



West ARC

Secondary Accommodation Review

Ancaster High – Highland – Parkside – Westdale

Report To: Director of Education
Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board

Report From: West Secondary Accommodation Review Committee

Submitted On: February 3, 2012

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1.0 Executive Summary

At the March 22, 2010 Board meeting, the Hamilton-Wentworth School Board Trustees approved a recommendation to initiate an accommodation review for the West cluster of secondary schools which includes Ancaster High, Highland, Parkside and Westdale. The mandate of the Accommodation Review Committee (ARC) was to produce a report to the Board which addressed a number of different criteria including accommodation, facility condition, program, transportation, funding and implementation. The West ARC, comprised of parents, students, community representatives, principals, teachers, trustees and non-teaching staff began its work on January 18, 2011.

Over the course of thirteen (13) working group meetings and four (4) public meetings the West ARC believes that the following recommendations satisfy the mandate of the Committee:

1. The closure of Highland and Parkside Secondary Schools in June 2015 and the construction of a new school on the existing Highland site with a target opening date of September 2015.
2. The closure of Ancaster High School in June 2015 and the construction of a replacement school on the existing site with a target opening date of September 2015.

This report provides the supporting analysis to the recommendation and details the work completed by the West ARC throughout the entire process.

2.0 Accommodation Review Process

In June 2009, the Ministry of Education revised its “Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline” which outlines the necessary steps to follow when school closures are being considered. In accordance with the guideline, the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board revised its Pupil Accommodation Review Policy (No. 12.0, **Appendix ##**), in December 2009.

The Pupil Accommodation Review Policy states that the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board is committed to providing viable learning programs in quality facilities in a fiscally responsible manner. Various factors may result in the need to consolidate, close or relocate one or more schools in order to align pupil accommodation with resident enrolment. These factors include: changes in demographics and/or student enrolment, mobility

rates and/or migration patterns, government policies or initiatives, curriculum or program demands, operating costs, and the physical limitations of buildings.

2.1 Purpose of the Accommodation Review

School Boards in Ontario are responsible for providing schools for their students and for operating and maintaining their schools as effectively and efficiently as possible to support student achievement. The purpose of the Board's Pupil Accommodation Review Policy is to provide direction regarding public accommodation reviews undertaken to determine the future of a school or group of schools.

The ARC serves as an advisory body to the Board of Trustees of the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board. The mandate of the West ARC, as outlined in the Terms of Reference (**Appendix ##**), is to produce a report to the Board that encompasses the following:

(a) Accommodation: Develop recommendations to maximize the utilization (enrolment as a percentage of Ministry "on-the-ground capacity") of Board facilities in the review area with a target of 100% utilization for a future ten-year period achieved through accommodation changes including, but not limited to, school closures, new school construction, permanent additions, (i.e., bricks and mortar structure), non-permanent additions (i.e., portables or portapaks), and partial decommissions (i.e., the demolition or shut-down of part of a building).

(b) Facility Condition: Develop recommendations for capital improvements (i.e., repairs, renovations or major capital projects such as new construction) into existing facilities and sites along with a funding strategy to pay for those improvements.

(c) Program: Develop recommendations around the strategic locations of Secondary School programs, including, but not limited to, Regular, Vocational, Programs of Choice, Specialist High Skills Majors, French Immersion, Community and Continuing Education, Special Education, Alternative Education, Supervised Alternative Learning for Excused Pupils, Gateway, Care Treatment and Correctional Programs.

- Take into consideration the "Secondary Education of the Future" report

(d) Transportation: Develop recommendations that address the implications of other recommendations on pupil transportation.

(e) Funding: Develop a funding strategy to address any capital works that are contemplated in the recommendations above.

(f) Implementation: Develop recommendations for implementation timeframes for any of the above recommended changes.

(g) Scope: The ARC's work (i.e., discussion and recommendations) applies only to the following schools: Ancaster High, Highland, Parkside and Westdale.

(h) Timeline: The ARC will complete its work and submit its report to the Director of Education by Friday, February 3, 2012.

To fulfill this mandate a number of key criteria should be considered by the ARC. These *Reference Criteria* include the following:

(a) Facility Utilization: Facility Utilization is defined as enrolment as a percentage of "on-the-ground" capacity. The goal is to maximize the use of Board-owned facilities over the long-term.

(b) Permanent and Non-permanent Accommodation: Permanent accommodation refers to "bricks and mortar" while non-permanent construction includes structures such as portables and portapaks. The goal is to minimize the use of non-permanent accommodation as a long-term strategy while recognizing that it may be a good short-term solution.

