

**Dalewood Elementary Accommodation Review Committee Meeting**

**Education Centre Board Room**

**September 7, 2011**

**Minutes (Working Meeting #4)**

**ATTENDANCE:**

**Committee Members**

***Chair –Krys Croxall***

***Voting Members – Suzanne Brown, Maria Carbone, Nadia Coakley, Pamela Irving, Anita McGowan, Kim Newcombe, Emily Reid, Michael Reid, Kristen West***

***Non-Voting Members – Judith Bishop, Heidi Harper, Silvana Galli Lamarche, Joanne Hall, Margaret Jobson, Debra Lewis, Peter Martindale, Denise Minardi, Colleen Morgan, Michelle Rodney-Bartalos***

**Regrets**

***Voting Members –Juanita Parent***

***Non-Voting Members – Brian McHattie***

**Resource Staff**

***Ellen Warling, Daniel Del Bianco, Ron Gowland, Robert Fex***

**Recording Secretary**

***Tracy McKillop***

**1. Call to Order – Superintendent Krys Croxall, Chair**

Superintendent Krys Croxall welcomed everyone back to the forth working group meeting after the summer break.

The Chair welcomed all members of the public in attendance. She stated that the working group meetings of the ARC differed slightly from the “town hall” style public meetings in that any one that was not a member of the ARC was there in an observing capacity only.

**2.0 Agenda** - <http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/arcelementary/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/Dalewood-ARC-agenda-Wednesday-September-7-2011.pdf>

**2.1 Additions/Deletions** – There were no additions to the agenda.

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

### **3.0 Review of Data Requested by the Committee – Daniel Del Bianco**

Mr. Del Bianco spoke of the ReCAPP critical needs data that was distributed. The critical needs data refers to those components within a school that, if they should fail, have the ability to cause the closure of some or all of the facility.

Urgent need is a weighing system that the ReCAPP software uses and it has to do with the life cycle of the items within the facilities e.g. the life cycle of a door is 20 years. Urgent need mean that the item has reached the end of its expected lifecycle and should be assessed to determine if a repair or replacement is required.

#### **3.1 Questions**

Q. Is there a list of items that were urgent and need to be replaced and have not been replaced?

A. Not at this time.

Q. We still don't have a list of what has to be replaced. Ron stated that there is a list that will be forthcoming.

The Chair stated that this is not saying that the Board is going to do that...it is simply an objective measure of the comparison of all the schools. It is statistically objective.

C. We would like to know what the real costs are.

A. We are not working at making a financial decision today and that will happen down the road.

Mr. Del Bianco shared that this is the best measuring stick that any school board has at this time. It is simply to support the Boards in assessing their renewal needs. This is a Ministry of education initiative and is an estimate only. The costs could be more or less. The jobs would be put out for tender on any work that would be required; however sooner or later all of the items on the ReCAPP data will float to the top and eventually need to be replaced. The decision should not rely totally on ReCAPP.

Frustration was expressed by the Committee on having to make a decision based on possible renewal needs.

C. Walls are not on a critical list and ReCAPP records all of the items. There are certain items that could possibly close down a school.

C. We spend a great deal of money on school upkeep.

C. The FCI of the schools is not reliable because it is based on the ReCAPP data. This is why we feel frustrated. The data is not as solid as we would like it to be.

C. We are required to assess the data each year and the Ministry of Education will be revising the software.

Q. Why are we having an ARC then? The enrolment at Dalewood is not that bad.

Ms. Warling stated that the enrolment numbers are just one variable that the committee must take into consideration as we move through this process. While the enrolments may remain stable, it is the distribution of these students throughout the grades of the different programs that must be reviewed in order to maintain a healthy balance between the English and French Immersion students and avoid having multiple split grades.

Kristen West shared a report with data from 1999. Ellen indicated that the information is dated and HWDSB has studied the declining enrolment.

The Chair stated that a final recommendation to close schools is entirely up to the Committee. If you don't want to close a school the ARC can recommend no closure. The ReCAPP data is a guideline of the costs that will be incurred by all of the schools.

Q. How long would our recommendation stand? How long before another ARC can be put forth?

A. HWDSB can not touch these schools for 5 years as stated in the Ministry of Education guideline.

C. There are two reports that go to the Board of Trustees; one from the ARC and the other from Board staff. The Trustees are the ones that make the final decision.

