

North Accommodation Review Committee Meeting

Education Centre Board Room

February 1, 2011

Minutes

ATTENDANCE:

Committee Members

Chair – Vicki Corcoran

Voting Members – Jayne Bentley, Sandra Binns, Anna Busse, Michele Cameron, Michael Chalupka, Lisa Deys, Annie Fu, Jane Henry, Rick Kunc, Marie Jackson, Prema Rao, Joyce Schneider, Dawn Spencer, Grant Thomas, Barb Wachner, Jane Withers

Non-Voting Members – Robert Barlow, Scott Barr, Marco Barzetti, Danielle Bawden, Paul Beattie, Judith Bishop, Marilyn Bratkovich, Chad Collins, Glenn Cooke, Geoff Coombs, Mark Currie, Rich Gelder, Eileen Griffett, Jim Holubeshen, Peter Joshua, Ray Mulholland, Jamie Nunn, Maria Pearson, Don Pente, Bob Pratt, Pam Reinholdt, Pat Rocco, Michael Root, Tim Simmons, Sharon Slater, Todd White

Regrets

Voting Members –

Non-Voting Members – Jason Farr, Bernie Morelli, Sam Merulla

Resource Staff

Daniel Del Bianco, Steve Stirling, Jim Wibberley, Michael Slee, Don Hall, Kevin Morton, Ellen Warling

Recording Secretary

Tracy McKillop (formerly Skinner)

- 1. Call to Order** – Superintendent Corcoran called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.
Superintendent Corcoran commenced the meeting with introductions and reviewed the house rules.

2. Agenda

- 2.1 Addition and Deletions** – There were no additions or deletions to the Agenda.

2.2 Approval of the Agenda – The agenda was approved by consensus.

3. Minutes of the Meeting of January 11, 2011

3.1. Errors or Omissions – There were no revisions.

3.2 Approval of the Minutes -The minutes were approved and consensus was given.

3.3 Business Arising from the Minutes

3.3.1 Binder Updates – Mr. Del Bianco spoke about the updated School Information Profiles (SIP) which were distributed to the Committee and now includes sections two and three. The committee also received the “Non ARC” SIP for Saltfleet District High, Waterdown District High and Westmount School. School overviews for each of the schools – Delta, Glendale, Orchard Park, Parkview, Sir John A Macdonald and Sir Winston Churchill were added.

3.3.2 Clarifications – It was noted that the school overviews should be filed behind the yellow tabs located under the school profile tab. The old SIPs are to be replaced with the newer, larger version of the SIPs.

4. Information Items and Follow-Up

4.1 Timelines and Benchmarks – A flow chart outlining the meeting dates and objectives was included in the handout package. Mr. Del Bianco shared that the timelines chart can be adjusted if necessary as this is just a guideline.

4.2 Public Meetings and Organization – Mr. Del Bianco informed the committee that the public meeting provides an opportunity to present an update to the public regarding what has taken place at both working meeting one and meeting two. The intent is to provide a brief overview of the ARC process, the SIPs and the program strategy as well as the recommendations from the Senior Administration team. This meeting will allow the committee an opportunity to listen to the questions and comments of the community. The meeting is scheduled for Sir John A Macdonald at 6:00 p.m. The public meeting will be advertised in the media.

Questions - there were no questions asked at this time.

4.3 School Tours – Mr. Del Bianco indicated that the school tours will provide the members of the committee a better understanding of the SIPs and the opportunity for them to see the properties first hand. March 26, 2011 was the proposed date and a tentative agenda was included in the handout package. Mr. Del Bianco informed the committee that due to the number of schools this will be a full day event. He feels that this is an important component that all members should work toward participating in. The members will meet at Sir John A Macdonald and board the bus. A box lunch will be provided.

Question/Comments from the Committee:

- There was some concern that some of the members are on two ARCs and would be unable to attend both ARC tours. This was something that would be taken back to the Steering Committee for further discussion.

