



**West Hamilton Accommodation Review  
Working Group Meeting #2  
Wednesday January 25, 2017  
6:00 pm**

**Bennetto  
47 Simcoe Street East,  
Hamilton, Ontario**

**Agenda**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Housekeeping Items                        |  |
| 2. Correspondence                            | 15 mins                                |
| 3. Public Meeting January 11, 2016 – Debrief | 45 mins - Deferred to February 8, 2017 |
| 4. Identifying 'Themes' heard                | 30 mins - Deferred to February 8, 2017 |
| 5. Next Steps                                |  |

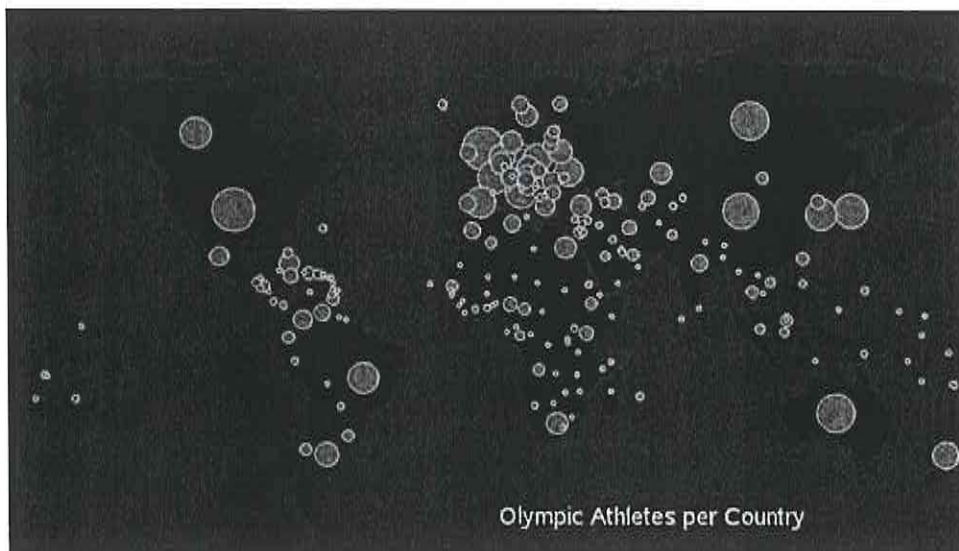
## Correspondence

From: David Heska

Hello Sue,

I'm on the working committee (as a rep from Hess St) and I have the following initial questions:

- 1) Where are the French Immersion students at Earl Kitchener (82 students) and the Ryerson (46 students) bused from? Can you provide this information as dots on a map?
- 2) If all 9 schools remained open and if the French Immersion boundary lines were changed so that all JK-8 students who live north of King St went to Bennetto instead of Earl Kitchener/Ryerson, how would this affect the current projected enrollment numbers at these 3 schools?
- 3) For each SIP "Attachment 8" instead of just providing a "Student Distribution Map" with one equal size dot representing the address of a single house (with one student) and the same size dot representing a highrise apartment (with 100+ students), can you instead provide this information showing population density. Something like this:



- 4) Will the City staff and planners who come to the next working committee meeting be able to discuss the development plans not only at Pier 7/8 but also at Barton-Tiffany and at Jamesville.

5) Can HWDSB staff bring 100 copies of the 24 page "Initial Report" to the public meeting so that parents who want a copy can pick one up? Many of the low income families do not have internet access and are asking for a hard copy to read.

6) On the bottom of page 14 the initial report states "However, these communities students are given smaller class sizes to accommodate their learning needs". Can you please clarify if it is only Bennetto, Cathy Weaver, Dr. Davey and Queen Victoria students who are given these smaller class sizes? If not, which other schools qualify?

7) The top of page 15 the initial report refers to the "2016-2017 Learning Opportunities Plan". Can this plan be provided to the working committee?

Answer: The board keeps this type of sensitive information confidential because it doesn't serve the interests of our communities to publicize it. Furthermore, it can be hurtful to publicize it. The LOP list is sensitive because it identifies vulnerable populations. It's simply a matter of being respectful and professional.

8) What is the current annual cost to bus: (a) all 396 students to the 9 schools? (b) 143 students to Bennetto? (c) 50 students to Queen Victoria?

9) Based on the SIPs, can staff provide a summary table showing all 9 schools and their respective "Community Use Total Cost" and "Revenue"?