(c) Program Offerings: The ARC must consider program offerings, each with their own specific requirements, at each location. Program offerings include, but are not limited to: Regular, Programs of Choice, French Immersion, Special Education, Care Treatment and Correctional Programs and Alternative Education, etc.

(d) Quality Teaching and Learning Environments: The ARC should consider the program environments and how they are conducive to learning. This includes spaces such as Science Labs, gymnasiums, other specialty rooms, etc.

(e) Transportation: The ARC should consider the Board's existing Transportation Policy and how it may be impacted by or limit proposed Accommodation Scenarios.

(f) Partnerships: As a requirement of the Policy and Ministry guidelines, the ARC should also consider opportunities for partnerships.

(g) Equity: The ARC should consider the Board's Equity Policy, specifically as it relates to accessibility, both in terms of the physical school access as well as transportation and program environments.

2.2 Composition of the Accommodation Review Committee (ARC)

The Board's policy stipulates that ARC membership will consist of the following persons:

- **Chair - One Member of Executive Council** (who will not have any "voting" status);

Voting Members Include the Following:

- **One Principal** who is not directly associated with any of the schools in the Review Area (*to be chosen by the respective Principals' Association*);
- **One Teacher** who is not directly associated with any of the schools in the Review Area (*to be chosen by the respective Teacher Union Executive*);
- **Two Student Leaders** from outside the review area;
- **Two "Public School Supporter" Community Leaders** (*Community Leaders must not be directly associated with any of the schools in the Review Area. Community Leaders are to be appointed by the Parent Involvement Committee*);
- **Two Parent Representatives** from each of the schools directly affected by the accommodation review (*to be appointed by School Council*).

Non-voting Members include the Following:

- **Any Superintendent of Education** whose direct responsibilities include a school in the Review Area;
- **The Trustee(s)** whose ward includes a school in the Review Area;

- **The Ward Councilor(s)** whose ward includes a school in the Review Area;
- **One Principal** from each of the schools directly affected by the accommodation review;
- **One Teacher** from each of the schools directly affected by the accommodation review (*to be chosen by teaching peers*);
- **One Non-Teaching Staff Representative** from each of the schools directly affected by the accommodation review (to be chosen by non-teaching staff members at each of the schools).

In accordance with the above composition guidelines the table below represents the West Secondary Accommodation Review Committee membership list:

Name	Affiliation	Representing
Sharon Stephanian, Superintendent of Leadership and Learning		Chair
VOTING MEMBERS		
Em Del Sordo	Hamilton-Wentworth DSB	One Principal Representative
<i>Declined</i>	Hamilton-Wentworth DSB	One Teacher Representative
Judy Shen Allyssa Horning	Hamilton-Wentworth DSB	Two Student Leader Representatives
Deborah Knoll Christopher Austin	Hamilton-Wentworth DSB	Two Public School Community Leader Representatives
Heather MacDonald Rosemary Bellefeuille	Ancaster High	Two Parent Representatives
Boris Williams Lori King	Highland	Two Parent Representatives
Phyllis Chasty Deborah Beedie	Parkside	Two Parent Representatives
Bea Howell Sharon Ricci	Westdale	Two Parent Representatives
NON-VOTING MEMBERS		
John Laverty Krys Croxall	Hamilton-Wentworth DSB	Area Superintendents of Education
Judith Bishop Alex Johnstone Jessica Brennan	Hamilton-Wentworth DSB	Area Trustees
Brian McHattie Lloyd Ferguson Russ Powers	City of Hamilton	Area Ward Councillors
Judy Langsner	Ancaster	Principal
Rick Hart	Highland	Principal
Paul Barwinski	Parkside	Principal
Virginia McCulloch	Westdale	Principal
Laurie Swackhammer	Ancaster	Teacher
Brian Lenart	Highland	Teacher
Dan Thomson	Parkside	Teacher

Maria Rikic-McCarthy	Westdale	Teacher
Michelle DesRochers	Ancaster	Non-Teaching Staff Representative
Anne Waldie	Highland	Non-Teaching Staff Representative
Gudrun Anderson	Parkside	Non-Teaching Staff Representative
<i>Declined</i>	Westdale	Non-Teaching Staff Representative

