

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB)

South Accommodation Review Committee Meeting

Education Centre Board Room

October 18, 2011

Minutes

ATTENDANCE:

Committee Members

Chair -Scott Sincerbox

Voting Members - Bill Barrett, Beverly Bressette, Jackie Brown, Alexandra Butty, Ken Durkacz, Margaret Eagle, Alexandra Ewing, Kim General, Al Pierce, Anne Pollard, Cheryl Poot, Susan Pretula, John Whitwell

Non-Voting Members - Wanda Bielak, Donna Clappison, Gary Deveau, Angela Ferguson, Manny Figueiredo, Randy Gallant, Mag Gardner, Brian Greig, Wes Hicks, Peter Joshua, Deb Jukes, Ted Kocznr, Joanna Maull, John Miholics, Lillian Orban, Laura Peddle, Kevin Robinson, Paul Vukosa

Regrets

Voting Members - Derek Hambly,

Non-Voting Members - Scott Duvall, Tom Jackson, Renee Majic, Terry Whitehead

Resource Staff

Daniel Del Bianco, Steve Stirling, Jim Wibberley

Recording Secretary

Tracy McKillop

1. Call to Order

Superintendent Scott Sincerbox welcomed everyone to the tenth working group meeting. The Chair welcomed the new student representative, Lexy Ewing to the ARC Committee.

Superintendent Sincerbox shared that the Public Meeting, which is scheduled for Thursday, October 27th, has been changed from Barton Secondary to Hill Park Secondary due to a scheduling conflict. He also informed the Committee that there was a package of information for the night's meeting which has been distributed.

2. **Agenda** <http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/arc/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/South-ARC-Agenda-October-18th.pdf>

2.1 Additions/Deletions – There were no changes.

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

3.0 Minutes of the meeting of Sept 27, 2011

3.1 Errors or Omissions – there were no changes made to the minutes.

3.2 Approval of the Minutes – The minutes were approved by consensus.

3.3. Business Arising from the Minutes

3.3.1. Bus Ticket Information (Tickets vs. Bus Pass & Eligibility Criteria) – Dan Del Bianco

Mr. Del Bianco shared that with respect to HSR bus passes, HWSTS (Hamilton-Wentworth Student Transportation Services) provides school-hour HSR bus passes to students meeting the required distance eligibility (residence greater than 3.2kms from school) who are attending their in-catchment school on behalf of the HWDSB. Bus passes are the service mode utilized for regular-service eligible secondary students attending schools within the former "Hamilton Board of Education" area (urban Hamilton).

Eligibility for bus passes is calculated twice annually (for each semester) based on current student information within the HWDSB eSIS database and the HWSTS routing software distance calculations. For some of the students who are participating in the Life Skills Development program it is easier to give them tickets daily instead of a bus pass.

3.3.2. Transportation for Coop Students – Jim Wibberley

Mr. Wibberley reported that Coop students do not automatically receive transportation. In the case where there is a need a school may apply for transportation support through the office of experiential education. Some coop students receive help with transportation in the form of a bursary.

Beverly Bressette shared that some of the students who participate in the Coop programs do not have enough time to get home, eat their lunch and then get back to school.

3.3.3. Programs at Board Owned Non-School Sites – Scott Sincerbox

<http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/arc/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/Board-Programs.pdf>

Superintendent Sincerbox shared with the Committee that in their package they have a one page document which sets out these programs and location along with some explanatory notes.

3.3.4. ARC Membership – Scott Sincerbox

The Chair stated that at the last meeting the Committee passed a motion endorsing the continued participation of two parent representatives that no longer have students at the school they represent. He indicated that we have one more Committee member who is now in this situation. Al Pierce, one of

the parent representatives from MacNab is this member. The MacNab School Council has endorsed his continued participation. The Chair requested a motion to support Al Pierce continuing as a member of the South ARC.

There was consensus to have Al remain as a Committee member.

3.3.5. Extension and Additional Meetings - Scott Sincerbox

The Chair stated that “last night the Board of Trustees met as the Committee of the Whole and they received the South ARC’s request for an extension. I am pleased to inform the Committee that this request was approved. Please note that the final approval will be at the Board Meeting.”