C. I have looked at data from a couple of the other ARCs and their numbers were a lot less than ours.

A. If a Board is considering a program change that would impact 50% of the student population at a school they would require an ARC. There are a number of costs involved in the operation of a school – costs to staff the schools, maintenance of the building, administrative supports are just a few that must also be taken into consideration when determining whether or not an ARC should be initiated.

C. If you know what ARCs are coming up I feel that it is important to have the costs up to date and available.

A. The plan would only be what the Board will be spending in the upcoming year.

Q. Is an assessment done every year?

A. When the items float to the top they need to be assessed. Some things go on the list while others come off. A boiler is a boiler and sooner or later these items will go. Please use this as lens to look through. Enrolment is another consideration as well as programming. This is the tool the Board uses and you do not have to use this tool if you don't want to. You can keep things as they are. Not all schools get assessed at the same time – it is done over a 4 year period.

C. This is a tool that should be updated prior to the ARC being started so that the information is up to date.

C. The piece we don't have is what the administration costs would be in these scenarios.

A. The enrolment numbers were considered for these options and once the Committee gets down to a reduced number of options then we begin to look at costs. We do not have the manpower or the time to complete this information for nine options.

C. It is a great expense for asbestos removal, is there special funding for this?

A. It is on a separate line because the Ministry of Education did not consider this at the time of the assessment.

Mr. Del Bianco asked the Committee if the Staff have missed any information requests. If there is any information requests outstanding or is there any material that the Committee needs for the future?

The data requested surrounding the operational costs associated with Dalewood and the impact of the recreation centre will be available at an upcoming working group meeting.

#### **4.0 Minutes of the Working Group Meeting #3 (June 22, 2011)**

**4.1 Errors and Omissions** – None.

**4.2. Approval of the Minutes** – The minutes were approved.

**4.3 Business Arising from the Minutes** –

Q. There was some confusion around PTR (Prohibitive to Repair). Can the staff provide the Committee with the history of PTR funding? Mr. Gowland will provide the B Memos.

Mr. Del Bianco shared that Antonio Paez has been bumped and received permission from the Committee to have him present next week at September 14, 2011.

#### **5.0 Review of Concept Options Proposed by the ARC**

Ms. Warling introduced Robert Fex as a new member of Planning Dept. She shared that Mr. Fex comes to HWDSB with a lot of experience with ARCs.

##### Options:

Status quo remains as an option.

Option 1 – is a flip of the staff recommendation.

Options 2 – These are all k-8 configurations.

The Mandarin program is not scheduled to go beyond grade 3 at this point.

Q. Does the utilization at GR Allan include the two basement classrooms at this time?

A. Yes, the 123% utilization includes the basement classrooms.

Q. Do the basement classrooms in GR Allan have to be counted as part of the schools capacity? If they were removed would that change the capacity?

A. Under the Ministry of Education guidelines they are considered classrooms.

A. This is why they would be renovated. Currently they are considered classrooms under the Ministry of Education guidelines. We have to accommodate the students therefore we would need to add portables if we were to close these classrooms.

We still have to look at programming at the schools as well.

Option #1 - Move GR Allan students into the Prince Philip School.

Is this a viable option? That would make the school way over capacity.

Option #2 – Close GR Allan School – both of the other schools would be K-8. We would need to add space to the schools and we would be looking at split grades in English and French.

Q. How does that class break down for the Mandarin program?

A. There would be 9 students per grade. That is the reality of the program in terms of the number of rooms available for the program. This is a highly specialized program and we have had to turn students away to stay within the capacity.

Option #3 - Close Dalewood School and keep Prince Philip as an English and French school.

This option provides better use of enrolments and capacity. We would move the Mandarin program to the GR Allan School.

Option #4 - Close Prince Philip School – move the Mandarin program to GR Allan and have single track English at GR Allan and Dalewood would be single track FI.

There is one other example of a single track FI school in the Board - Norwood Park.

The Committee would like to discuss this option further.

Option #5 - Close GR Allan School. Dalewood would be single track FI and Prince Philip would be single track English. Prince Philip is way over capacity and would require a large addition.

Option #6 - Close GR Allan School – Dalewood would have the English and Mandarin program and Prince Philip would become the FI School for the community. Both of these schools would require significant additions.

Option#7 - Close Prince Philip School. Dalewood would have English K-8 and the Mandarin program and GR Allan would become the FI School.

Q. Why would the Mandarin program be at Dalewood?

A. This would allow the students to go from Mandarin program directly into the English program without changing schools.

Q. The Mandarin students are not from this community so would they go back to their home school rather than remain in these schools?