2.3 Meetings of the Accommodation Review Committee

In preparation for the four (4) public meetings, the West ARC was also involved in thirteen (13) working group meetings. These working group meetings were designed to facilitate the exchange of ideas, comments and/or concerns between ARC members on the topics which were to be presented at the public meetings. Although working group meetings were centred on ARC members' discussion, the public was invited to attend as observers. As outlined in the Terms of Reference, the West ARC held four public meetings in order to receive input from the community as follows:

a) **Public Meeting #1 (March 1, 2011, Westdale Secondary School) – Appendix ##**

Members of the Public that Signed In: 51

At the first public meeting, resource staff outlined the ARC's mandate, provided an overview of the accommodation review process, reviewed the data contained within the School Information Profiles (SIP) and presented the proposed accommodation option created by HWDSB staff. After the presentations by resource staff, the ARC Chair facilitated a question/answer session with members of the public to seek input on the information presented. In preparation for Public Meeting #1, the ARC held the following working group meetings:

- Working Group Meeting #1 (January 18, 2011) – Appendix ##
- Working Group Meeting #2 (February 8, 2011) - Appendix ##

b) **Public Meeting #2 (May 31, 2011, Ancaster High School) – Appendix ##**

Members of the Public that Signed In: 33

At the second public meeting, delegations from the public were welcomed by the ARC member. Delegations were made at the meeting in the form of 10 minute presentations and followed by a 5 minute question period for each speaker. Secondly, resource staff provided an overview of the accommodation review process. ARC members reviewed the work that they had completed to date and presented three (3) "Concept Options" developed by the ARC. After the presentations, the ARC Chair facilitated a question/answer session with members of the public to seek input regarding the ARC's "Concept Options". In preparation for Public

Meeting #2, the ARC held the following working group meetings at which input from Public Meeting #1 was also considered.

- Working Group Meeting #3 (March 29, 2011) – Appendix ##
- Working Group Meeting #4 (April 14, 2011) – Appendix ##
- Working Group Meeting #5 (May 10, 2011) – Appendix ##

c) **Public Meeting #3 (November 1, 2011, Parkside Secondary School) – Appendix ##**

Members of the Public that Signed In: 167

At the third public meeting, resource staff provided an overview of the accommodation review process. Members of the ARC reviewed the work that they had completed to date, presented their proposed accommodation options and discussed the next steps of the Committee. After the presentations, the ARC Chair facilitated a question/answer session with members of the public to seek input on the information presented. In preparation for Public Meeting #3, the ARC held the following working group meetings at which input from Public Meeting #2 was also considered.

- Working Group Meeting #6 (June 16, 2011) – Appendix ##
- Working Group Meeting #7 (September 20, 2011) – Appendix ##
- Working Group Meeting #8 (October 11, 2011) – Appendix ##

d) **Public Meeting #4 (January 17, 2012, Highland Secondary School) – Appendix ##**

Members of the Public that Signed In: 138

At the fourth public meeting, resource staff provided an overview of the accommodation review process while a member of the ARC presented the Committees final recommendations. The presentation contained all of the elements that will be contained in the final ARC report (to be presented to the Director of Education on February 3, 2012). After the presentations, an ARC member facilitated a question/answer session with members of the public to seek input on the ARC's final recommendations. In preparation for Public Meeting #4, the ARC held the following working group meetings at which input from Public Meeting #3 was also considered.

- Working Group Meeting #9 (November 22, 2011) – Appendix ##
- Working Group Meeting #10 (December 8, 2011) – Appendix ##
- Working Group Meeting #11 (December 13, 2011) – Appendix ##
- Working Group Meeting #12 (January 12, 2012) – Appendix ##

One final Working Group Meeting (#13) was held on January 25, 2012 to review community input from Public Meeting #4 prior to finalizing the ARC recommendations and report.

Detailed minutes of all of the public meetings and working group meetings were recorded, made available to the public via the Board's website and have been attached as appendices to this report.

2.4 Resources Available to the Accommodation Review Committee

Throughout the entire process ARC members relied on a number of resources and data to assist them in developing and assessing potential accommodation options. These resources include the School Information Profiles (Appendix ##), the ARC resource binder and the knowledge of resource staff. All of the information contained within the resource binder (including the School Information Profiles) was made available to the public via the ARC website and has been included in the appendices of this report.