Mr. Del Bianco spoke to the handout that was part of the update package regarding some possible additional meeting dates for the South ARC. To view the timetables please click on the following link:

http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/arc/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/SouthARC_Timelines_revised_Oct16_2011.pdf

3.3.6 Other

There was no other business arising from the minutes.

4.0 Accommodation Options

4.1 Summary of Mandate and Decision Criteria – Scott Sincerbox

The Chair stated that at the September 6th meeting this Committee reviewed the ideas that came out of the small group discussion. You can find this starting on page 6 of the minutes of September 6th. He noted that a quick look at this will refresh their memory as to some of the accommodation options that were discussed and some possible decision criteria.

He then directed the Committee’s attention to the mandate and reference criteria, which was on page one and two of the Terms of Reference. The Terms of Reference contains some of the same criteria as was found in the minutes of September the 6th.

Superintendent Sincerbox summarized some of the concepts in the Minutes and the Terms of Reference.

1. Maximize/improve the utilization of school facilities by reducing the number of pupil spaces.
2. Improve facilities to meet program needs.
3. Student disruption is a concern.
4. The requirements of high needs and vulnerable students are important.
5. School boundaries are a significant consideration – in other words if students move where do they go to school and what are the transportation implications?

6. How does a possible new school factor into the decisions? This would include considering areas of population growth and decline.

The floor was opened up for discussion of these and any other criteria that may help the Committee.

Geographic balance was added as number seven to the list of criteria.

4.2 Full Committee discussion of the accommodation options

The Chair shared that it is time to continue the discussion of the ARCs preliminary options. He stated that the goal for the evening is to have a set of concept options that the Committee feels are viable and that can be presented at the public meeting.

Mr. Del Bianco went over the options again. He did remind the Committee that these are only preliminary options.

- The closure of Barton and Mountain
- The closure of Sir Allan MacNab and Mountain
- The closure of Hill Park and Mountain
- The closure of Barton and Hill Park

Questions:

Q. Can students potentially go to Westmount?

A. We can make a recommendation to send students to schools outside of our cluster...that is part of the boundary process.

C. Westmount is not a gated community.

Q. Susan do you have an option that included Westmount?

A. Not at this time.

Kevin Robinson suggested just adding Westmount to the map even though it is not one of the schools within the Terms of Reference.

Dan shared that if adding it helps then that is fine.

There was discussion on school boundaries.

Q. Has any decision been made on where a new school would be built with the staff recommendation?

The Committee can make a recommendation as to where they would like to see a new school.

Typically a new school is 1250 pupil places.

Q. Can we add Saltfleet as well on the map so that we can visually see it? Can we add the Catholic schools as well as options for kids to go to schools?

This will be deferred to speaking about the public meeting.

Q. Are there options that are completely off the table?

C. I believe the Committee should determine if we want a new school first.

Q. Can we also discuss what we will be doing with the special needs students? Anne Pollard has an option that she would like to propose when the time is right.

The floor was opened for discussion regarding the Mountain school.

Gary Deveau brought forth a proposal as a representative for Sherwood. The North ARC has a direction that they are heading toward. The population in Sir Allan MacNab is not justified so can we put the Mountain students in a wing of Sir Allan MacNab?

Mr. Del Bianco clarified that the North ARC has one recommendation which includes keeping the Parkview students and incorporating them into a new school. Close Delta, Parkview and SJAM and build a new school centrally located and the Parkview students in an annex of the new school.

Mr. Del Bianco clarified that the North ARC does not like the word “wing” either and that is not their intent to call it a “wing.”

John Whitwell mentioned that he has worked with these students for the last 10 years and has found that the students who are in their home schools are doing well and enjoying being in their home school. They have transitioned well.

Anne Pollard asked for support in developing this option...

