓ Better age distribution between elementary and high school
- ✓ Students stay in their own community of Beaverlodge
- ✓ Grade 9 students may mature faster in a high school environment
- ✓ More funding may be available
- ✓ Parents may benefit from the change
- ✓ Less time spent on the bus
- ✓ Improved sports team situation

SCENARIO 2: BES K-8 AND BRHS 9-12, HRS REMAINS K-9 - **DRAWBACKS**



As shared by broader community & respondents

- Disproportionately negative impact on HRS and potential programming cuts / staff downsizing
- Lowering of the quality of education due to reduced funding, loss of specialized teachers, special needs infrastructure
- Lessening of community interaction, creating division and segregation in the larger regional community
- Not adequately capturing the age / maturity grouping,
- Difficulties in school sports programming, dividing kids and resources
- Not addressing the overall regional downward trend of enrollment rates
- Inadequate facilities at BES to accommodate increased student population and programming for junior high students
- Not addressing bus issues for rural, Hythe, and Horse Lake students

As shared by high school students

- There may not be enough space or resources for students at BES
- Classes that focus on art or music may no longer be available
- Students may find it difficult to adjust when transitioning from BES to BRHS
- There may be no sports teams for students at BES or HRS
- The community may become divided as a result of this change
- Students in grades 7 and 8 are too old to attend elementary school
- The quality of education for students in K-8 may be affected
- Some people feel that this change is not important or doesn't address the real issues
- Funding for schools may decrease as a result of this change
- Younger students may be exposed to negative behaviors like smoking, vaping, and drinking

SCENARIO 1:

REALIGNMENT: BES K-7 AND BRHS 8-12

SCENARIO 1 INVOLVED REALIGNING STUDENTS SO THAT GRADES K-7 ATTEND BES AND GRADES 8-12 ATTEND BRHS.

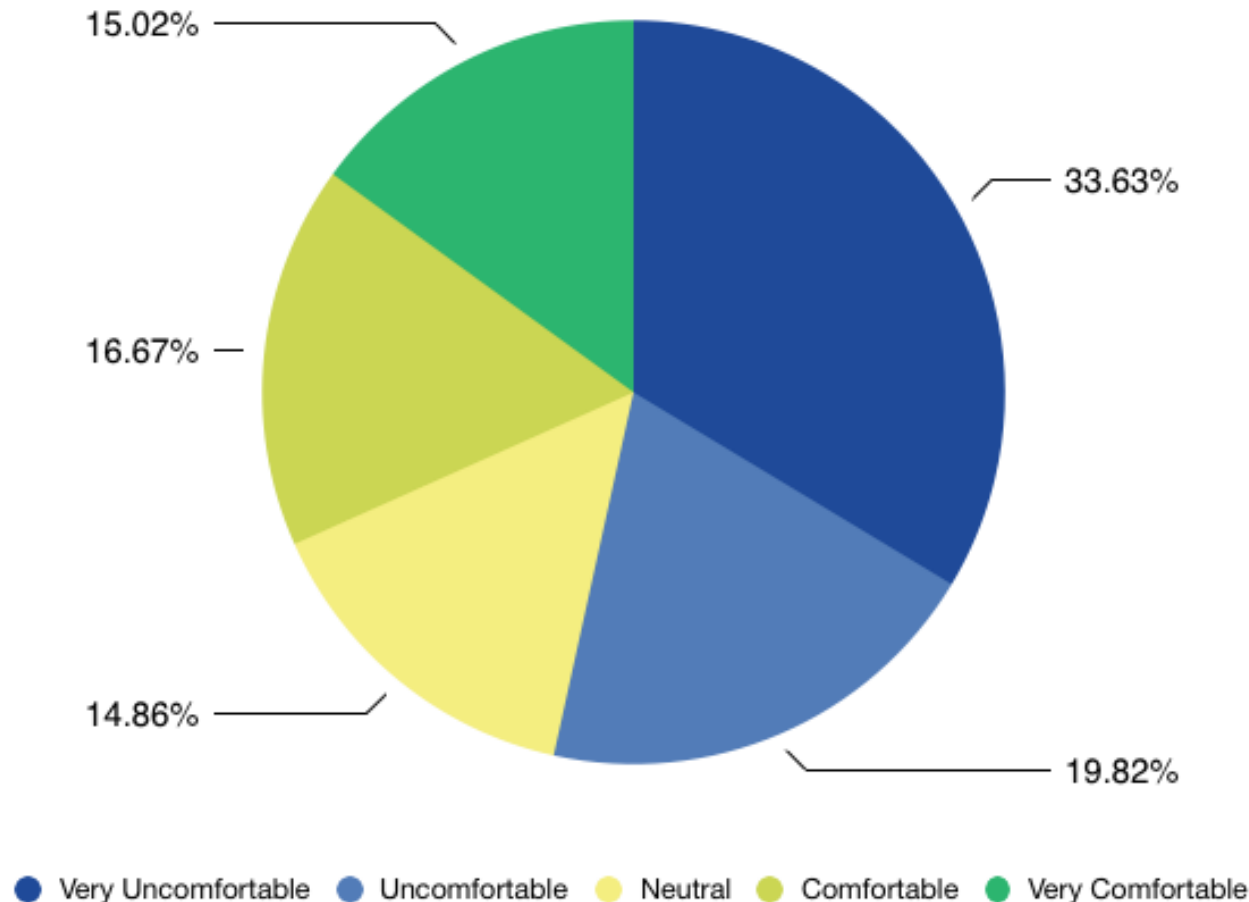
IF APPROVED, THIS APPROACH WOULD INVOLVE:

