

Dalewood Elementary Accommodation Review Committee Meeting

Dalewood School

April 6, 2011

Minutes (Public Meeting #1)

ATTENDANCE:

Committee Members

Chair –Krys Croxall

Voting Members – Maria Carbone, Nadia Coakley, Pamela Irving, Anita McGowan, Kim Newcombe, Emily Reid, Michael Reid, Kristen West

Non-Voting Members –Judith Bishop, Silvia Galli Lamarche, Joanne Hall, Margaret Jobson, Debra Lewis, Peter Martindale, Brian McHattie, Denise Minardi, Colleen Morgan, Michelle Rodney-Bartalos, Linda Trmal

Regrets

Voting Members – Juanita Parent, Atheling Seunarine

Non-Voting Members –

Resource Staff

Ellen Warling, Daniel Del Bianco, Michael Slee, Ron Gowland, Don Hall

Recording Secretary

Tracy McKillop

1. Welcome and Introductions

Superintendent Krys Croxall welcomed everyone, introduced herself and shared her role as Chair of the Dalewood Accommodation Review Committee (ARC). She commenced the meeting by introducing the members of the Committee and each person stood as their names were read. The Board staff were then introduced which included Ellen Warling and Michael Slee from the Accommodation and Planning Department, Ron Gowland from the Facilities Management Department, Daniel Del Bianco acting as Support Staff to the ARC and Tracy McKillop, the Recording Secretary.

2. **Purpose of Meeting**

Superintendent Croxall began the meeting by providing a bit of background about the Accommodation Review Process. She stated that in February of this year (2011), the Board of Trustees approved the Terms of Reference for the Dalewood ARC. There are four key reasons behind any accommodation review and they include:

- To ensure efficient use of available space to accommodate students appropriately as it relates to long term enrolment demands and facility utilization.
- To ensure the long term viability and sustainability of our school facilities.
- To continue the revitalization of our schools by reducing long term capital renewal requirements.
- To continue the implementation of the Board's evolving program strategy.

As an organization the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board must address these challenges so that funding can be directed to students and programming. Superintendent Croxall stated that the night's meeting will do three things:

- The first is to provide an overview of the Accommodation Review process, share timelines and discuss the work of the Committee.
- The second is to offer a look at some of the information that the Committee will be working with.
- The third is to provide members of the community the opportunity to ask questions and make comments about the Accommodation Review process.

Superintendent Croxall spoke of the Public Meeting norms which were listed on the back of the meeting agenda. She shared the importance of having a robust dialogue about the matters before the ARC while adhering to the meeting norms.

3. **Explanation of the ARC Process**

The explanation of the ARC process was turned over to Mr. Daniel Del Bianco. He began by sharing that the presentation this evening would focus on explaining "what is an ARC process", "why did we start the ARC process" and "where do we go from here."

Why are we here tonight?

- To review the challenges facing the schools included in the Dalewood review.
- To provide an overview of the ARC process.
- Address any question pertaining to the ARC process.

School included as part of the Dalewood ARC are:

- G.R. Allan
- Dalewood
- Prince Philip

Mr. Don Hall, Senior Manager, Facilities Management Department, spoke of the challenges faced by the schools which include:

- Declining Enrolment
- Increasing renewal needs/ongoing operational costs
- Ability to offer programming consistent with the HWDSB direction

Mr. Hall spoke of the Evolution of the Dalewood ARC.

- As early as 2006, the Board indicated the need in its annual Capital Plan to replace Dalewood and Prince Philip schools due to the Prohibitive to Repair (PTR) designation.
- In 2008 the Board passed the following motion; “Construct a new JK-8 school in the Dalewood Review Area to replace Prince Philip and Dalewood, contingent upon Ministry approved financing, particularly the approval of Prohibitive-to-Repair funding...”
- By 2008, PTR funding requirements had grown exponentially province-wide, and the funding source was unable to meet the demand.
- Today the PTR designation no longer exists in the Ministry funding envelope, and all 3 schools in the ARC are now designated “critical” as it relates to their Facility Condition Index (FCI) rating.