School closures - Proposal

After some considerable thought, I know that my only real objection to the Board proposal of February 2011 is the Board plan for the nearly 500 MID students of Parkview and Mountain. The current plan to integrate them into the composite schools within two years I believe is overly ambitious for such a complicated and vulnerable population. No child is particularly comfortable with transition and obviously many adults aren't either. Children who require extremely specialized teaching, specialized programming, a unique separate curriculum, supportive administrations, advocacy (particularly if their parents cannot advocate for them), and guidance cannot be dealt with expediently. I have seen enough excellence in this Board and as well as certain –hopefully transitory - limitations to know that the

students of Mountain and Parkview can receive an even better education than they do now if we proceed with forethought and caution. We need a) to remember what has been done well; b) to remember that our most vulnerable population needs education, safety, supports, advocacy, and opportunity; and c) to acknowledge that while some special needs children will, with the right supports, be able to transition to composite schools, or to specialized programs at Mohawk College, others will not.

These are the basics of my proposal.

- A) As the only school on the west mountain other than Westmount, MacNab needs to be left alone;
- B) Mountain should close only if and when solid hub programs are set up and running at composite schools along with a small (300 student) stand-alone specialized school for kids with MID within the Hamilton-Wentworth system, probably in the North cluster. The hubs need to be spread evenly throughout the city to increase the chances of children being able to attend school if not in their immediate neighbourhood then nearby.
- C) This stand-alone school for MID adolescents will be a jewel in the crown of the HWDSB. It will lead the way in terms of excellence of teaching, and of teacher training, pilot projects, innovative programming, flexible timetables, and community connections to parents, businesses, and agencies. It will offer Specialist High Skills Majors as in areas such as Hospitality as Mountain does now. It will make and maintain connections with Mohawk College for their postsecondary programs for MID adults. It will be a place where students can attend with pride. It will also be a place to prepare students for transition to their local high schools, if possible, to college programs if possible, to the workplace if possible, and to community living.
- D) Closure of two other schools. This is a necessary misfortune. Closing Barton and Sherwood would save the most amount of money. If Barton and Sherwood are to be closed, money must

be put into the remaining schools to ensure they are functional and attractive places that will engender a sense of pride and belonging.

E) No student should have to undergo more than one forced transition within a four-year period.

F) The timelines must be changed in order to properly prepare the hubs and the stand-alone school for the incoming students from Mountain and/or Parkview.

G) Suggested timeline:

- As soon as the ARC is over, begin planning the hubs in both the North and South ARCs. Expand upon the programming already at MacNab and Hill Park for MID students (2-3 full years of intense teacher and administrative training);
- 2014 or 2015 Begin Parkview/Mountain amalgamation into one stand-alone school...probably in the core of the city. Students will have a choice as to whether they attend a local hub or the specialized school;
- Close left-over school (or schools if a third location other than Mountain or Parkview is chosen for the stand-alone school)
- Close the composite school in the South ARC that is most expensive to maintain;
- 2017 Build a new school south of the Linc and when no child is in danger of a second forced transition, close the second composite school (the second most costly to maintain). To expedite this, grade 9's can start at the new school prior to the complete closure of the old one.

Mr. Del Bianco stated that there is no magic formula to get a new facility. As an ARC we address all of the concerns from A-F under the mandates.

There was discussion around the Mountain program.

The Committee is looking to maintain the mountain program; however, not necessarily the facility.

Consensus was not reached and the floor was opened for further discussion.

The Committee dealing with Alt Ed are considering having hubs for these programs. There will still be alt Ed programs for the students.

There was discussion regarding level 3 tiered intervention along with students with IEP's. Some Committee members felt that we can not lump all of these students under tier 3 due to the variety of needs.

Joanna clarified that it is a congregated Mountain program.

Kevin Robinson made a motion to have a congregated Mountain program not necessarily in the mountain building

Q. Does this motion mean that we do not support the integration of students for those who are ready to have it?

Susan Pretula shared that usually we have a motion made and then it is seconded and then opened up for discussion.

This was then further discussed.

The Chair asked that a motion be made and seconded with friendly amendments and then a vote. A motion was made to have it seconded and then open for discussion and then the vote. A vote of 12 in favour and the motion was carried and now this is how voting will be going forward.

Consensus was not given on Kevin's motion but it was seconded.