- ADDING BEAVERLODGE GRADE 7 STUDENTS TO BES (BES BECOMES K-7)
- ADDING BEAVERLODGE GRADE 8 AND 9 STUDENTS TO BRHS (BRHS BECOMES 8-12, WITH BEAVERLODGE GRADES 8 AND 9 ZONED TO ATTEND BRHS INSTEAD OF HRS)
- HRS WOULD REMAIN K-9



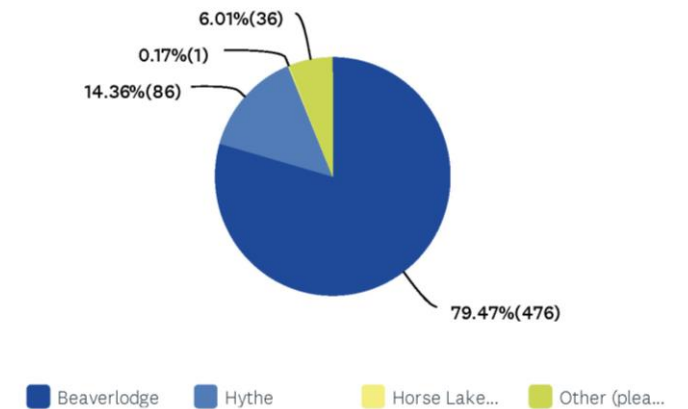
SCENARIO 1: REALIGNMENT: BES K-7 AND BRHS 8-12

Q1 Please indicate your level of comfort with this approach



Q14 What community do you most associate with?

Answered: 599 Skipped: 84



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SCENARIO 1: REALIGNMENT: BES K-7 AND BRHS 8-12 - **BENEFITS**



Benefits – As seen from broader community & respondents

- ✓ Reducing transportation time and costs for Beaverlodge students, as well as students who live more remotely.
- ✓ Beaverlodge students will be able to stay within Beaverlodge, which will improve local relationships and community connections.
- ✓ Potential opportunity for increased educational opportunities, public school investment, and after school activities.
- ✓ Increased sense of safety for those who voiced concerns with the safety of HRS and/or bus transit time on the highway.
- ✓ Increased enrollment numbers within Beaverlodge public schools.
- ✓ Improving children's social well-being, including making friends and smoothing the transition between elementary and high school

Benefits – As shared by high school students

- ✓ Beaverlodge kids will be able to stay in their community
- ✓ Grade 8 students will have more role models
- ✓ CTF (Career and Technology Foundations) would be easier
- ✓ Students will have the opportunity to play sports
- ✓ It will be easier on families with siblings
- ✓ Grade 8 students will have to mature faster
- ✓ There will be larger high school teams
- ✓ Grade 8 students will have more options and programs
- ✓ It will be more convenient for parents
- ✓ Students will have more interactions with older kids
- ✓ Hythe students will get more play time
- ✓ Fundraisers would increase
- ✓ Students will spend less time on the bus

