



John Malloy
Director of Education
TEL: 905.527.5092 EXT: 2297
FAX: 905.521.2539

August 21, 2014

Hon. Liz Sandals
Minister of Education
22nd Floor, Mowat Block
900 Bay Street
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 1L2

Dear Minister,

RE: Request for an Administrative Review of Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB) decision to close Roxborough Park and Woodward Ave.

We are writing in response to the request received on July 22, 2014, for an Administrative Review of the East Hamilton City 1 accommodation review process undertaken by HWDSB which resulted in the Board approved closures of Roxborough Park and Woodward Ave schools. HWDSB staff were able to verify that 70 of 87 supporters who signed the petition are parents of students from Woodward Ave or participated in the accommodation review process. This represents approximately 53 per cent of the October 31, 2013 headcount (132).

HWDSB Trustees voted to conduct an accommodation review of four planning areas consisting of 23 Elementary Schools throughout Hamilton. In the East Hamilton City 1 planning area, seven schools were reviewed, including Hillcrest, Parkdale, Rosedale, Roxborough Park, Viscount Montgomery, WH Ballard and Woodward Ave. The accommodation review began on October 3, 2013 and final reports by staff and committee members were presented to Trustees on March 24, 2014 at Special Board. On June 16, 2014 Trustees ratified a motion regarding the East Hamilton City 1 accommodation review to closure Roxborough Park and Woodward Ave in June 2015.

While petitioners believe that HWDSB did not follow the Pupil Accommodation Review Policy, it is our opinion that the policy was followed over the course of the East Hamilton City 1 accommodation review.

Please find our response to the petitioners below. The response outlines the accommodation process followed, as well as the process following the receipt of the accommodation reports by HWDSB Trustees:

Timelines

The East Hamilton City 1 accommodation review timelines are consistent with those outlined in the Ministry of Education's guidelines as well as the Board's [Pupil Accommodation Review Policy \(No. 3.8\)](#).

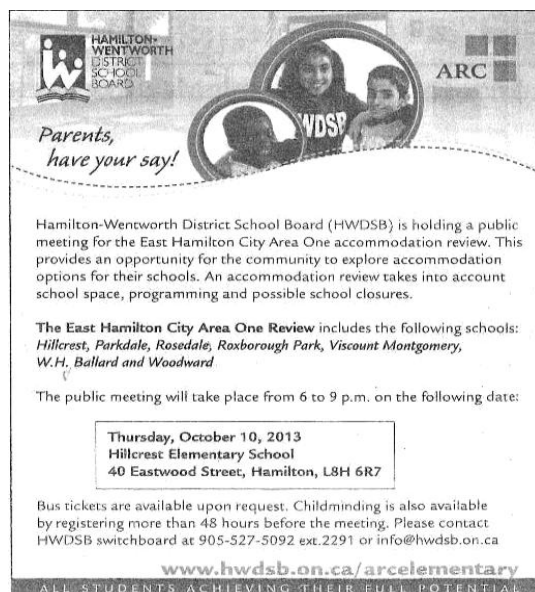
Action	Timeline	Date
First Public Meeting	As scheduled by HWDSB Senior Administration	October 10, 2013

Second Public Meeting	As scheduled by the ARC	November 7, 2013
Third Public Meeting	As scheduled by the ARC	December 5, 2013
Fourth Public Meeting	As scheduled by the ARC	January 28, 2014
Delivery of the final ARC report	Not earlier than ninety (90) days and not later than one hundred and twenty (120) days after the ARC's first Public Meeting	February 10, 2014
Presentation of the Director's Report and the ARC Accommodation Report	Not less than thirty (30) days after the final ARC report was delivered to the Director of Education*	March 24, 2014
Committee of the Whole Meeting (regular or special) for Public Input	As scheduled by Trustees within sixty (60) days prior to making their final decision	May 5, 2014
Committee of the Whole Meeting (regular or special) to decide on School Accommodation Review	As scheduled by Trustees no earlier than sixty (60) days from when the Director's Report is officially received by Trustees	June 2, 2014

The committee held eight working group meetings between October 3, 2013 and January 30, 2014. The schedule was approved at the first working group meeting on October 3, 2013 (see section 2 of minutes) <http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/elementaryarc/files/2013/08/Minutes-WG-Mtg-1-Oct-03-2013-East-Ham-Approved1.pdf> .

Notification of Public meetings/Advertisement/and Website Information

All public meetings were advertised in local newspapers for all stakeholders to ensure those stakeholders without school-aged children could participate in the process (see advertisement below) as well as posted on school signs. Child care and bus tickets were available upon request by stakeholders at each of the four public meetings.