Q. Congregated – who is included in the group?

Kevin Robinson stated that it would be a mountain like program in one location not necessarily in the pre-existing mountain building. Bill Barrett shared that he would like it to say in the South cluster.

Kevin Robinson made a motion to have a congregated Mountain program not necessarily in the mountain building in the South Cluster. This was voted on and carried by 9 votes in favour.

The next discussion was around the question "Do we want to keep the building?"

C. I would like to see the program maintained however I would like to see it perhaps in a new school.

Q. Is it a new school? Do we maintain Barton, Sir Allan MacNab and a new school south of Hill Park and close Sherwood and Mountain and Hill Park with the Mountain program going into the new school?

A member felt that if we keep Mountain open our recommendation would not be taken seriously.

Q. Where are the kids going to go if you close those three schools? Do they build the new school and then move the students?

A. Yes that is correct.

Q. How many students will Barton accommodate?

A. Barton can accommodate 1113 students. Barton can currently accommodate 350 more students then is currently enrolled.

Q. Do we redefine the boundaries?

C. We have a lot of students who walk to school so a lot of schools would now require bussing.

Q. Do schools have to close prior to build a new school or can they build one first and then move the students?

A. Usually a new school is built and then the students are moved. It does mean the disposition of properties after the rebuild; however, I don't believe that would be a challenge for the Ministry.

C. Boundaries would be redefined no matter what we do. Given the Board's proposal I thought that we had to deal with these issues.

Mr. Del Bianco indicated that the Committee identify when they would like to see the new school built and you recommend at what time you want to move the students.

This seemed to be a revelation to the Committee.

C. The boundaries would need to be adjusted – you would not simply move just the Hill Park students into the new school.

Mr. Wibberley shared that in 5 years time Sir Allan MacNab will have an enrolment reduction of nearly 50%.

Gary Deveau shared that he thought that the utilization had to be 100%, and that you could not build a new school while keeping the other schools open.

Q. Is there a maximum capacity that you can request for a newer school?

A. You can ask for whatever size you would like to have in your proposal.

Kevin Robinson made a motion to decide if we want a new school regardless of location, and regardless of which schools are closed prior to closing other schools with only one move for the students. This was seconded.

Friendly Amendment – prior to closing other schools – don't want students moving 2 or 3 times.

Trustee Peddle shared that she would like to know why and where it would be located. When this Board was under supervision the Supervisor indicated that schools would be moved and once they chose to close it he kept them in a holding tank.

The motion was seconded.

Q. If we make this recommendation will we get a new school?

A. No – it would have to be approved by the Board of Trustees and the Ministry.

Mr. Del Bianco shared that they would have to go back to look at this and make the boundary adjustments, and the size of the school would need to be adjusted.

Mr. Wibberley indicated that a really good business case would be required.

Q. Do we own property south of the Linc?

A. Mr. Stirling stated “yes we do” and it would accommodate a high school.

Trustee Peddle brought up that she was told that the Board does not have a 15 acre site south of the Linc.

A. 15 acres are the provincial standard – you can build on a school of a lesser site.

The motion failed by a vote of 6 to 6.

Joanna Maull asked why the members chose that they didn’t want a new school.

I would like to have more information – where the new school would be, how large the school would be.

Al Pierce feels that we should get some public feedback on this and he did not feel comfortable with closing 3 schools.

The area that is growing most is south of the Linc.

I felt that the school would be too far south and the students would need to be bussed.

Kevin Robinson felt that these students are already being bussed because they currently live where a new school is needed. They get bussed to our antiquated schools.

Retrofitting a school would be more costly than building new.

The chair indicated that time is running out and we need to consider other options.

Further discussion ensued.

Ken Durkacz shared the idea of closing Hill Park, Barton, and Mountain, build a new school south of the Linc and have these students go to the new school.

Kevin Robinson shared that no one is opposed to a new school; however, they just feel that they don’t have enough information. We need to bring something to the public meeting.

There was further discussion.

C. A lot of students could walk to Barton so he did not agree with the closing of Barton.

Joanna Maull asked if the Committee can we put out a new motion out that everyone likes the idea of a new school?