10) Based on the SIPs, can staff provide a summary table showing all 9 schools and their respective "Utility Cost Total" and "Utility Cost per sq ft"?

11) Is the Sir John A MacDonald land a possible location of a new downtown elementary school?

12) What is the approximate cost for the Board to build a new 500 student elementary school? Is this more cost effective than trying to bring some of our current schools up to the benchmark?

To the Committee and staff,

I'm a parent from Hess street school. I'm a stay at home parent as we have medical issues that keep me at home. As such I have had a lot of time to think about the review. I have a few questions that if they could be answered would help me get a bigger picture of our student population across the entire ward.

1. if Bennetto catchment expanded into Cathy weaver from Dickinson street north how many students would be moved?
2. If cathy weaver expanded into dr. Davey up to Victoria ave. How many students would be moved?
3. With the previous moves how many open spaces would be at Dr.Davey?
4. How many students from gr6-8 are in strathcona catchment?
5. How many students from gr6-8 are in central catchment?
6. how many students from gr6-8 are in earl kitchener catchment?
7. Is the Sage program moveable?
8. What is happening with the sir john a. Mcdonald property?
9. Is it possible to turn earl kitchener into a k-8?

With those answers I would have a better idea what our population looks like and would be able to offer another option to look at for review.

Please provide information about the purpose and agenda of the meeting.

1. The flyer refers to an opportunity to ask questions. Who will be representing the Board and Trustees at this meeting?

2. Is the intention also to seek input from the community? If so, please provide the questions and topics that people will be asked to give feedback on. Who will receive the feedback collected?

I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Thank you,



I am a parent rep at Strathcona School for the Accommodation Review Committee and I have some questions with regard to the rationale of closing a school to access additional funding pools at the provincial level. Do we absolutely need to close a school to be financially sustainable? What was the thinking/rationale behind the initial option of closing a school?

Do we absolutely need to change anything in order to continue to function, or is this genuinely a process which allows us to develop, going forward, a vision for our schools and communities which can grow and develop over time?

I have been working on this all week in every free minute, plus time on the Christmas Holidays and it is my sincere hope that as a member of this committee that I may serve to develop a coherent vision and plan for our urban communities and schools that works for everyone.

I have put together the beginnings of an option that look to me like it could work for everyone but I need help to know if the ideas would work from someone who has all the information.

Could you please help me, or direct me to someone who can?

Sincerely,

Nadine Bernacki

1. The status of Sir John A MacDonald ..... at a previous ARC it was decided the SJAM would close (2015)  
- it is still open, when is it now slated to close ?

..... what is the plan for the school and land (once it closes) ?

..... what are the specs of the SJAM property - acres?, school facilities, rooms etc ?

2. What are the Separate School Boards accommodation plans for schools in the West Hamilton City area ? I have heard that some schools are closing/boundaries changing and students could possibly be looking to change boards.

3. What are the future plans for the City of Hamilton for the West Hamilton City area including, James St., Barton-Tiffany area, etc.

4. School Catchment areas for the West Hamilton City area and how they are been changed over the last 20-30 years ? For a historical perspective.

5. Some further clarification about the identified and designated properties and specific what can and cannot be done with them. I think Central is designated and both Strathcona and Earl Kitchener are identified, So what exactly does that mean for those properties ?

Thanks very much Sue, I will see you on Wednesday at the public meeting at SJAM.



To the committee and staff

I have looked at little closer at past catchment changes and have another few questions.

1. If the hess catchment were to be expanded east to john street, how many students would be affected?
2. If it was expanded east to Locke street how many students would be affected?
3. Is the sage program also at ryerson?
4. If it is could it be accommodated in strathcona as a specialized school?
5. Could strathcona be combined with hess to make that possible?

January 23 2017

To: West Hamilton Accommodation Review Advisory Committee

From: Judith Bishop

I am writing you, as "the key criteria of accommodation reviews includes .....

- student achievement and the conditions that support student achievement
- student well-being " (Guiding Principles of the HWDSB Pupil Accommodation Policy)

### **Summary of Concerns:**

Hess Street School is a neglected school with very high student needs. A very large proportion of grade 3 and Grade 6 students are English Language Learners (ELL), the largest in Hamilton in 2016. (Table 1) Numbers have been substantial since 2008 (Tables 2&3). A few other schools in the Hamilton Wentworth District School Board also have high percentages of English Language learners, but none also have high proportions of special education students. (Table 4) The percentage of special education students at the school in grades 3 and 6 is also the largest in an elementary school (Table 5), and is increasing (Tables 6 and 7): they are now over half of grade 3 and grade 6 students.