**HAMILTON-
WENTWORTH**
DISTRICT
SCHOOL
BOARD

ARC

*Parents,
have your say!*

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB) is holding a public meeting for the East Hamilton City Area One accommodation review. This provides an opportunity for the community to explore accommodation options for their schools. An accommodation review takes into account school space, programming and possible school closures.

The East Hamilton City Area One Review includes the following schools:
Hillcrest, Parkdale, Rosedale, Roxborough Park, Viscount Montgomery, W.H. Ballard and Woodward

The public meeting will take place from 6 to 9 p.m. on the following date:

**Thursday, October 10, 2013
Hillcrest Elementary School
40 Eastwood Street, Hamilton, L8H 6R7**

Bus tickets are available upon request. Childminding is also available by registering more than 48 hours before the meeting. Please contact HWDSB switchboard at 905-527-5092 ext.2291 or info@hwdsb.on.ca

www.hwdsb.on.ca/arcelementary

ALL STUDENTS ACHIEVING THEIR FULL POTENTIAL

Information was also sent home directly to families through individual school communities (see <http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/elementaryarc/east-hamilton-city-area-1/letters-to-parentsguardians>). Additionally, HWDSB used automated phone messages to notify parents/guardians about the date, time and location of the upcoming public meetings. Articles in local media were also effective in reaching members of the public about meeting dates and times. All documents were published on the Board's website immediately following the meeting (see <http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/elementaryarc/east-hamilton-city-area-1/>) and print copies were made available upon request.

Public meetings

Public meetings were conducted using "World Café" methodology. The purpose of this methodology is to effectively host group dialogue by breaking large numbers of people into small groups of 8-12 individuals. A facilitator provided discussion questions to the group and a note taker recorded the conversations. Each group's notes were compiled and provided to the accommodation review committee for information and analysis.

At the first public meeting, the Accommodation Review Committee presented the preliminary school Accommodation Review Report prepared by the Director of Education (see <http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/elementaryarc/files/2013/08/Board-Report-re-Elementary-ARCs.pdf>), including the Board/Staff proposed alternative accommodation option(s) (see <http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/elementaryarc/files/2013/08/Administration-Staff-Accommodation-Option-WG-Mtg-1-Oct-03-2013-EastHam.pdf>). The Accommodation Review Committee also described the HWDSB's Pupil Accommodation Review Terms of Reference which outlines seven reference criteria (see <http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/elementaryarc/files/2013/08/Pages-from-Final-East-Hamilton-I-Report-to-Standing-Committee.pdf>). The reference criteria include facility utilization, permanent and non-permanent accommodation, program offerings, quality teaching and learning environments, transportation, partnership opportunities and equity. ARC members used these criteria to guide them through the review process in order to achieve the committee's mandate and outline its study process. The committee also gave the public a briefing on the data and issues to be addressed and received community input (see <http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/elementaryarc/files/2013/08/Presentation-WG-Mtg-1-Oct-03-2013-East-Ham-Final.pdf>). The reference criteria was available to Trustees and stakeholders.

The School Information Profiles (SIP) were presented to the public in an open forum during the second public meeting on November 7, 2013. School Information Profiles are a tool created in order for both ARC members and stakeholders to understand how well schools meet the objectives and the reference criteria outlined in the Terms of Reference. They address four consideration values – value to the student, school board, community, and local economy. The SIPs were delivered to the ARC in draft format during the first working group meeting as part of their accommodation review binders. The SIPs were discussed, reviewed and approved at working group meeting #3 (see working group meeting #3 minutes, section 7 <http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/elementaryarc/files/2013/08/Minutes-WG-Mtg-3-Oct-29-2013-East-Hamilton-Final.pdf>) and were presented publically at the second public meeting. Staff and committee members were present to review any questions from the public. The information was also

available to Trustees, ARC members and stakeholders online at East Hamilton City 1 SIP -
<http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/elementaryarc/files/2013/08/East-Hamilton-City-1-SIP11.pdf>

At the third public meeting, the ARC presented the two accommodation options to the community for input (see <http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/elementaryarc/files/2013/08/East-Hamilton-PM-3-Dec-05-Minutes-Final.pdf>) (section 6). The input was received and used by the ARC when drafting their interim accommodation recommendations.

The ARC presented the draft accommodation report with its interim accommodation recommendation(s) and three options in order to receive community input (see <http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/elementaryarc/files/2013/08/East-Hamilton-City-1-ARC-Report-Draft-2.pdf>) at its final public meeting. Based upon community feedback, the report was finalized and presented to the Director of Education.