SCENARIO 1: REALIGNMENT: BES K-7 AND BRHS 8-12 - **DRAWBACKS**



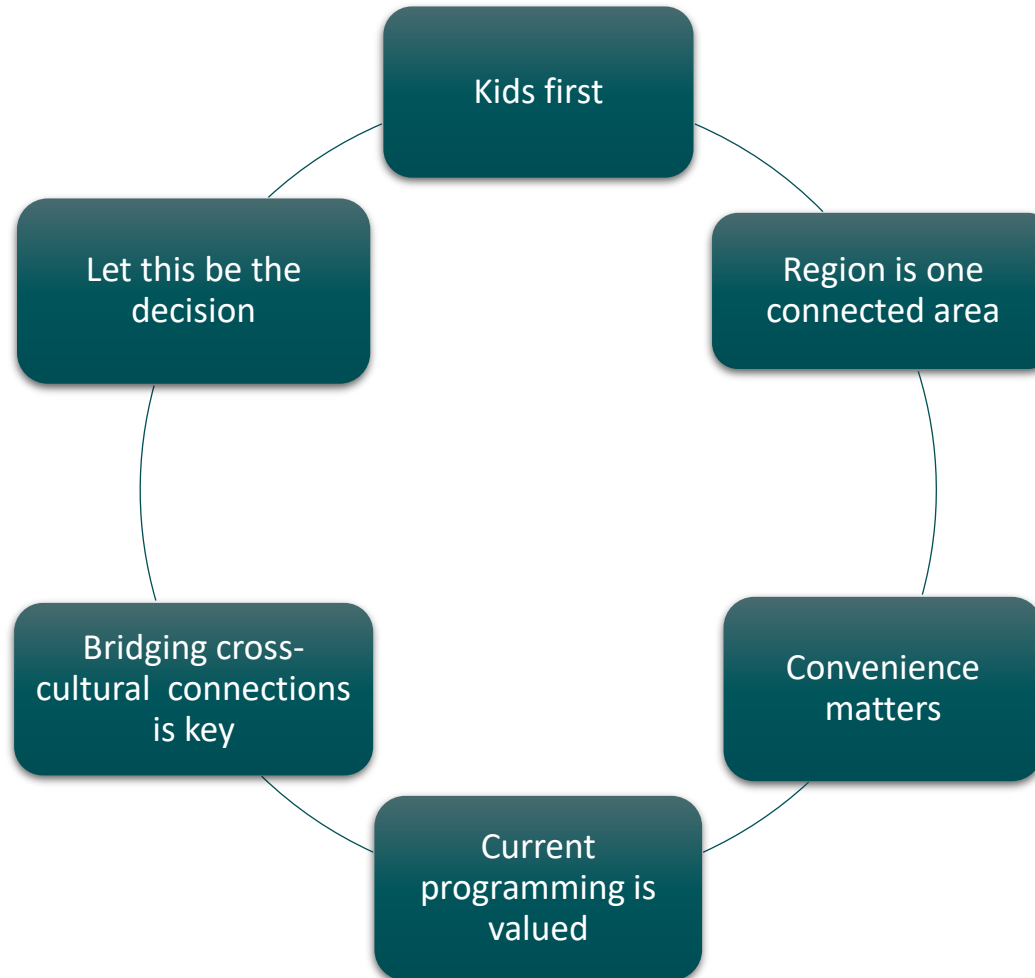
Drawbacks – As seen from broader community & respondents

- Benefiting Beaverlodge students while disproportionately impacting HRS and the Hythe community.
- Removing a specialized environment catered to this particular age group and maturity level.
- Redistribution of students may lead to an overall decrease in funding, which could negatively impact the quality of education for junior high students.
- Potential impact to student extra-curricular activities
- The lack of sufficient infrastructure at BES
- Does not address the root problems within the community
- May lead to less socialization for the students,
- May lead to reduced enrollment numbers at Hythe Regional School.

Drawbacks – As shared by high school students

- The change will cause anxiety and be a big change for Grade 8 and 9 students.
- Hythe will lose dances, sports teams, and extra-curricular activities.
- There will be fewer option classes.
- Bus drivers may lose jobs.
- Grade 7 students may not mature appropriately.
- High school will be more crowded.
- More teachers will need to be hired.
- All communities will lose sports teams.
- Kids may abuse their new freedom and privileges.
- Earlier exposure to unhealthy habits may occur.
- There is a maturity difference between grade levels.
- There may be a lack of diversity.
- Rules and schedules may be more constricting.
- Some responses are general or irrelevant.
- Extra-curricular activities may be minimized.
- The BES gym is too small for grade 7 students.
- Teams may be unfair in experience.

REGARDLESS OF PERSPECTIVE OR SCENARIO PREFERENCE





Thank you!!!!