

# **PENTZ AND PETITE RIVIERE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS**

## **OVERVIEW OF THE PHYSICAL ACCOMMODATION OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOL PROGRAMS**

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## INTRODUCTION

The South Shore Regional School Board (SSRSB) has requested that the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD) and the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal (TIR) work with the SSRSB to perform reviews of each of the Pentz Elementary School (PES) and the Petite Riviere Elementary School (PRES) facilities with the intent of determining:

1. if the physical condition of the buildings is such that they have value for continued use for another fifteen to twenty years
2. what would be required to bring the buildings to an acceptable physical standard, allowing them to continue in use for the above mentioned period. This is to include estimates of the costs that would be involved.
3. from an education delivery point of view, what would be required to allow the buildings to effectively accommodate the Nova Scotia Public School Programs and the changing nature of education delivery for the 21<sup>st</sup> century for another fifteen to twenty years.
4. what the costs would be to add to and/or modify the existing building(s) to achieve #3 above

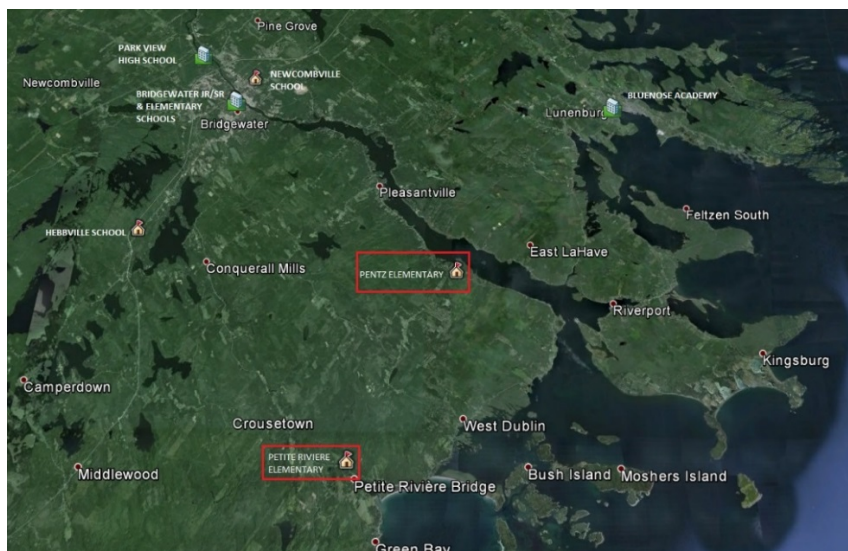
A team has been created between EECD and TIR to perform the reviews that includes the following individuals:

- Darrell MacDonald, Education Facility Project Services, TIR
- Peter Howitt, Regional Director, EECD
- Susan Martin-O'Brien, Literacy Coordinator, Early Years Branch Liaison, EECD

The SSRSB has provided the following staff members as resources to the process:

- Mark MacLeod, Coordinator of Programs, Programs and Student Services, SSRSB
- Andy Selig, Operations Coordinator, SSRSB

The school facilities being reviewed are located in rural areas of Lunenburg County, to the south and south-east of the Town of Bridgewater.



## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

It is the opinion of the review team that the provincial Public School Programs can be delivered effectively within each of the Pentz or Petite Riviere elementary school buildings, depending upon the total enrolment numbers. The utilization rate for each school is below 60%. The administrations and teachers in each school have demonstrated resourcefulness in their use of the spaces that exist and have created effective learning environments for the students of the communities served by the school facilities.

If one of the buildings were to have its effective life extended for a period of 15 – 20 years as an elementary school for the total current enrolment, we recommend that, in order to most effectively accommodate the changing nature of education delivery both in Nova Scotia and beyond, some newly constructed space would be of value.