ARC Report

The final ARC report submitted to the Director of Education consisted of two options (see <http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/elementaryarc/files/2014/02/East-Hamilton-City-1-ARC-Report-Final.pdf>)
These options were not ranked and are outlined as follows:

Option

Close: Parkdale, Rosedale, Roxborough Park, Viscount Montgomery, and Woodward schools
Remaining Open: Hillcrest, NEW Viscount Montgomery, and WH Ballard schools
Considerations: Boundary changes; new 550 pupil place school on the Viscount Montgomery site

Option

Close: Parkdale and Roxborough Park
Remaining Open: Hillcrest, Rosedale, Viscount Montgomery, WH Ballard schools, and Woodward
Considerations: Boundary changes

The final staff option coincided with one of the ARC options:

Staff Option

Close: Parkdale, Rosedale, Roxborough Park, Viscount Montgomery, and Woodward schools
Remaining Open: Hillcrest, NEW Viscount Montgomery, and WH Ballard schools
Considerations: Boundary changes; new 550 pupil place school on the Viscount Montgomery site

(Original Staff Option presented at first public meeting (also noted previously) -

<http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/elementaryarc/files/2013/08/Administration-Staff-Accommodation-Option-WG-Mtg-1-Oct-03-2013-EastHam.pdf>)

Close: Parkdale, Rosedale, Roxborough Park, and Woodward schools
Remaining Open: Hillcrest, Viscount Montgomery, and WH Ballard schools
Considerations: Boundary changes

Public Delegations

A special public meeting was held to receive public input from delegations regarding the Director's Report and the ARC report. Notification of the delegation night was communicated through local media, individual school communities and via automated phone messaging (see <http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/elementaryarc/files/2014/03/ARC-Delegations-EHam.pdf>). There were 42 delegations heard by Trustees on Monday, May 5, 2014 and 30 items of correspondence (see <http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/meetings/East-Hamilton-Delegations-Agenda-1399063280.pdf>) received.

Trustee Questions

After receiving accommodation reports from the accommodation review committee and staff, Trustees had the opportunity to request additional information from staff on all the accommodation reviews. Trustees asked questions at committee meetings and responses were provided to Trustees through Standing Committee or Board meetings. Responses were provided to Trustees on the following dates:

April 7, 2014 <http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/meetings/West-Glanbrook-Delegations-Appendices-1397576681.pdf>

April 14, 2014 - <http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/meetings/Standing-Committee-Appendices-1397589463.pdf>

April 28, 2014 - <http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/meetings/West-Flamborough-Delegations-Appendices-1398970363.pdf>

May 5, 2014 - <http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/meetings/Central-Mountain-Delegations-Appendices-1399659517.pdf>

May 12, 2014 - <http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/meetings/Standing-Committee-Appendices-1399991125.pdf>

May 26, 2014 - <http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/meetings/Special-Standing-CommitteeAppendices2-1401216298.pdf>

June 2, 2014 - <http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/meetings/Special-Standing-CommitteeAppendices2-1401896774.pdf>

Trustee Recommendation brought forth and approved June 2, 2014 – Ratified June 16, 2014

The recommendation is outlined as follows (see <http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/meetings/Special-Standing-CommitteeAppendices-1401896759.pdf>):

A) In the East Hamilton City ARC, the Board of Trustees approves:

- i) The closure of Woodward and Roxborough Park in June, 2015.
- ii) The adoption of the boundary map in Appendix B.



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B) The board will make the minimum investment of \$4M (estimated value of property disposition) to address existing urgent and high renewal needs, resurface or repaint gymnasium floors, and provide school-wide air tempering at the remaining schools.

C) Staff will begin a Post-ARC Boundary Review to consider changes between A.M. Cunningham, Queen Mary, Viscount Montgomery and W.H. Ballard schools.

D) Staff will report to the Board of Trustees with plans to address the unused space at W.H. Ballard School. This could include, but is not limited to, relocating HWDSB administrative staff, relocating existing programming, or pursuing public or private facility partnerships.

A post-ARC committee will be created with membership from school council, parents, staff, students, Special Education Advisory Committee and Superintendents to ensure a smooth transition for students and their families. The committee helps oversee the transition of students from a closing school to their new location and makes sure programming, equipment, community funding and partnerships is equitably reallocated within the system. All items within a closing school will, if needed, follow the students to their new location. All items deemed surplus will be shared with all other schools within HWDSB.

Conclusion

School closures are challenging and are an emotional process for a school community. While we understand how difficult it can be for a community when a school is closed, we believe HWDSB followed the Pupil Accommodation Policy and the terms of reference for the East Hamilton City 1 Planning Area. We understand that an administrative review is an important part of the democratic process and we welcome the opportunity to further clarify any of the information noted above.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Malloy". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

John Malloy