The substantial number of students who are ELL and with special education needs has not been matched by a proportionate increase in instructional support to the school.

Students did better academically at the school prior to 2008, when EQAO scores sometimes were at or above Provincial averages. Student needs have increased since. In the period I knew the school well (1998-2014) staff and principals were always committed and dedicated to their students. But student achievement has been declining since 2006. (Tables 9, 10, 12.13) The lack of substantial additional resources for large ELL and special education populations are underlying reasons, and suggest why achievement is now at crisis level. (Tables 8.11) Results in Grade 3 math are the lowest for the school since EQAO test scores began, and more than two-thirds of students are not meeting Provincial expectations in Grade 3 reading and math, and Grade 6 math. The school is one of only two percent of schools in the Province with Grade 3 reading scores below 34%.

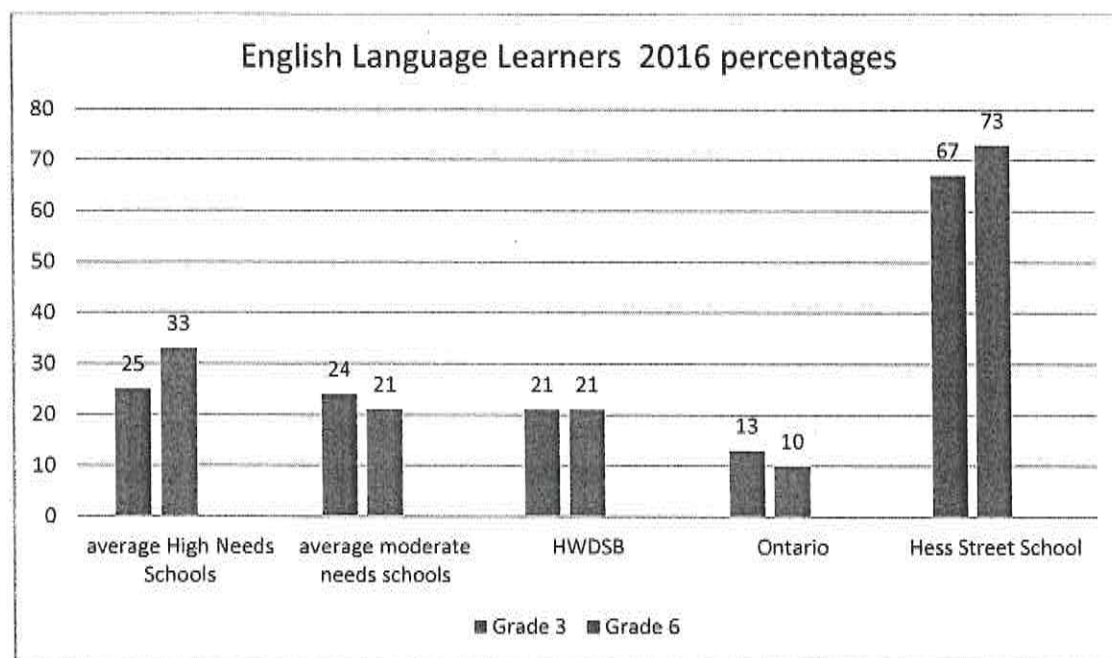
My request is that the Advisory Committee for West Hamilton consider carefully recommendations regarding Hess Street School, in the best interest of its students' achievement. The high needs of the students are unique in the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board and require unique and additional resources. Like all students, Hess Street students deserve the opportunity to be successful. They should be provided with adequate educational resources and the instruction that will prepare them for success in high school. A successful education is a route out of poverty. Any accommodation solution you select should be linked to increased resources and better potential outcomes for improved student success in learning and achievement.

All data used in this memo is derived from public EQAO individual school, HWDSB, and Ontario reports. Some was collected in the period when I was Trustee for Hess Street School 1998-2014.