2.4.1 School Information Profiles (SIP)

Prior to the commencement of the ARC, the Board, in accordance with the Ministry of Education Guideline developed and approved a School Information Profile. The SIP is a "tool" available to the ARC and designed to provide an overview of each of the schools based on the following considerations:

- *Value to the student*
- *Value to the community*
- *Value to the school board*
- *Value to the local economy*

The SIP document provided a starting point and the ARC then customized each school information profile to address unique local factors which should be considered during the ARC process. Review of the SIP allowed the ARC members to gain a better understanding of all the schools involved in the process.

2.4.2 Staff Recommendation

As outlined in the Ministry of Education Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline (Appendix ##), the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board presented an alternative accommodation option which addressed the objectives and Reference Criteria as outlined in the Terms of Reference. The option

created by Board staff proposed the closure of Parkside Secondary School in June 2013 with those students being redistributed to the remaining facilities, effective September 2013 (Appendix ##).

2.4.3 School Tours

Tours of the facilities involved in the ARC process were conducted on Saturday, March 26, 2011. During that time, ARC members were provided with the opportunity to participate in a guided tour of schools included in the accommodation review process (Appendix ##). The 30-45 minute tours included a site walk of the outside of the facility as well as a tour of the interior (i.e., gymnasium, classrooms, library, etc.).

2.4.4 Resource Staff

Resource staff were made available at all public and working group meetings to assist the ARC members in deciphering any information in the resource binder and to address any questions regarding Board/ Ministry of Education policies and guidelines. Resource staff were also available to respond to requests for additional information from the ARC, as directed by the Chair of the ARC.

2.5 Communication Strategy

Very early on in the process the Board realized the importance of developing an effective communication strategy to ensure that the community was continuously informed throughout the process. Notice of the public meetings was provided to the public through flyers sent home by the schools with the students, the Board's (ARC) website, and advertisements in local community newspapers (Appendix ## and ##). All public meeting notices included the date, time, location, purpose, contact name and number.

2.6 Community Input

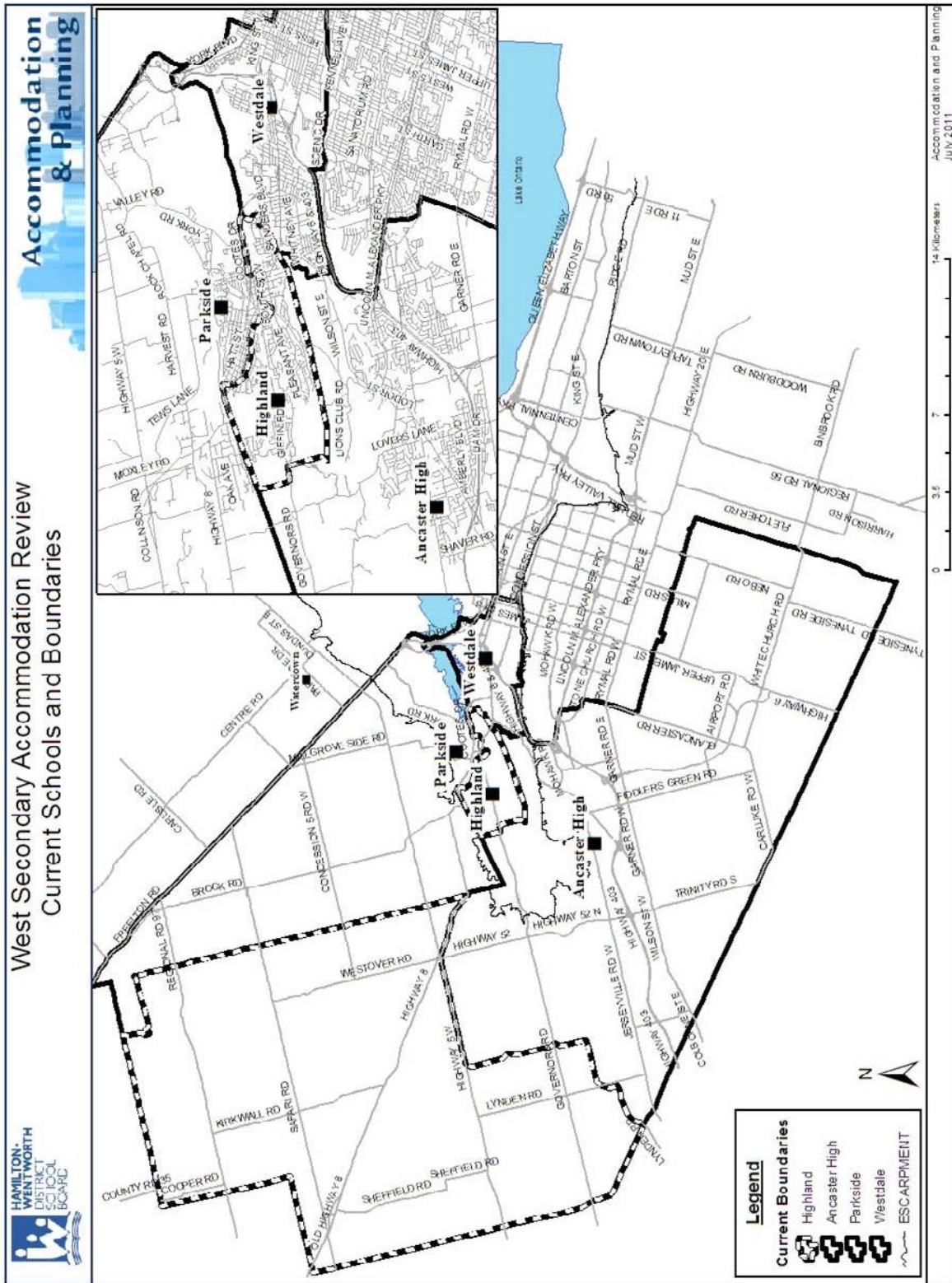
Community input was an integral part of the Accommodation Review process. Throughout the entire process the public was encouraged to share their ideas and comments through email, voicemail and through the question/answer period at all of the public meetings. Members of the community were also welcome to attend all working group meetings as observers of the process. All input received from the community either through email or during the public meetings was taken into consideration as the ARC developed its final recommendations.