### **Pentz Elementary School**

The Property Condition Assessment, prepared for the SSRSB by Stantec, states:

*“...the overall property is in fair to good overall condition as compared to buildings of similar age and construction.”*

The total probable cost for program space additions and improvements, plus infrastructure repairs from the Stantec report, is estimated to be in the order of \$5,509,000 (see the Value for Future Use section). This number is subject to final confirmation of the detailed scope of the work.

### **Petite Riviere Elementary School**

The Property Condition Assessment, prepared for the SSRSB by Stantec, states:

*“...the overall property is in fair overall condition as compared to buildings of similar age and construction.”*

The total probable cost for program space additions and improvements, plus infrastructure repairs from the Stantec report, is estimated to be in the order of \$6,049,000 (see the Value for Future Use section). This number is subject to final confirmation of the detailed scope of the work.

**Note:**

It is unknown if there are hazardous materials on either of the sites requiring remediation. Stantec notes that environmental assessments would need to be performed to determine if remediation is required and what the costs would be should they be necessary. This has not costed in either case and could increase the overall estimates for A&A projects. They need to be considered risk items requiring further study to quantify.

**Comparison of A&A to New School Costs**

The total project cost for a new school option is in the order of \$11 million. Acknowledging the possible effects of the risk item discussed above, the cost of an Addition & Alterations (A&A) project at the Pentz Elementary School is approximately 50% of the cost of a new school project and 55% at Petite Riviere Elementary School building.

As a result, it is the opinion of the review team that, relative to a new school project, an Addition & Alterations project at either school building would provide the best value to the Province and the communities served in this area.

It is beyond the scope of this report to make recommendations or comments on which is the appropriate site, should an A&A project be the chosen direction by the South Shore Regional School Board and Government.

## **EDUCATION PROGRAM DELIVERY**

## Nova Scotia Public School Programs

In Nova Scotia, as in all of Canada, education is a provincial responsibility. The Department of Education & Early Childhood Development has created the educational vision for the province as a whole. It is described within the Public School Programs document (PSP) found at [http://www.ednet.ns.ca/pdfdocs/psp/psp\\_03\\_04\\_full.pdf](http://www.ednet.ns.ca/pdfdocs/psp/psp_03_04_full.pdf). The PSP was created in 2003-04 and is presently being re-written.

This document:

*“...presents the goals and policies of public school education in Nova Scotia, describes what students should know and be able to do (essential graduation learnings) if the goals are to be reached, and describes the programs and courses offered in the Public School Program. School boards, school administrators, and teaching staffs are to use the information provided in this handbook as the basis of their programs.” (PSP 2003-2004)*

The goals of public education in Nova Scotia are stated in the PSP document) as follows:

*“Public school education in Nova Scotia has two major goals: to help all students develop to their full potential cognitively, affectively, physically, and socially and to help all students acquire the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary for them to continue as thinking, learning, physically active, valued members of society.”*

The PSP then identifies six areas of learning called “essential graduation learnings (EGL’s) that, as they are developed, will assist students in reaching the goals. They are listed as follows:

1. *Aesthetic expression*
2. *Citizenship*
3. *Communication*
4. *Personal Development*
5. *Problem Solving*
6. *Technological Competence*

The Department of Education & Early Childhood Development is presently re-writing the Public School Programs document and has collaborated with the Council of Atlantic Ministers of Education and Training (CAMET), resulting in Department of Education and Early Childhood Development identifying the following “essential learning competencies” that students are expected to know, be able to do, and reflect on by the time they graduate from high school:

1. Citizenship
2. Communication
3. Creativity and Innovation
4. Critical Thinking
5. Personal-Career Development
6. Technological Fluency



## **South Shore Regional School Board**

School boards throughout the province implement and expand upon the goals and policies of the PSP in their own ways.

