

Correspondence
West ARC
March 29, 2011

Sent by email

Hello: I attended the public meeting on March 1st at Westdale SS. Although I did not ask any questions at that time, I have since come up with a question/suggestion. Interestingly enough, everyone I have mentioned this process to all have the same comment, and so I thought it would be worthwhile to forward it to the committee for their consideration. All of the people I have spoken to live in the Flamborough area, and all of them either do not have children at all or they are well-grown and done with school (therefore, no vested interest in what happens). I have since discussed my thought with other Parkside parents and they all agree that this is a reasonable solution.

Having dealt with the City of Hamilton before, I am well aware that sometimes the geography of the "country" is a little misunderstood. I also appreciate that Waterdown SS is not included in the review committee's area of discussion due to its overcapacity. I am also aware of the proposed expansion that is scheduled for the school. Finally, I am also aware that this expansion is still likely going to be "too small" even before it is finished....similar to the building of the highschool itself a number of years ago (i.e. already too small before it was even finished).

At any rate, here is what all of the Flamborough residents have said to me when I discuss the Parkside closing.

"What? Why would they do that when Waterdown is already so overcrowded? Why don't they just take some of the students in Waterdown's catchment area and move them to Parkside. That would solve all the problems."

In addition to this, I would like to add that "Waterdown proper" could remain in Waterdown SS, but it would be possible to move all the "country" kids attending Waterdown to Parkside. We live in Freulton and my daughter is already on the bus for a very long time to get to Parkside and the school board seems to feel that is fine. So, why are we not taking say all the children that are in the Balaclava and Flamborough Centre catchment area and sending them to Parkside. Most of these children are already friends with the children in my area as the hockey arena, dance studio, etc are in Carlisle. Their bus ride would be no longer than anyone currently attending Parkside and they would benefit from not having overcrowding at their school.

I think this is a reasonable and rational solution to the problem. I would like for the committee to consider it as a solution to the overcrowded/underattended problem of Waterdown vs Parkside. I appreciate it is not within the scope of the committee to make this decision, but I hope they would consider it as an option to be considered by whoever is responsible, and use it as a reasonable doubt to recommend NOT closing Parkside.

Thank you for your time.
Lisa Blenkarn

Sent by email

I send this e-mail with one initial statement in mind; Parkside should stay open.

- First of all, I am a Parkside Student. I started attending this school in 2009, September. I am now in grade 10, in the middle of my year. When I heard of this plot to close my school, my mother and I were adamant to go to the A.R.C. meeting.
- What I discovered was that there was, first of all, no assurance of student care at all. The A.R.C. members were only discussing the fundamental numbers and matters. It mattered nothing that this would be interrupting education for the younger students, shoving schools into over-capacity~and even not even considering the nurturing area nurturing atmosphere of Parkside and Dundas.
- Another pressing issue I found is that the answers were weak. I realize that the man and woman of the A.R.C. who do you mean? Mr. Bain and Ms Stephanian have been discussing this issue for a~while, so they don't have need to say the extra wording of as to why this is occurring. The audience being addressed, on the other hand, had little idea of why their answers were so short and un-carefully ill-considered. My family for one feels this is simply lip service so we are no longer concerned of what after. I am still concerned of about this business of regarding my school.
- My biggest fear is for my little sister. I will be the last graduating class from Parkside- but my sister will~not. She will be like I~am now, a grade 10. My parents, along with hundreds of other families, are making the decision whether or not to send their children to a school which may be closing. When the articles in the Dundas~Star released a date to close the school, it seemed definite. This is not acceptable. It seems like a ploy to drive students away and assure the program plan of shutting down Parkside works.
- I want the A.R.C's commitment that you will read this letter and process this letter. I would appreciate it if I could bring this into your minds when this issue comes up again.

Parkside Student,
E.Kodi-Leigh Organ