5. School Information Profiles – Dan Del Bianco

5.1 New Information – Mr. Del Bianco had six groups set up – one for each school. He advised that by breaking up into groups it would allow for more intimate discussions and the opportunity for the members to go over the SIPs and ask any questions that they have. A member of Facility Management was available to work with each of the groups and answer some of their questions and concerns. Forty minutes was allotted for the group discussions. Mr. Del Bianco shared that it may not be enough time to go over the SIPs in detail; however it is a starting point.

5.2 Review and Customizing - Upon the return from the meeting where questions and concerns were documented, Mr. Del Bianco indicated that these will be addressed at the next working committee meeting. He asked that all of the documented questions and concerns, of each group, be handed into Tracy McKillop at the end of the meeting.

6.0 Presentations

6.1 Recommendations of HWDSB Senior Administration – Ken Bain, Associate Director of Education – Associate Director Bain informed the committee that the Ministry policy requires Senior Administration to provide their recommendation to the ARC and the public during the ARC process. There is no stipulation as to when the recommendation is to be presented; however, HWDSB's Senior Administration team felt that they would share it early in the process. He shared with the ARC Committee that this is a point in time recommendation. He also said that the committee members could endorse it, set it aside, modify it, or simply throw it away. Associate Director Bain stated that the Senior Administration team will be kept abreast of the questions and recommendations of the ARC and this information may change or impact the Board's final recommendation. He then went on to explain why we have an Accommodation Review and shared that we have empty spaces in our schools. If we can combine some of the schools and increase enrolment then larger Secondary School environments can mean the following for students:

Program Benefits

- Provide greater options for students
- Broader course selection
- Flexible student timetables
- More opportunities for all pathways

Financial Benefits

- Vast majority of grants are provided on a per pupil basis – therefore spreading the funding over fewer schools allows for greater benefits
- Renewal – removing those schools with high renewal needs would allow the Board to reallocate those funds to the remaining schools.

Associate Director Bain spoke of the Reference Criteria as outlined in the Board policy:

- a) Facility Utilization
- b) Permanent and Non-Permanent Accommodation
- c) Program Offerings
- d) Quality of Teaching and Learning Environments
- e) Transportation
- f) Partnerships
- g) Equity

Associate Director Bain showed a chart which outlined the current situation, the on-the-ground capacity, enrolment utilization for 2009/10, 2015/16, 2020/21, the current FCI, and the 10 year FCI. He also spoke of the schools located in the North ARC and their associated boundaries.

Associate Director Bain explained the North ARC Cluster Proposed Recommendation

- Close Delta and Parkview in June 2013
- Relocate the students to the existing facilities effective September 2013.

Associate Director Bain then displayed a chart showing the enrolment percentage changes that would result from the above listed closings. He indicated that 85% of the students that are currently enrolled in Parkview are within the boundary of Sir John A Macdonald. The money from the sale of Parkview and Delta will be reinvested into the remaining schools. Associate Director Bain went on to explain that the new program changes will be shared at the meeting in April and that all of the students can be accommodated in the existing buildings. This recommendation is a starting point for the ARC to build from. It is completely up to the ARC what they choose to do with this option. He stressed that this is

the Board's best thinking at this point in time and that this may change after the ARC makes its recommendation. Associate Director Bain felt that it was advantageous to hear the new program strategy prior to hearing questions and comments from the committee. He stated that the Board is undertaking to introduce the new program changes along with the changes which may occur once the Board of Trustees has made their final decision.

6.2 Program Plan – Peter Joshua and Vicki Corcoran – Superintendents

Presentations – Superintendent Joshua stated that tonight's presentation provides an important high level look at the program strategy, its guiding principles and its connections to the Education in Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board report that was presented at the last meeting. He explained that the program strategy is all about a focus on how we can best support your child (student) in learning, achieving and preparing for life during and beyond secondary school. Superintendent Joshua shared the definitions of the program strategy which included:

Personalized Learning - this puts the learner at the centre and provides assessment and instruction tailored to a student's particular learning and motivational needs.

Pathways – this is a combination of courses that lead to graduation and to a post secondary destination which may include apprenticeship, college, university, community or the workplace.

