Examine the option of reconfiguring the Middle River School as an alternative small Primary to grade 12 facility to serve students whose academic needs and learning styles can flourish in a small school setting.

Considerations

The Middle River School was constructed in 1960. It serves the students from Hunter's Mountain to Lake O'Law along the Cabot trail and on the west side of Middle River.
Under the transfer policy of the Board, some students from the Baddeck catchment area have elected to enroll at Middle River School as it is a small school setting. Some students that were previously home schooled by their parents now attend Middle River School.

Middle River School has existed as a multiage instructional facility since its inception. In the early days grade Primary to grade 8 students were housed in the four room facility. Today, there are 23 students being instructed by two site based classroom teachers and supported by specialists in the areas of physical education, resource, French and music.
This 5348 sq. ft. facility is the smallest school facility in operation under the Cape Breton Victoria Regional School Board and the 23 students registered as of September 30 2013 represents the lowest student population in any school within the Board.
Parents who elect to have their children educated in this small school see the retention of this school as:

- an alternative to longer bus trips to a larger school
- a setting in which their children can flourish as independent learners

This scenario advocates for the retention of students at Middle River by expanding curriculum offerings from Primary to 6 to Primary to grade 12.
The existence of correspondence course offerings and the expansion of the Virtual School courses are supporting structures that enable students in rural settings to continue their education in community based schools. Virtual communication is already familiar to young people who are growing up using the technology to learn and socialize. The organizational, technological and independent learning skills exhibited by most learners in a multi aged instructional situation are an excellent fit for students who wish to attain their secondary schooling in a community school setting utilizing technology.

Program spaces consistent with the delivery of secondary curriculum would need to be established at the Middle River School. These would be right sized consistent with the number of students to be served.