The South Shore Regional School Board's mission, guiding principles and belief statements are stated as follows:

### ***Our Mission***

*To engage all students in quality, equitable education within a healthy, safe and respectful environment.*

### ***Our Guiding Principle***

*The South Shore Regional School Board is committed to cognitive, social, emotional, physical and creative development.*

### ***Belief Statements***

- *Student learning is our primary focus.*
- *All students have the ability to learn.*
- *Students learn at their own pace and in different ways.*
- *School communities must be safe, supportive and socially just, where everyone is treated with dignity and respect.*
- *Education is a partnership among home, school and the community.*

Much has been said in recent years of the need for educational delivery models to evolve from the “factory” model of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to a more dynamic one that takes into account the rapidly changing nature of the world, be it in business, industry, technology, etc. The SSRSB is very progressive with respect to its pedagogical approaches and how they implement the overall intent of the PSP. It recognizes that all students can learn and that they do so in a variety of ways. The board also understands that the skills required for the 21<sup>st</sup> century require education delivery approaches that expand upon what could be called “traditional”.

## **School Facility Requirements**

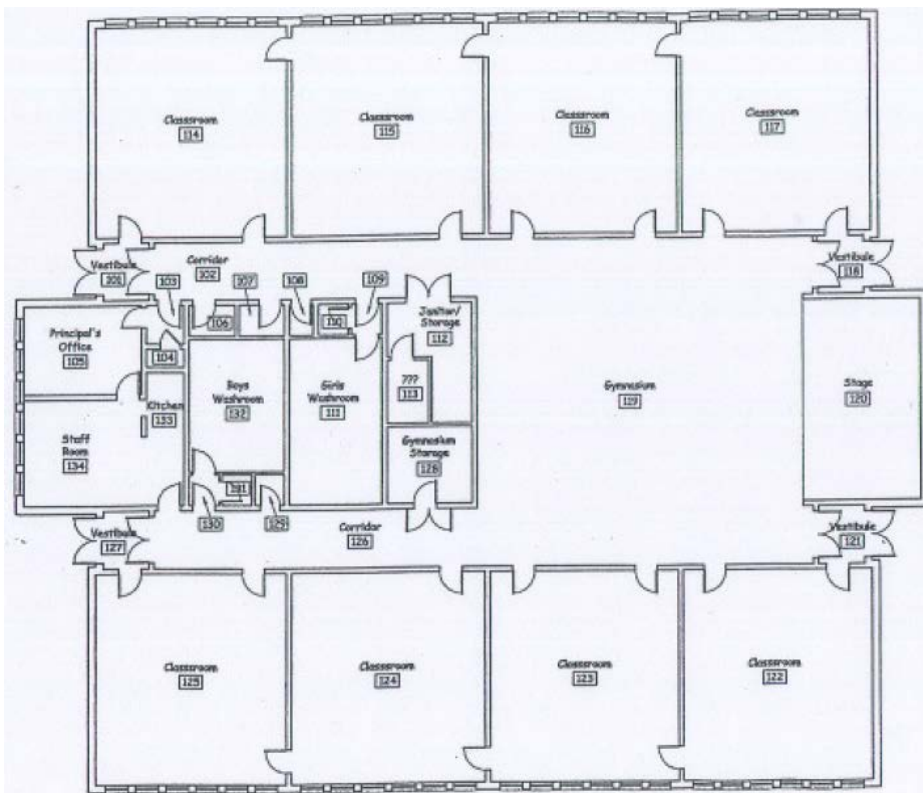
All school facilities must effectively accommodate the full spectrum of learning and teaching modalities and allow teachers to tailor their pedagogical approaches to achieve appropriately differentiated instruction for all of its students. The buildings must provide choices for teachers and students in their teaching and learning endeavors. If group collaborative work is required, spaces need to be available that support it. This includes space for individual work, as well as for small, medium or large groups. Should enclosed rooms be required for visual and acoustical separation, they must be provided in the most effective locations and manners. School buildings must also contain spaces that allow for collaboration in open areas or in acoustically separated spaces that allow students to focus on their work. School buildings in the South Shore Regional School Board must provide teachers and students the ability to effectively use teaching strategies and methods that fit within an overall environment of inquiry and collaborative exploration.