3.0 West ARC Recommendations

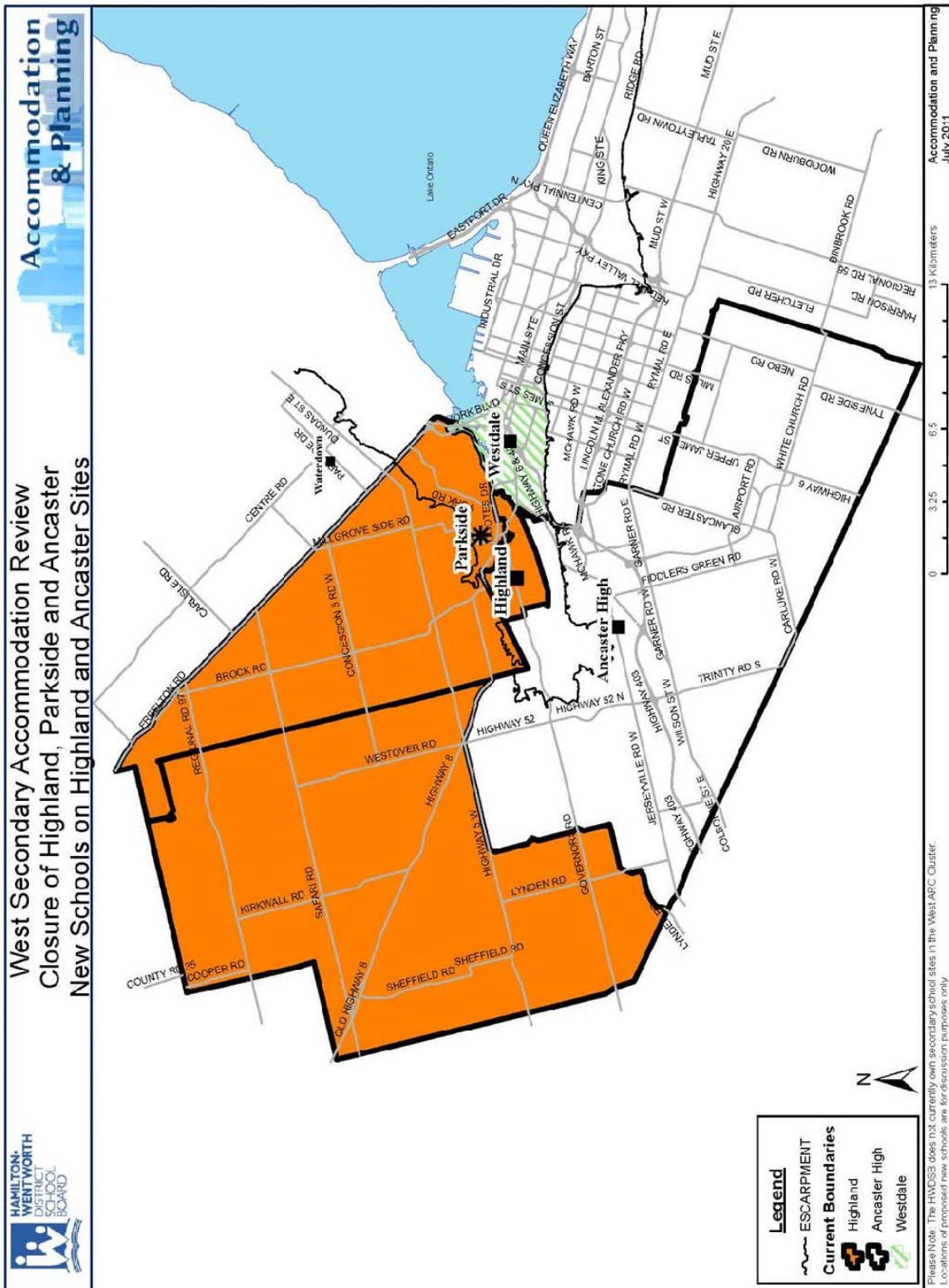
The West Accommodation Review Committee is proposing the following recommendations for the Trustees of the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board to consider:

1. *The closure of Highland and Parkside in June 2015 and the construction of a new school on the Highland site with a target opening date of September 2015.*
2. *The closure of Ancaster High in June 2015 and the construction of a replacement school on the existing site with a target opening date of September 2015.*
3. *That the new schools will have no less than 1,000 pupil places.*
4. *To include a theatre style auditorium on each school site and if necessary shared spaces with a music and or theatre focus.*
5. *That any new school will include space for community partnerships where interest and support is evident.*
6. *The existing schools that have been identified for closure will remain open until new schools have been built.*
7. *That the existing programs and the appropriate space in the current schools be retained if moved to any new or modified school subject to consultation with the community and schools.*
8. *That the Facilities Management Department will consult with the principals, specialists and school communities to ensure that the remaining facilities are upgraded to meet the program strategy and address the renewal needs as outlined by the West ARC.*
9. *The in the absence of funding, the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board will meet with the school communities to outline the Boards proposed strategy. (PROPOSED – based on input from public meeting)*

Map #1: Current Situation



Map #2: West ARC Recommended Option (Proposed Boundaries)



In developing their final recommendation, the ARC has successfully used the reference criteria to fulfill their mandate based on the following factors:

(a) Accommodation

- One of the challenges faced by the West ARC was to develop an accommodation strategy which would address the number of surplus pupil places in the cluster over the long-term in spite of an ongoing decline in secondary enrolment. As of October 2010 there were 3,907 students attending the four schools located within this cluster for an overall utilization rate of 85%. Long-term projections indicate that over the course of the next ten years, enrolment is projected to decline to approximately 3,200 students with the overall utilization at 69% (Table 1). During that same time period the number of surplus pupil spaces is projected to increase from 671 to approximately 1,416.

The West ARC has recommended the closure of Ancaster High, Highland and Parkside in June 2015 and the construction of two (2) new facilities, both of which are targeted to open in September 2015. Under this option, the overall utilization of the cluster will improve to 100% by 2015 (the year of implementation) and 90% by 2020 (Table 2). Under this scenario, there will be no surplus pupil places in 2015 before gradually increasing to approximately 385 by 2020. Under this option the boundaries for Highland and Parkside would be consolidated while there would be no change proposed for the boundary of the new Ancaster High replacement school. The following tables summarize the historical and projected by-school enrolments/utilization rates for the current situation and the West ARC recommendation.

Table 1: Historical and Projected Enrolment (Current Situation)

Secondary School	2010 OTG Capacity	2010/ 2011	% Utiliz.	2015/ 2016	% Utiliz.	2020/ 2021	% Utiliz.
Ancaster High	1,356	962	71%	979	72%	882	65%
Highland	924	756	82%	612	66%	490	53%
Parkside	777	595	77%	490	63%	420	54%
Westdale	1,521	1,594	105%	1,456	96%	1,370	90%
Total	4,578	3,907	85%	3,537	77%	3,162	69%
Surplus Pupil Places		671		1,041		1,416	

Table 2: Projected Enrolment (West ARC Recommendation)