Q. Is the plan to continue to transport these out of catchment students to one of the Dalewood schools even after they graduate from the Mandarin program?

A. No transportation is currently provided to the students in the Mandarin program. It is a program of choice and they come from all over the entire city.

Q. Is the thought that they would stay if they had a sibling at school?

A. The thinking is that we would allow them to stay.

Q. If students come out of FI program do they have to go back to home English school?

A. Westdale does not take out of catchment students unless it is due to programming needs.

Q. Is there talk of expanding the Mandarin program?

A. The Ministry of Education has only given us permission to go to grade 3 at this time – it is a transition program. We don't have any authority to expand on that.

C. We currently have a waiting list for JK/SK for the Mandarin program and we have to remain within the number of classrooms that the program has been allotted at this moment in time.

Option #8 – Close Dalewood School - Prince Philip will be FI for K-8 and GR Allan will be English for K-8 as well as house the Mandarin program.

An addition would be required at Prince Philip.

Option #9 – This option closes both junior elementary schools. We would tear down Dalewood and build a new school on that site. We are not sure if this option could be accommodated with the recreation Centre. We would have to build up not out.

Q. Do we need to think about the proposal that was submitted by a member of the Community regarding Asperger Syndrome when considering these options? Please click on the attached link to view the proposal: <http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/arcelementary/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/Complete-Proposal-Social-Communications-Classroom.pdf>

A. The proposal submitted by the community member focuses on a strategy for students with Asperger Syndrome. We are looking at possibly implementing this strategy in West cluster of schools initially at the secondary level.

A. Committee member shared a possible 10<sup>th</sup> Option. She was interested in the City of Hamilton's plan to build a new Recreation Centre on the Alexander Park site and wondered if a new school could be built

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Dalewood ARC – Sept 7, 2011

in conjunction with this. It would mean closing the Dalewood site, keeping GR Allan and building a new facility on the Prince Philip site along with the possible new recreation centre.

Q. What are your thoughts for programming for Option #10?

A. I have not thought about that ....perhaps K-8.

Mr. Del Bianco shared that if a large addition is required at Prince Philip it might be better to build a new facility due to the costs involved. We have only so much money so HWDSB can't build new and still put additions/renovations on the other schools.

Q. Is there a possibility of Canadian Martyrs and Prince Philip joining?

A. I am not sure that the Catholic Board entertain that and that would need to be processed through the Board of Trustees.

C. The school in Grand Erie where this is currently happening has separate entrances. It is basically two separate buildings attached on one property with a shared gym space.

C. At a previous meeting Councillor McHattie indicated that we should explore this.

A. Ms. Warling will take that away to see how that could be approached.

Q. Is it an option to build a super school?

A. It is very costly.

We will cost out your options once you dwindle them down.

A. We need to create a business case for the funding of new schools and/or renovations and the Ministry of Education is currently looking at funding renovations rather than new buildings.

Q. Is there a preferred model for a school?

A. The Board prefers a K-8 school which minimizes the transition from one school to another. There are a lot of people who believe in middle schools also and there are benefits to having a junior school.

A. More Boards are moving to a K-8 school because it is cheaper from a land perspective. It needs to be a larger school and 850 students in a school is not uncommon. Site size would be a concern if the City of Hamilton wants to expand the recreation centre.

Q. Can Dalewood be renovated internally and what would the costs be?

A. We have not costed that yet but we know that we could renovate it to a 500 student capacity. We can add additional classrooms through internal renovations.

Q. Would there be a rotary system if we were to go to a K-8 model?

A. Yes

The Committee began to go through each of the options to discuss their thoughts on these and to begin to eliminate some of the options.

Q. Are you saying that if we left things unchanged and went with the status quo scenario the likelihood of us receiving funding for renovations is low?

A. I can't say that because that is up to the Trustees to make that decision.

Q. Are there any schools eligible for Accessibility Grants?

A. No the facility money is to be used for accessibility updates and the date for having everything accessible is now 2035.

The results of the discussion were:

Option #1 – eliminated

Option #2 – up for discussion

Option #3 – up for discussion with some tweaking

Option #4 – up for discussion

Option #5 – eliminated

Option #6 – eliminated

Option #7 – eliminated

Option #8 – eliminated

Option #9 – (closure of all three existing schools and the construction of one new facility) originally this option was eliminated but later brought back after further discussion

Option #10 – Dalewood closed, GR Allan JK-5 English and JK-3 Mandarin program, Prince Philip would have a new building housing JK-8 English and FI – eliminated.