### English Language learners (ELL)

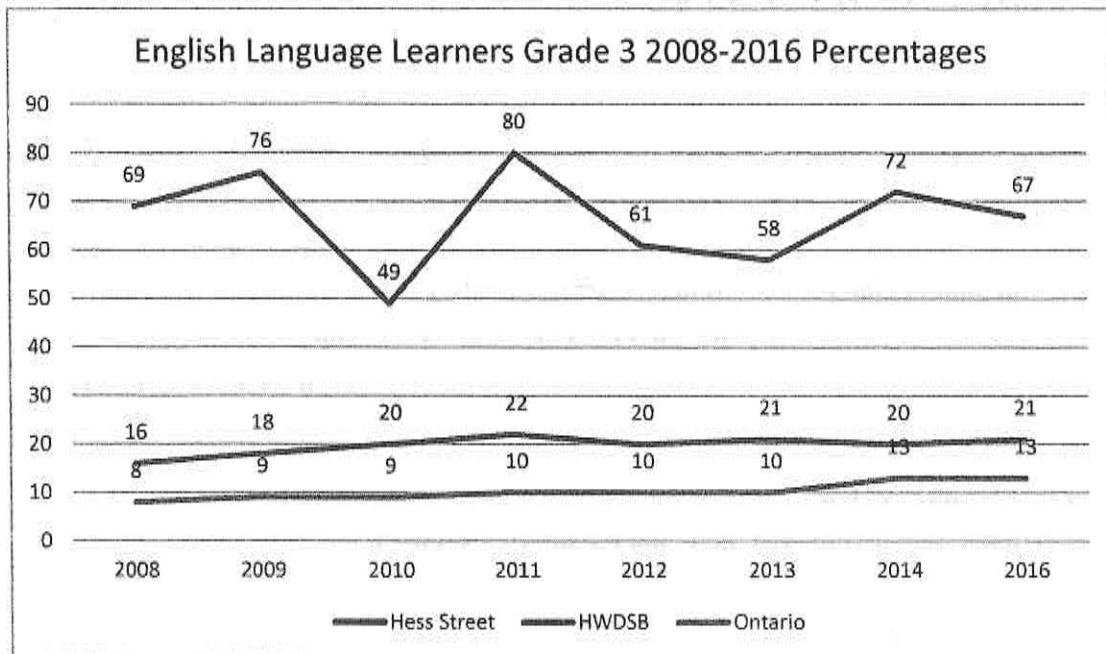
Very high proportions of the students at the school are ELL-- almost three quarters of Grade 6. Traditionally many of these students are Government Assisted Refugees who have experienced trauma in war torn countries. They have often had disrupted education and or very little education in their native language. This creates instructional challenges.

Table 1



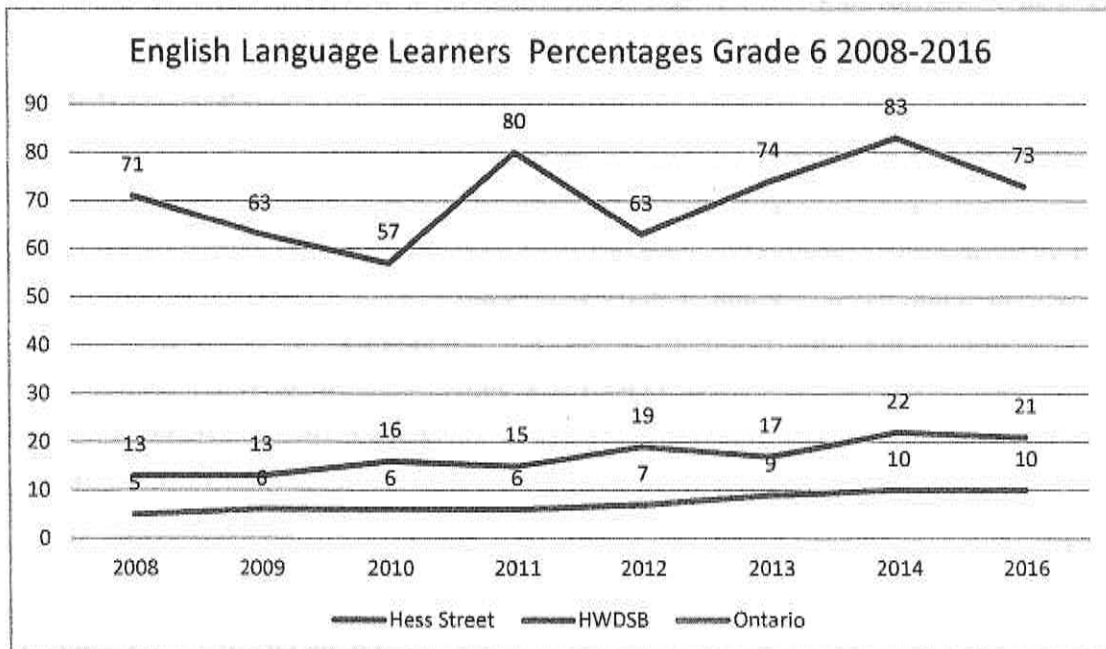
Hess Street School has had large percentages of ELL learners since 2008.