Secondary School	2015 OTG Capacity		2015/ 2016	% Utiliz.	2020/ 2021	% Utiliz.
Ancaster High	-		-	-	-	-
Highland	-		-	-	-	-
Parkside	-		-	-	-	-
Westdale	1,521		1,456	96%	1,370	90%
New Highland/Parkside	1,000*		1,101	110%	910	91%
New Ancaster High	1,000*		979	98%	882	88%
Total	3,521		3,536	100%	3,162	90%
Surplus Pupil Places			(15)		385	

*Note: Proposed capacity, may be subject to change

(b) Facility Condition

- According to the ReCAPP® (Renewal Capital Asset Planning Process) software, the current back-log of renewal needs for the four schools is estimated to be approximately \$46,000,000. Assuming that no additional repair work is undertaken in the interim, this total is projected to increase to approximately \$67,000,000 by 2020 (Table 3).

With the closure of Ancaster High, Highland and Parkside, the ARC’s recommended proposal would remove three schools from the Board’s inventory; thereby eliminating approximately \$44,000,000 in future renewal needs (Table 4). The Facility Condition Index (FCI), which is used to rate these schools, is the comparison of the renewal needs of the building relative to the replacement value of the building. The higher the FCI, the poorer the condition of the building.

The future renewal needs for the remaining schools would be addressed through the Board’s annual renewal plan developed by the Facilities Management Department. The following tables identify the current and projected renewal needs of all four schools contained within this accommodation review under both the current situation and West ARC recommendation.

Table 3: Estimated Renewal Needs (Current Situation)

Secondary School	2010	2010 FCI	2020	2020 FCI
Ancaster High	\$8,320,404	27%	\$15,484,655	50%
Highland	\$11,649,454	48%	\$16,811,175	69%
Parkside	\$5,133,259	31%	\$11,335,588	68%
Westdale	\$20,607,038	49%	\$23,548,910	56%
Total	\$45,710,155		\$67,180,328	

Table 4: Estimated Renewal Needs (West ARC Recommendation)

Secondary School	2010	2010 FCI	2020	2020 FCI
Ancaster High	\$8,320,404	27%	-	-
Highland	\$11,649,454	48%	-	-
Parkside	\$5,133,259	31%	-	-
Westdale	\$20,607,038	49%	\$23,548,910	56%
Total	\$45,710,155		\$23,548,910	
Difference vs. Current Situation			(\$43,631,418)	

(c) Program

- In an attempt to evenly distribute programming across the entire West cluster of schools, the Committee has made the following proposals regarding program type and placement. The following tables summarize the existing programs currently offered at the schools along with those that have recently been introduced and/or relocated from one of the schools that have been recommended for closure. The recommended location and implementation of these programs is contingent on Trustee approval and student interest.

Table 5: New Ancaster High School Program Strategy

Programs of Choice (POC)/ Specialization	Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM)	Special Education
Biotech	Aviation and Aerospace	Tier 1: Resource Support
Connexions (Social Justice)	Arts & Culture *	Tier 3: Specific Support Program
Hockey	Theatre and Performing Arts *	Tier 2: Comprehensive Support *
International Baccalaureate (IB)	Information & Communications *	Tier 2: Comprehensive Support * (Social Communication Focus)
Robotics *	Technology *	
Soccer *	Health & Wellness *	
	Justice & Community Service *	

Table 6: New Highland/Parkside Secondary School Program Strategy

Programs of Choice (POC)/ Specialization	Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM)	Special Education
Basketball Focus	Arts and Culture	Tier 1: Resource Support
Global Connect	Music and Visual Arts	Tier 2: Comprehensive Support
Social Justice	Manufacturing	
Music Theatre	Advanced Placement (A.P.) *	
	Digital Media *	
	Business *	
	Non-Profit *	
	Transportation *	

Table 7: Westdale Program Strategy

Programs of Choice (POC)/ Specialization	Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM)	Special Education
French Immersion (FI)	Arts & Culture (Visual Arts)	Tier 1: Resource Support
International Baccalaureate (IB)	Construction	Tier 3: Graduated Support Program
Strings	Digital Media *	Tier 2: Comprehensive Support *
Quest *		
Horticulture *		
Basketball *		

*New programs and/or those that have been relocated from one of the schools being recommended for closure.

(d) Transportation

- The Board's existing Transportation Policy (Appendix ##) states that secondary students residing in "all developed urban areas" will be eligible for transportation services when the walking distance exceeds 3.2km. Approximately 57% of the total student population across the entire west cluster presently resides within walking distance to their home school, while 43% are eligible for transportation. The proposed ARC option would result in approximately 54% of the total student population in the West cluster residing within walking distance to their home school, thereby increasing the total number of students eligible for transportation to 46%. As the existing boundaries and school locations for Ancaster High and Westdale are not proposed to change under the ARC recommendation, the slight increase in the number of students eligible for transportation is as a result of consolidating the Parkside students into Highland.