Specialization – these are programs that allow students to explore their interests. In addition to the programming offered at neighbourhood schools there would be alternative programs which focus on such things as sports, academics, science, arts, and languages. An example of this is the program that is offered at Westmount Secondary School. Westmount is a system school - only one of six in our province.

Equity – all students have access to programs when and where they need them and where all students participate to the best of their abilities.

Tiered Intervention – a method used to meet the abilities and preferences of students where the level of support or programming is adjusted appropriately for each student.

The Program Strategy intertwines support to all schools. Superintendent Corcoran stated that the first criteria used to assist students in choosing an appropriate program pathway is their individual learning profile and level of independence. What is the goal for the student at the end of his/her secondary years and what is the best plan to achieve that? With the focus on "Learning for All" the schools need to provide inclusive and supportive environments that encourage the engagement and involvement of all students in all aspects of the secondary experience.

Superintendent Corcoran spoke of the Spectrum of Programs that would be available in all schools:

Student Support Centres – would provide support to students who are fully integrated into regular class and earning credits.

Student Alternative Support Centres – would be a new support program designed to support students in regular programs but who have anxiety-related or other mental health concerns and require targeted socio-emotional support in order to succeed in their chosen pathways.

A Comprehensive Support Program – is a program that would provide targeted, yet credit-bearing support in the core areas of literacy and numeracy plus inclusion into regular courses.

Superintendent Corcoran then went on to explain the Spectrum of Programs that would be available in all clusters:

Graduated Support Program – this program would be similar to a pilot program that is currently being offered at one site in our system. This program has two parts: The Personalized Support Part of the program is a four year program designed to solidify functional skills in literacy and numeracy, provide life skills training and focus on independence skills. Students would participate and be integrated appropriately into the school community. The transition part of the program would last a maximum of three years and involve a planned transition to the community, focusing on skills determined by the transition plan which assist the student in their integration into the community through co-op or work experience placements.

Specific Support Program – would provide such support, plus some inclusion into the secondary school community as personally appropriate. This program would provide intensive, personalized support in various areas, such as life skills, communication and personal care.

Personalized Learning Centres – would provide individualized programs not housed in a regular high school setting. These students would receive the supports necessary to transition back to the regular school environment or to a workplace setting as appropriate.

Superintendent Corcoran stated that there are two other programs which need to be provided as part of the spectrum of services in order to meet the needs of all of our students. These include:

The Extensive Support Program – which would provide targeted support to students requiring extensive and continuous support and supervision, and very personalized support programs. This program would be offered in at least one location in Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board.

The Intensive System Support Program – which is a program designed to support students in very unique situations where none of the existing programs will meet their unique needs, such that an individualized solution must be explored and developed collaboratively with our community partners.

At this point in the meeting Associate Director Bain stated that the recommendation is a long range vision which will support Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board in having well resourced schools and support the students in reaching their optimum goals.

6.3 Questions/Comments from the Committee:

Michele Cameron asked if the closing of schools means the selling off of the properties and will the proceeds be distributed among the schools? Associate Director Bain answered that “yes” the proceeds will be going back into the schools.

Danielle Bawden asked if HWDSB is prepared to spend eighty million dollars in upgrades why not propose the building of a new school? Associate Director Bain indicated that we need clarification from the Ministry for the funding of new schools and Senior Administration did not feel confident in recommending a new school. Ms. Bawden then asked how the upgrades are going to be completed by 2013/14. Associate Director Bain stated that all of the upgrades will not be completed by that time however the closing of a couple of the schools will provide some proceeds of disposition which will allow the upgrades to occur a little quicker.

A question was raised asking if the Parkview students will be integrated into the regular classroom. Superintendent Corcoran stated that the Board would have to look at where they are in the continuum to see what the best fit for them would be. It was then further asked if the students will have a separate school within the existing school. Superintendent Corcoran feels that they would be integrated into regular classrooms with support. She shared that the Board already has classrooms like this and that they are working well.

Michael Chalupka asked if the students will have a personal profile before they are moved. Superintendent Corcoran said absolutely and HWDSB will look at the personalized profile to make the transition easier and it will be pre-planned. Superintendent Joshua stated that ongoing assessments are key in making this a smooth transition.

