

Editorial Page

OPINION

New high school needs to happen

Barrhaven has almost everything it needs. It has more than enough grocery stores, and it finally got a movie theatre and a bookstore. There's nothing much lacking in the community.

But one thing that Barrhaven needs, and needs soon, is another public high school – the Longfields-Davidson Heights Secondary School, to be exact.

A petition has been circulating on this topic, and the signatures already number several hundred. But more names need to be added to make another school a reality. We hope everyone gets on board with this goal.

Last week, MPP Lisa MacLeod was presented with a list of 428 signatures, and planned to present them at Queen's Park this week. We thank her for getting on board with this.

You may ask, why does Barrhaven need another public high school? Isn't John McCrae enough?

The answer to the second question is a resounding no, and there are multiple reasons why this has to happen.

Currently, students from the east half of Barrhaven are being bussed to Merivale High School – an hour-long trip. That's too far from their homes. Kids need to go to school in the communities in which they live.

Besides, when students are unnecessarily bussed all the way from Barrhaven, it adds to the school board's transportation budget. Traffic is more congested along Merivale Road. Busses spend time idling and polluting our air more than necessary.

When kids aren't going to school near their homes, there are numerous negative affects. First, students who wish to stay active and walk or bike to school, cannot. And if they want to get involved in an extra-curricular club, a band or a sports team that meets after school, they'll have to think twice. It's tough to consider staying after school when you're still a lengthy trip home by bus.

The Longfields-Davidson Heights school would cater to students from Grade 7 to 12 – a huge and important

demographic.

Politicians are already on board with this petition. Couns. Jan Harder and Steve Desroches have inked it, as have trustees and members of school councils. Make sure you

add your name to that list.

A PDF version of the petition is available online at www.ourschoolourcommunity. Print one, fill it out, and make sure MacLeod's office gets it before the deadline of Dec. 8. Tell

your friends, your neighbours and the parents of your child's classmates.

Let's help our students – our future – get the schooling they need, in their own community. They'll thank you for it.