C. I would love to see the Outdoor Education Centre at GR Allan stay in the neighbourhood but could that be removed?

A. The Outdoor Education Centre is funded externally and it is used in the spring and the fall for programming so perhaps that programming could be moved somewhere else.

Q. It is a great program so could it be moved into another school? Could the external funding help with setting it up elsewhere?

A. No it barely covers the cost of the program...it is \$8,000 dollars annually to be used for programming.

A. We will look at the status quo and cost it out.



Another option was added at this point:

Option #11– which is status quo with renovations– eliminating basement classrooms over time as they are no longer required. Eliminate a classroom which can be used for washrooms.

A. An application would have to be made to the Ministry of Education to see if they would change the use of the room from classroom status to no classroom status.

Q. At what point do you consider the impact of the all day kindergarten? At Prince Philip if you add all day kindergarten how will that change the capacity?

A. The impact of full day kindergarten has already been factored into the projections. There is funding for creating classrooms for full day kindergarten. \$215,000 per classroom was estimated for internal renovations and \$480,000 per classroom for a new build.

At this point an Option #12 was considered.

Option #12 –If there is a lot of space for internal renovations at Dalewood and GR Allan is a nice building for someone to purchase perhaps Prince Philip would stay the way it is and we could move GR Allan into Dalewood. This is similar to #2 which is up for discussion.

**Consensus to extend to 9:20 was given.**

Ward 1 has no all day kindergarten programs at the moment due to the ARC.

We have consensus on the above approved options as well as the cost of a super school.

**6.0 Correspondence** – Some of the Committee members felt that Councillor McHattie’s entire submission should be considered. They were interested in the real estate value of each site.

The Committee was informed that this could be provided at next meeting by cluster or by ARC. This value is based on acreage and it is an average value of the sites. There is a protocol that has to be followed. HWDSB can only sell the property at a minimum of 10% below the appraised value, which is confidential information.

### **7.0 Other Business**

**7.1 Community Sponsorship** - Mr. Del Bianco spoke of Facility Partnerships and shared that they had received a total of 18 expressions of interest for space within HWDSB. Of those 18, five could potentially meet the screening criteria according to the interim Facility Partnership policy which was passed by the Board in June. Some of the criteria include:

- The health and safety of students must be protected.
- Partnerships must be appropriate for a school setting.
- Partnerships must not compromise the student achievement strategy.
- No entities that provide competing education services such as private schools/colleges or credit offering entities are eligible.

Mr. Del Bianco shared that the Board reached out to the community through a number of mediums. There was an advertisement in the Hamilton Spectator. There was also outreach through social media channels such as Twitter and Facebook. The Board's website featured the application prominently on its homepage. There was an article in the Hamilton Community News as well as the Hamilton Spectator indicating that space was available. The Board also reached out to its current partners, not-for-profits and organizations outlined in the Regulation 444. This is the Regulation governing the disposition of property. In total, 440 letters were distributed to the community. The Facilities department is in the process of contacting those organizations that meet the screening criteria to get a better understanding of the facility requirements. Mr. Del Bianco shared that Boards are not expected to take on additional costs to support Facility Partnerships. They must be cost neutral.

**Consensus was given to extend the meeting to 9:32 p.m.**

The Committee requested a scatter gram. Ms. Warling shared that HWDSB has to be careful with privacy issue and therefore would not be able to include detailed street information on the maps. They will create the scatter plots and include the school boundaries.

A request came forward to redistribute Councillor McHattie's letter to the ARC members as some had misplaced the copy.

Q. What is the rationale for the Board to have this Dalewood ARC? The Committee would like to see the report, from the Board of Trustees, on the recommendation to have a Dalewood ARC.

The Committee would like to know all of the costs of the renovations, staffing costs, bussing....to make a cost decision. It does not have to be a definite cost but something similar to the ReCAPP and the SIPS would have administration costs.

What are the costs of keeping three buildings open?

The teacher's costs won't change significantly since we have to meet Ministry and Collective Agreement rules for class sizes.

Ms. Warling shared that the Committee has seven possible options and the Staff would be very challenged to have that information by the following week. She asked the Committee to please not get hung up on ReCAPP data and the financials because they need to consider the program components.

**Consensus to extend 5 minutes more was given.**

The Committee voted on prioritizing their options and decided which options they wanted costed for the following week. The final decision was:

1. The staff option
2. The status quo with renovations.

**8.0 Adjournment** - The meeting adjourned at 9:38 p.m.