## **PENTZ ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

This school is located at 2680 331 Hwy, along the LaHave River, in Pentz, Nova Scotia



It is an 11,200 square foot building constructed in 1965, with an enrolment capacity of 150 students and a current utilization rate of 57%. It has 8 general classrooms, 4 on either side of a central “multi-purpose” room. On one end of this space is a stage.



## SSRSB LONG RANGE OUTLOOK

School: Pentz Elementary School



Address: 2680 Hwy 331  
LaHave, Nova Scotia  
B0R 1C0

Grade configuration: P-6

Year Opened: 1965

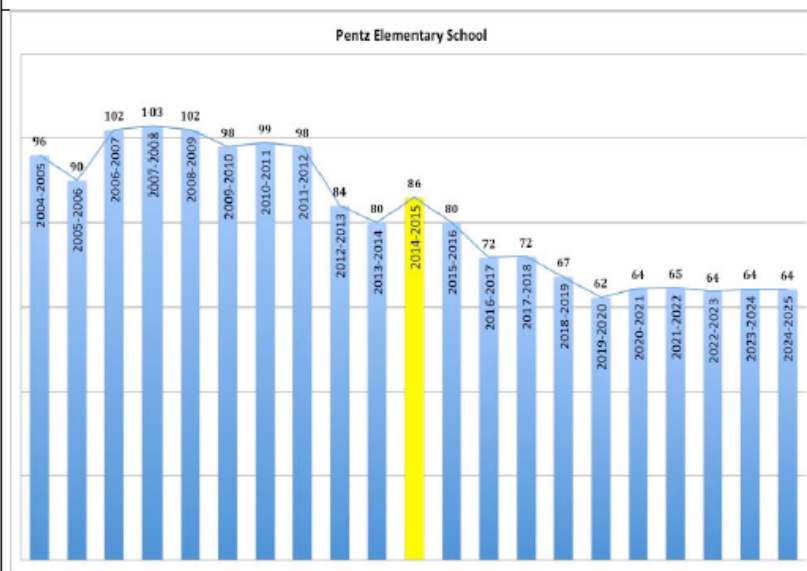
Number of stories with teaching spaces: 1

Number of portable teaching spaces/classrooms: 0

Current school capacity (permanent structures only): 150 students

School utilization: 57%

Enrolment: Past 10 years, as of Sept. 30, 2014, next 10 years



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Specific (specialized) programming offered at the school:

PATHS, P-6

Reading Recovery

Provincially approved addition and alteration projects or other major capital upgrades, including dates completed (if applicable):

Future considerations related to building condition:

It is not anticipated that capital repairs (\$ 150k-\$ 1M) will be required within the next 5 years.

Information about reviews of the school previously conducted:

A school review was conducted in 2013. A Board motion was passed in 2013 to close the school.

Any other factors relevant to the school: The School Board has ongoing discussions with the Provincial Government on potential new school construction for accommodation of students from the Pentz community.

### Typical Classroom

The sizes of the classrooms in the school average 707 square feet, allowing effective subdivision of the space for act, learning zones or centres that support work in small groups, individual study and whole class learning experiences. The teachers make optimum use of the space and the rooms are very similar to elementary classrooms found throughout Nova Scotia and beyond.



### Alternate Use of Space

With the low utilization rate (57%), surplus classrooms have been re-purposed for varying uses. For example, the photo below shows how the Music program is accommodated.



The photo below shows creative use of existing space for the school's Learning Centre/Resource Room.



## **Visual Arts**

As is very common in small elementary schools across the continent, the Visual Arts program is delivered in an integrated way within each classroom. This kind of integration has the benefit of blurring the lines between the Arts and other curriculum areas, which is seen as very desirable in recent literature regarding learning for the 21<sup>st</sup> century world.