Do we have consensus that everyone likes the idea of a new school.

There was consensus that a new school is desirable.

Gary Deveau feels that we need to have a new school and “Bishop Ryan” is why.

A new school can be built with the Mountain school in mind. They are specialized and should not be stuck in a wing so we need a school for them as well. This is celebrating these children and not just sticking them somewhere.

Bill would like to put his motion out to the public to hear the feedback.

The Chair re-iterated the ideas that the Committee has shared.

Joanna Maull stated that the Committee has agreed so far tonight that we would like to keep the Congregated Mountain program and a new school.

Cheryl Poot felt that the Board recommendation should be put back on the table and indicate that the students would not be moved 2 or 3 times.

A motion was put on the floor which stated “the South ARC will take plans to the public meeting to close a combination of two of the remaining schools being Barton, Sherwood, MacNab and Hill Park and the closure of mountain Secondary School, and the building of a new school south of the Linc.

Kevin Robinson shared that no one has indicated the closure of Sir Allan MacNab so can we agree on that and then present at the public meeting the possible closure of Hill Park, Barton or Sherwood.

Gary Deveau proposed that the motion be changed to the Committee is in agreement of placing a new school south of the Linc with the possibility of a combination of closures of Hill Park, Barton, Sherwood.

Q. Does this mean that MacNab is excluded and never to be touched?

A. No it just means at this particular time.

Trustee Peddle shared that Ancaster is worried about their numbers and would like some of the students from MacNab. She did not feel that MacNab should be considered as well. She feels that the Committee could go to the public with a number of options.

Bill Barrett shared that they have considered this. He felt that if they are talking about south of the Linc centrally located then they should take MacNab off. We need a school on the east, one central and one on the west.

C. I would like to keep all schools on the list.

Trustee Hicks shared that what the Committee has done tonight is outstanding and it is their decision. It is not the decision of the Trustees but the decision of the Committee. The Trustees will get their kick at the can.

Jackie Brown shared that there is a school with lots of space in Ancaster. Why can't we consider a school on the East and a school on the west?

There wasn't consensus on this matter. The above noted motion moved and seconded. A vote was taken resulting with 7 in favour and 3 opposed. The motion carried.

One proposal is going forward to the Public meeting.

Another motion was added to the earlier motion – the south arc proposes a new school south of the Linc prior to the closure of the remaining schools.

It was suggested that a new school to be built south of the Linc, prior to the closure of two of the remaining schools being Barton, Hill Park, Sherwood or Sir Allan MacNab to facilitate as little disruption as possible to the students and the closure of Mountain Secondary School.

This was approved by consensus.

Q. Can we get all 6 possibilities for next week?

A. Yes we can with no boundaries. We can show the map with all of the schools, the 6 combinations and the enrolment projections.

Consensus was given to extend the meeting until 9:15 p.m.

A motion was put forth to close MacNab and close one other schools on the East mountain.

Discussion ensued.

C. We have 6 possible options on the table – we don't have to arrive at a solid conclusion tonight. We can make more than one proposal.

Trustee Peddle asked the question "what clarity do we have on the maps?"

There was consensus to move off of item #4.

5.0 Other Business

5.1 Planning for the Public Meeting

Mr. Del Bianco shared that we give a quick overview, what the ARC has worked on until this date and what the proposed options would be. The Committee could also show the reference criteria that were used to come to a final decision.

Q. What do we show on the maps?

C. I would like to see Ancaster, Westmount and Saltfleet. Not catholic schools. They will be in another colour.

Q. Who will Chair the public meeting. It was decided that Scott Sincerbox would be the Chair.

Presenters will be Susan Pretula and Jackie Brown.

5.2 Other

The new working group meetings schedule was shared with the Committee.

C. Mr. Del Bianco stated that he would like to have direction for boundary recommendations.

A motion was put forth to have Mr. Del Bianco begin working on boundary maps for the next working group meeting.

Consensus was given.

There was consensus to move off of #5

6.0 Correspondence – A letter from J Shen was distributed.

Consensus to move off #6 was given.

7.0 Adjournment – The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.