Mr. Hall stated that the real work begins tonight and this is the reason for this Committee. He then spoke of the “Go-forward strategy for the Dalewood ARC.” He shared that the new capital funding model will impact any decision that the ARC makes. The Ministry of Education is going to look for consolidation, refurbishment and more renewal of the existing schools. The Facilities Management team will be meeting with the City of Hamilton to discuss any future plans for the recreation centre. The Board will work in conjunction with the City of Hamilton to see how the timelines could potentially work together.

Mr. Del Bianco shared that the Board considers such things as enrolment, renewal needs and the programs being offered when making decisions. It is costly to renew older schools. He stated that the Ministry of Education outlines that class size is loaded at 20 or 23 students depending on the grade. The utilization rate of the school refers to how full the school is and FCI – Facility Condition Index - is shown as a percentage and refers to how much it is going to cost to renovate a school relative to the replacement value of the facility. All of these were displayed on a slide showing the “current situation” of the three schools involved in the ARC.

Mr. Del Bianco spoke of enrolments and projections. He shared that projections are not an exact science. You take the best information that you have available to you - census information and live birth data – along with other data which supports you in making long term projections. You look at the trend and the consistency of the trend.

To reference this presentation please click on the following link: http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/arcelementary/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/Dalewood_Public_Meeting1.pdf

He next looked at the Accommodation Review Process:

- The process follows Ministry of Education guidelines, the Board Policy and the Terms of Reference.
- There will be Committee working meeting and public meetings.

- All meetings are open to the public.
- The Accommodation Review Committee (ARC) provides advice to the Board of Trustees through a report that includes recommendation on facilities and program.

Mr. Del Bianco indicated that the Ministry of Education outlines in its policy that the Board must provide a recommendation during the ARC process. The Committee has been tasked with coming up with their own option(s). They can take the Board option and throw it away, they can keep it or they can tweak it. Once the process has been completed the Committee will give a report to the Board of Trustees who will make the final decision.

Mr. Del Bianco outlined the ARC timelines with the Committee to give them some idea of what the upcoming meetings will consist of. All of the information that is shared with the Committee will be posted on the Board web site after the meeting has taken place. To view the ARC web site please click on the following link:
http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/arcelementary/?page_id=2

4. School Information Profile Overview

Mr. Del Bianco also spoke of the School Information Profiles (SIPs). These profiles consider the value of schools to the student, the community, the Board and the local economy. An example was displayed on an overhead screen. A SIP consists of 21 sections and 182 items.

5. Data Availability on the Board Web Site

All of the information that is shared with the Committee will be posted on the web site after the meeting has taken place. To view the ARC web site please click on the following link:
http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/arcelementary/?page_id=2

6. Next Steps

He next spoke of “What will the ARC consider when developing their options?” Reference Criteria (as outlined in the Board policy)”:

- Facility Utilization
- Permanent and Non-Permanent Accommodation
- Program Offerings
- Quality of Teaching and Learning Environments
- Transportation
- Partnerships
- Equity

Mr. Del Bianco ended his presentation by sharing that tonight was the start of the process. He touched on the importance of keeping informed of the process which could be done through the Board's web site. He stated that **ALL** meetings are open to the public.

The Chair stated that the Board has to build projections and look at how best they can serve the students from an educational perspective. The Board will be presenting their option at the next working group meeting.