## **Active Healthy Living**

The two general active, healthy living aspects of the PSP are Health Education and Physical Education. The PSP describes each as follows:

### ***Health Education***

*The purpose of health education in schools is to foster the growth of knowledge, attitudes, skills, and lifelong behaviours that will enable students to assume responsibility for healthy living and personal well-being.*

### ***Physical Education***

*The primary aim of the physical education program from primary through the senior high schools in Nova Scotia is to help students participate in and develop a physically active lifestyle that will enable them to experience a more enjoyable quality of life physically, mentally, emotionally, and socially. .*

Although the school does not have a formal gymnasium, the teachers and administration make effective use of their central multi-purpose room and the various play areas and structures that exist on the site in order to deliver the Physical and Health Education programs required by the PSP.

### **Central Multi-purpose Room**



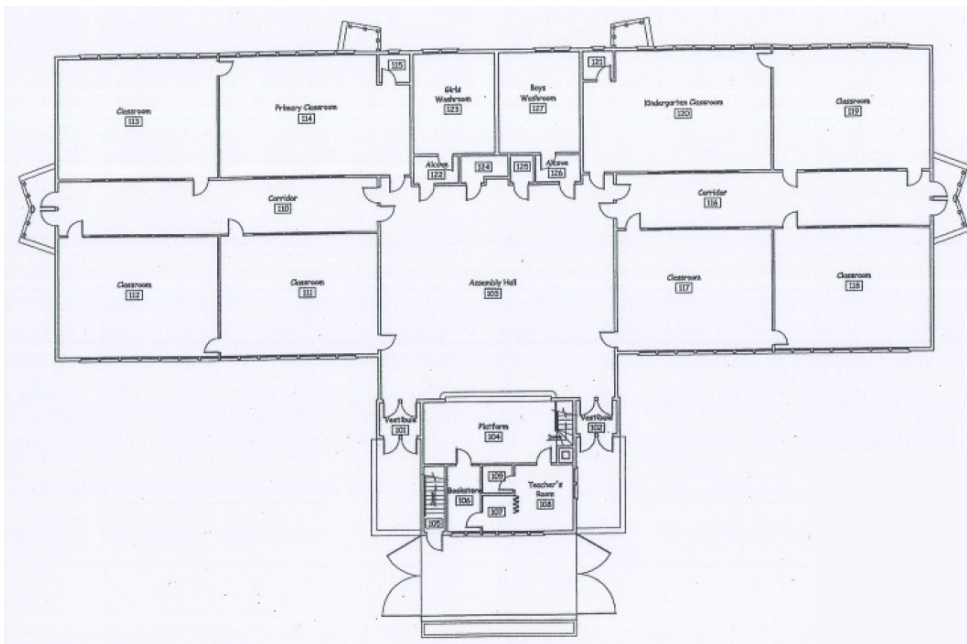
## **PETITE RIVIERE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**



The school is located at 123 Wentzell Road Petite Rivière, Nova Scotia.