(e) Funding

- The following table summarizes the estimated costs and potential funding sources associated with the West ARC recommendation. Approximately \$1,600,000 or 3% of the entire project can be self-funded through the proceeds of disposition from the sale of the school site proposed for closure. The balance of funds would be requested from the Ministry of Education through the submission of a business case (Table 8). Should no additional funding become available through the Ministry of Education, the West ARC requests the following:
 - *That the Facilities Management Department will consult with the principals, specialists and school communities to ensure that the remaining facilities are upgraded to meet the program strategy and address the renewal needs as outlined by the West ARC.*
 - *The in the absence of funding, the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board will meet with the school communities to outline the Boards proposed strategy. (PROPOSED – based on input from public meeting)*

To date, the HWDSB has only received one letter of interest from a suitable organization willing to explore the possibility of a potential partnership as it relates to a new secondary school. The

possibility of a partnership will be explored in more detail once the Board of Trustees have made their final decision.

Table 8: West ARC Recommended Funding Strategy

Estimated Costs		
1.	New Construction (2 x 1,000 Pupil Place School)	\$ 50,830,884
2.	Demolition Costs	\$ 4,000,000
3.	Other (i.e. parkland dedication, moving costs, etc.)	\$ 200,000
4.	Sub Total (Line 1 to 3)	\$ 55,030,884
Potential Funding Sources		
5.	Proceeds of Disposition (@ \$400,000/acre)	\$ (1,636,000)
6.	Ministry of Education (New School)	\$ (50,830,884)
7.	Sub Total (Line 5 + 6)	\$ (52,466,884)
Potential Cost to the Board (Line 4 – 7)		\$ 2,564,000

(f) Implementation

- The West ARC has proposed the closure of Ancaster High, Highland and Parkside in June 2015 and the construction of two new secondary schools with a target opening date of September 2015. The Committee has also recommended that in order to minimize disruption, no student should move until such time as construction of the new schools is complete.

(g) Scope

- The schools identified in the Terms of Reference include: Ancaster High – Highland – Parkside - Westdale

(h) Timeline

- The final ARC report was submitted to the Director of Education on Friday, February 3, 2012.

4.0 Additional Considerations

As part of their recommended option, the West Accommodation Review Committee members request the Board of Trustees take the following considerations into account when making its final decision.

5.0 Summary

In March 2010, Trustees of the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board initiated an Accommodation Review process which included Ancaster High, Highland, Parkside and Westdale secondary schools. The Accommodation Review was initiated by Trustees to address the long-term viability of this group of schools. Over the course of the past decade, enrolment in the area has steadily declined as the surrounding communities mature while the renewal requirements at each of the facilities continue to escalate.

An Accommodation Review Committee, consisting of parents, principals, teachers, students, trustees, community representatives and non-teaching staff, began their work in January 2011 to develop an accommodation strategy for the four (4) schools identified within the Terms of Reference. Over the course of thirteen (13) Working Group Meetings, four (4) Public Meetings, school tours, community input through email, voicemail and public meetings, as well as countless hours spent reviewing background information the West ARC developed a number of possible accommodation options. Through further consultation and feedback from the community, the West ARC chose to recommend the closure of three secondary schools (Ancaster High, Highland and Parkside) in June 2015 and the construction of two new secondary schools with target opening dates of September 2015. The West ARC worked collectively in order to address the needs of all students and the school communities throughout the West cluster of secondary schools. The Committee originally considered several alternate options throughout the process which included new schools and/or renovations to the existing facilities and believes that their final recommendation best addresses the criteria established by the ARC in addition to the criteria identified as part of the ARC mandate through the following:

- Considering the needs of all students across the West cluster of schools through the equal distribution of program, supports and infrastructure;
- Locating schools strategically in the West cluster to allow for equal access by all students;
- Eliminating the surplus pupil places and increasing the overall utilization rate at all of the schools;
- Incorporating input from public meetings and community presentations;
- Eliminating future renewal need schools from the Board's inventory

While the decision to close schools is never an easy process, the West ARC believes that the proposed accommodation strategy as outlined in this report will best address the long-term needs of all students residing in the West cluster.

DRAFT