7. Questions/Comments from the Public

- The first question was a request that all of the information be posted to the web site prior to the upcoming working and public meetings. The public were informed that all of the information goes to the Committee members prior to it being posted on the Boards web site.
- Some of the people shared that they felt the public meeting was held too soon in the process and they would have liked the information released prior to the meeting in order to have an informed discussion. The Chair stated that the Ministry of Education and the Policy dictate that the Board is required to have a minimum of four public meetings however the Committee can add more meetings to the schedule if they feel that it is necessary.
- The question of how did you arrive at school capacity numbers was raised and there was concern if hallway space was considered. Mr. Del Bianco stated that the Ministry of Education guidelines state that a teaching classroom is loaded at 20 or 23 students per class, depending on the grade and that hallway space is not a factor in determining the On-The-Ground (OTG) capacity.
- Another concern raised was if the enrolment at G.R. Allan was not going to change over the next 10 years then why are we having an ARC. The Chair stated that if there is a possible closure of a school then those students will need to be accommodated and under the Terms of Reference all schools that might be a part of a solution have to be included in the ARC in order to be a part of the recommendation.
- A parent stated that children out of catchment can not attend Westdale if they are going to Dalewood unless there is a program that he would be involved in. Superintendent Croxall spoke of schools out of catchment and the desire to reduce the number of portables. She spoke of the on-the-ground capacity and the potential to grow based on programming.
- Some people questioned the Impact on families when children in a family are split among a number of different schools. Superintendent Croxall stated that she understood however presently the Board has to accommodate according to the programs being offered. In the future they would like to offer these same programs at a number of different schools within the cluster.
- The question of the accuracy of the projections was raised and it was asked if there was historical data available. Mr. Del Bianco shared that this type of information that could be requested by the Committee.
- There was concern raised about the French Immersion program and Superintendent Croxall stated that the Board has had to make some short term decisions to deal with very pressing accommodation issues. She stated that the Board wants a longer term solution that will provide longevity and stability for French Immersion schools perhaps single track as well as dual track.
- Some of the public were disappointed that they did not hear the Board option at this meeting. Mr. Hall shared that this is the ARC's first meeting and that is not something that they were prepared to do

at the first meeting. Mr. Del Bianco stated that we have tried the public meeting a couple of ways and had they presented the Board option first then it would have dominated the meeting and no one would hear why they are here. He asked for patience and to give the process its due justice. If more public meetings or working meetings are required then they can be added. He also shared that the Committee will hear the Board option at the meeting on April 28, 2011 and the presentation to the public will be made on May 19, 2011.

- Mr. Hall spoke of funding. Every year the Board requests funding through the submission of capital priorities for the schools that are in most need of repair. He stated that for every \$10 of need the Board has about \$2 to throw at it. He stated that one reason that they have the ARCs is to reduce and improve the Boards infrastructure that houses the programs. He shared that they simply do not have enough money to reduce the FCI of the three schools. When items like the replacement of windows, floors, boilers, etc. are replaced the FCI value will decrease.
- One of the Committee members asked if there were any restrictions on how the information is gathered or how it is shared with the community. The Chair expressed the importance of sharing the information with parents and the community and to hear their feedback. Once it is shared with the Committee then it is posted to the web site.
- It was shared that there are currently five ARCs running at this time. Three Secondary ARCs and 2 Elementary ARCs. No decisions have been made at this time.
- There was a question – “is it the Board’s intent to close the smaller schools and create a super school.” Mr. Hall indicated that this is something for the ARC to consider however it is not the Board’s intent.
- The question of transparency was raised since the Recreation Centre is partnered with the school. “How much of the Board option was developed with the city and how much transparency will we see with the City.” Mr. Hall shared that the Board has been in contact with the City of Hamilton over the past couple of years. He indicated that the Board is only allowed to share what they have permission from the City to disclose. Councillor McHattie spoke to the audience and shared that the City did an indoor facility study across the City looking at different pools and arenas. When they looked at Dalewood they also felt that it was challenged and felt that it would be better to replace it. A feasibility study was done and the recommendation was that the Dalewood Recreation Centre would be rebuilt on the existing site. Even if the school were to close the recommendation was to purchase the property and build it on the existing site. This was voted on in September 2010 from the previous Council. Now they will meet with the Board to see what the upcoming plans are. It was shared that with Dr. Davey School both the Board and the City were able to work together and build the projects at the same time. The Ministry of Education likes it when the City and the Board work together in these projects. Mr. Del Bianco shared that the Board met with the City Planning Department over the summer months to review the assumptions built into the Board projections and to ensure that they are consistent with what the City is forecasting.
- It was further asked “where in this community do you have land available for a new school or does the Board just own the three existing parcels on land.” Mr. Hall stated that the Board does not own additional land within this ARC.
- There was a request for the information from the previous ARC. The Chair indicated that she would take that back and look into it.

- A member of the Committee wanted to put forth a motion to have the information posted on the web site prior to the upcoming meetings however the Chair indicated that this was not something that could be voted on at a public meeting.

The Chair ended the evening by thanking everyone for coming out. She stated that the next meeting will be held on April 28, 2011 at the Education Centre. The meeting adjourned at 9:02 p.m.