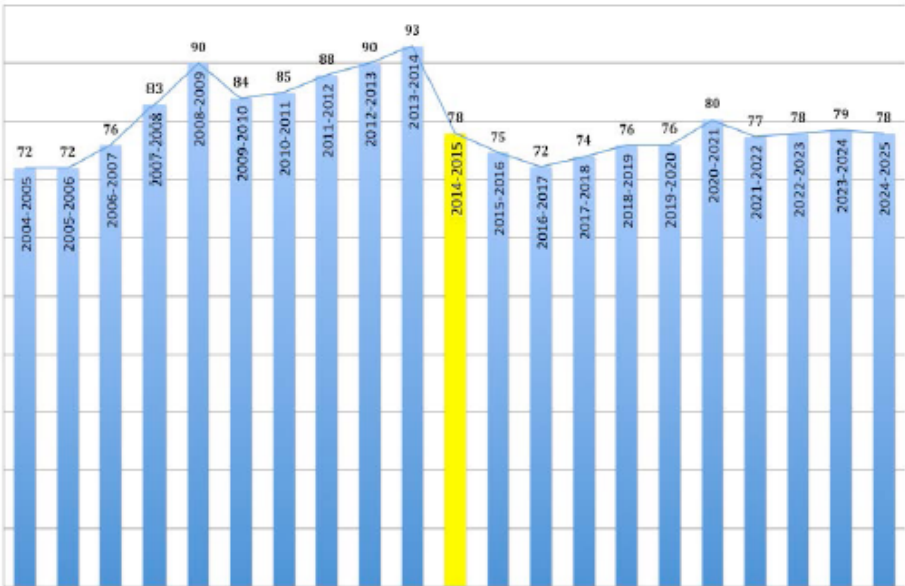


It is a 13,800 square foot building constructed in 1961. It has 2 wings of 4 general classrooms on either side of a central “multi-purpose” room, for a total of 8. On one end of the multi-purpose space is a stage.





## SSRSB LONG RANGE OUTLOOK

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	<p>Address: 123 Wentzell Road Petite Rivière, Nova Scotia B4V 5Y2</p>																																												
	<p>Grade configuration: P-6</p>																																												
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<p>Number of stories with teaching spaces: 1</p>																																													
<p>Number of portable teaching spaces/classrooms: 0</p>																																													
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<p>School utilization: 52%</p>																																													
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### Central Multi-purpose Room



View toward washrooms & large classrooms



View towards the stage and Principal's office

As per the Active Healthy Living discussion above regarding Pentz Elementary School, although the school does not have a formal gymnasium, the teachers and administration make effective use of their central multi-purpose room and the various play areas and structures that exist on the site in order to deliver the Physical and Health Education programs required by the PSP.

### Typical Classroom



Six of the classrooms are approximately 650 sq. ft. in area and 2 are approximately 800 square feet. Effective subdivision of the 650 sq. ft. classrooms is happening with the low enrolment numbers that exist and will also be possible with 20 – 25 students in the rooms. The rooms can accommodate stations, learning zones or centres that support work in small groups, individual study and whole class learning experiences. The teachers make optimum use of the space and the rooms are very similar to elementary classrooms found throughout Nova Scotia and beyond.

### **Alternate Use of Space**

With the low utilization rate (52%), surplus classrooms have been re-purposed for varying uses. For example, the photo below shows how the Music program is accommodated.



The photo below shows creative use of existing space for the school's Learning Centre and Resource Room.



### **Visual Arts**

As is very common in small elementary schools across the continent, the Visual Arts program is delivered in an integrated way within each classroom. This kind of integration has the benefit of blurring the lines between the Arts and other curriculum areas, which is seen as very desirable in recent literature regarding learning for the 21<sup>st</sup> century world.

## **VALUE FOR FUTURE USE**

It is the observation of the review team that the Nova Scotia Public School Programs (PSP) are being effectively delivered in both the Pentz and Petite Riviere Elementary Schools. The schools' administration and teachers have demonstrated resourcefulness and skill in their use of space that has allowed them to deliver a high quality education to the students in both communities. In order for either of the buildings to continue to serve their communities as elementary schools for the next 15-20 years, we suggest that, in addition to infrastructure improvements, some program related modifications to the existing structures would be of value.

The following is a list of functional and education program areas for a scenario that accommodates the combined enrolment of 160 students within one building and allows for the effective delivery of the Public School Programs:

1. 7 classrooms (enclosed rooms for acoustically controlled, multi-purpose learning experiences)
2. Learning Centre/Resource
3. Reading Recovery
4. Breakout function
5. Visual Arts
6. Music
7. Active Healthy Living
8. Library
9. Food consumption
10. Administration
11. Principal's office
12. Administrative Support/Reception
13. Staff Lounge

**Table A – Existing Buildings Spaces**

<b>Functional Area</b>	<b>PES Existing</b>	<b>PRES Existing</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Classrooms	8	8	Functioning well
Multi-purpose room	1	1	Serves both Active Healthy Living and Cafeteria functions
Principal's office	1	1	
Administrative Support/Reception	1	0	

## **SCENARIOS**

### **New School**

A new school to replace both schools would be 30,363 square feet in size and cost approximately \$10.9 million in today's dollars (subject to inflation to the date of tender).