The question -“would the same type of programming be offered at the new schools as is currently offered at Parkview?” Superintendent Joshua stated that the concept of pathways programs will support the students in moving into a direction that would work for them.

Michele Cameron asked how the Board will support the parents in making a good decision with the students because some of the students will be pulled out during their time in high school. Associate Director Bain stated that the Board will make every effort to provide support. They will connect with the students, parents and community to support them in making the transition as smooth and seamless as possible.

Trustee Simmons felt that the committee might like to hear the benefits that the students will experience by moving to a new school. Associate Director Bain stated that the Board will provide an overview in April.

The next question raised was concern over the enrolment projections. If some of the schools are over capacity then how can you move more students into the school? Associate Director Bain stated that the boundaries will need to be reviewed between Glendale and Churchill (moving west to take in some of the Churchill students). Some of the programs may need to be moved out to other schools and with the new program strategy and not having students in the classroom for four periods a day, five days a week will also support this move of students.

Geoff Coombs feels that committees may be needed for the schools that are closing as well as for the schools who will be receiving these students.

Danielle Bawden felt that some of the Grade 9 students may not want to register at Delta only to be moved in a couple of years to another school. Is there a way that the Board could offer a phase out program? Associate Director Bain stated that the Board considered a phase in and phase out method however it was felt that this was not the best approach. He indicated that if the ARC committee chooses to make that recommendation then please feel free to proceed with that recommendation.

Barb Wachner wanted to know what the psychological implications were going to be. Superintendent Corcoran indicated that this has to be a part of the transition. The Board will look at how they can support the students with this transition and the easing of any anxiety that they may feel around the move. In April, the committee will be informed of the various program locations.

Michele Cameron asked Associate Director Bain if the students could be told that this is just a recommendation at this time. He stated that this was an excellent point and that tomorrow messaging would be going out to communicate this very point. He shared that these are just point in time recommendations and that it will be a year from now before a final decision is made by the Board of Trustees.

Michael Chalupka asked if the utilization ratio had anything to do with the student/teacher ratio. Associate Director Bain indicated that on-the-ground reflects 21 students per classroom. Although the collective agreement differs from 21 students per classroom Senior Administration is using the on-the-ground data for this recommendation. He indicated that some classrooms are less than 21 students while others may be higher. Associate Director Bain stated that the collective agreement will be honoured during all of these changes.

Eileen Griffett stated that Parkview will not get the social aspect at a larger school. She feels that they will lose their community and safe space. Superintendent Joshua acknowledged Eileen's concerns and shared that all of the concerns will be taken into consideration.

Jim Holubeshen stated that the two schools with the lowest enrolment are being closed. Associate Director Bain shared that it is easier to re-locate the lower enrolments schools however the school conditions are taken into account as well.

Anna Busse asked Associate Director Bain if the feeder schools would be receiving information as well. He indicated that at this point in time there was no intention to send communications out to the feeder schools the following day although the secondary school would be receiving this information. This is something that will be considered at a later date.

A member asked if E Learning is currently being used or is it just a concept. Superintendent Corcoran stated that blended learning is already being offered however some of this is a new concept.

Danielle Bawden questioned whether it is wise to go down this route. She asked if the Board is going to support the staff by having support staff in the classrooms with the special needs students. Superintendent Corcoran stated that the students have the right to be in the Secondary Schools for seven years. She indicated that social work will be provided as well as support from community providers.

The last question that was brought forward was -are the staff permitted to follow their students if it falls within the Agreement? Associate Director Bain shared that the Board has already been in touch with the OSSTF to address the needs of the teaching staff. He indicated that they have already had information sessions and will continue to have meeting to make sure that all needs are being met.

6.0 Other Business – Mr. Del Bianco stated that if there are any other questions or changes to the data in the School Information Profiles please e-mail them to Tracy McKillop where they will be addressed at the next working committee meeting.

7.0 Adjournment – the meeting was adjourned at 8:53 p.m.