

Request to move Dr. G.W. Williams misses latest round of provincial funding

By Brock Weir

A request by the York Region District School Board to move Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School to the Board-owned lands on Bayview Avenue at Borealis missed the cut in the latest round of education funding.

Earlier this month, the Government of Ontario announced funding for a series of new schools, along with additions and repairs to existing schools, across the Province. Details of the funding announcement were scant, but the Ministry of Education revealed the investment would include 39 brand new schools, 40 of which were described as "major renovations and additions" along with 157 new child care rooms, equating to more than 2,700 licensed child care spaces.

Details on how York Region would be impacted by the announcement were released this week, bringing with it two new schools for the area, but nothing for Aurora.

Announced by Dr. Helena Jaczek, MPP for Oak Ridges-Markham are two new elementary schools both accommodating over 600 students and two new child care spaces. They will be located in Cornell, a community in Markham, as well as Vaughan.

\$14 million in provincial funding will be invested in each school, while a further \$13.3 million will go towards a new French Catholic high school for 400 students in Vaughan, under the Conseil scolaire catholique MonAvenir.

\$800,000 further will go towards retrofitting St. Francis Xavier Catholic Elementary School in Markham.

"On behalf of the trustees of the York Region District School Board, I am pleased with the investment in the future of students and families in York Region," said Corrie McBain, Chair of the York Region District School Board.

Added Dr. Jaczek: "Our government's investment is great news for families in York Region. I am proud that we are making a real difference for students and families now and for future generations."

Nevertheless, work will continue here in Aurora to address the growing needs of families on Aurora's east side who have been advocating for a new high school closer to home.

"I will continue to work with concerned parents, the school board and Ministry of Education to encourage the construction of a new secondary school on Bayview Avenue," said Newmarket-Aurora MPP Chris Ballard. "At the same time, we need to ensure that students who live in southwest Aurora can continue to be educated close to their homes and that the important green space of Dr. G.W. Williams is protected for the local community."