### **Addition & Alteration**

An Addition & Alterations (A&A) scenario to one of the buildings would need to take into account the small enrolment numbers and the abilities and resourcefulness of teachers and administrations. In small elementary schools, individual teachers tend to cover multiple curriculum areas, as opposed to being specialists in certain topics. Therefore, delivery of the PSP is in an integrated fashion, with overall benefits to students and their abilities to make connections between subject areas.

The impact of this on an A&A scenario is that "specialty" subject matter areas, such as Visual Arts, Music and Active Healthy Living are often delivered in non-standard ways that don't require dedicated spaces for those subjects. For example, in both the Pentz and Petite Riviere schools, the Visual Arts programs are delivered within the general classrooms in an integrated approach. Also, the Music program is delivered within spare classrooms in both buildings. Active Healthy Living programs are delivered within the central Multi-purpose Rooms in each building, as well as external to the buildings in play fields and playground areas. Student Services programs, such as Resource, Learning Centre and Reading Recovery are delivered in spare classrooms.

If one of buildings were to receive an A&A project, it is recommended that new space be constructed for some program areas and existing space be reused or re-purposed for others, as follows:

### **Reused or Re-purposed**

#### **1. Classrooms**

7 of the existing classrooms would continue as such.

#### **2. 1 of the 8 existing classrooms could be dedicated to the Student Services related functions of the Learning Centre, Resource and Reading Recovery.**

#### **3. Library and Cafeteria**

With careful choices of furniture, the existing Multi-purpose Room could fulfil the functions of a modern Library/Learning Common and a Cafeteria.

#### **4. Visual Arts**

This program area can continue to be delivered within each classroom in an integrated fashion

#### **5. Principal's office and Administrative Support**

Existing space refurbished and made barrier free.

### Newly Constructed Space

1. Kitchen, including Storage  
550 sq. ft.
2. Music  
1,200 sq. ft., including storage
3. Active Healthy Living  
5,264 sq. ft. Gymnasium  
600 sq. ft. Change Rooms  
100 sq. ft. Office  
700 sq. ft. Gym Storage
4. Staff Room  
370 sq. ft., complete with a washroom
5. Itinerant and Schools Plus  
Three offices, at 100 sq. ft. each, for a total of 300 sq. ft.

The estimated costs for the work at each building are broken down in the tables below. It is important that, during the construction phase of either of the project scenarios, students will need to be temporarily re-located to maximize the logistical efficiencies for the contractors.

#### A&A Project at Petite Riviere Elementary School

Construction	
Gymnasium	1,932,000
Remaining new construction	1,427,000
Administration upgrades	100,000
Infrastructure repairs (Stantec report)	1,270,000
<b>Construction sub-total</b>	<b>4,729,000</b>
<b>Soft Costs</b>	
Design	480,000
Project Management (TIR)	220,000
Testing & Inspection	200,000
FFE&T	300,000
<b>Soft Costs Sub-total</b>	<b>1,200,000</b>
Soft Costs Contingency (10%)	120,000
<b>Total re: Program Space</b>	<b>1,320,000</b>
<b>TOTAL PROJECT COST</b>	<b>\$6,049,000</b>

### A&A project at Pentz Elementary School

<b>Construction</b>	
Gymnasium	1,932,000
Remaining new construction	1,427,000
Administration upgrades	100,000
Infrastructure repairs (Stantec report)	807,000
<b>Construction sub-total</b>	<b>4,266,000</b>
<b>Soft Costs</b>	
Design	430,000
Project Management (TIR)	200,000
Testing & Inspection	200,000
FFE&T	300,000
<b>Soft Costs Sub-total</b>	<b>1,130,000</b>
Soft Costs Contingency (10%)	113,000
<b>Total re: Program Space</b>	<b>1,243,000</b>
<b>TOTAL PROJECT COST</b>	<b>\$5,509,000</b>