Table 2



Prior to 2008 there was a slowdown in immigration under the Federal conservative government. I have records kept as a trustee using EQAO data that show 21% of students were ELL learners in 2004 and 8% in 2005, far lower than the lowest percentage since 2008. Unfortunately I can find no other data for years prior to 2008. But this suggests that numbers prior to 2008 may well have been lower.

Table 3





### Hess Street's ELL students compared to other HWDSB elementary schools

Hess Street has the highest percentage of ELL students of all HWDSB's elementary schools. Only 7 other elementary schools came near to approaching Hess Street's high numbers of ELL in 2016.

Table 4

### HWDSB Schools with more than 40% ELL learners and their percentages of special education students in Grade 3 and Grade 6, 2016

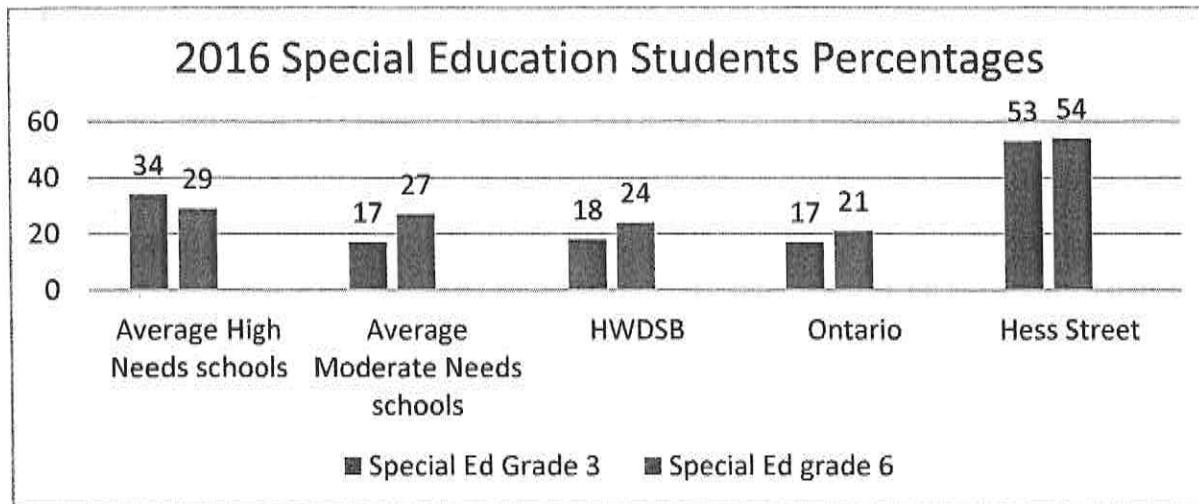
School	Grade 3 %ELL	Grade 6 % ELL	Grade 3 Spec Ed	Grade 6 Spec Ed
Hess Street	67	73	53	54
Lake Avenue	63	72	12	16
Dr. J Edgar Davey	42	71	30	26
Central	55	N/A	16	N/A
Ridgemount	49	46	11	18
Sir Isaac Brock	44	N/A	22	N/A
Pauline Johnson	(31)	47	31	12
Cathy Wever	(23)	46	30	33

**Hess Street School alone has both very high percentages of ELL and high percentages of Special Education students.**

### Special Education:

53% of Grade 3 students and 54% of grade 6 students are on Independent Education Plans (IEP) (EQAO 2016). An IEP is usually given to a student who has learning difficulties or behavioural issues and is working approximately two grades below their chronological age. With such a high proportion of students on IEPs, it is impossible for one teacher to monitor them all and implement their plans. This is the only school in HWDSB with this degree of special education need in grade 3 and grade 6. These figures are 30% above grade 3 and 35% above grade 6 Board IEP averages.

Table 5



**Students requiring Special Education support have been increasing.**

From 2008 to 2016 percentages doubled in Grade 3 and by two and a half times in Grade 6. Over the same period resources needed to support these students have not doubled.

Table 6

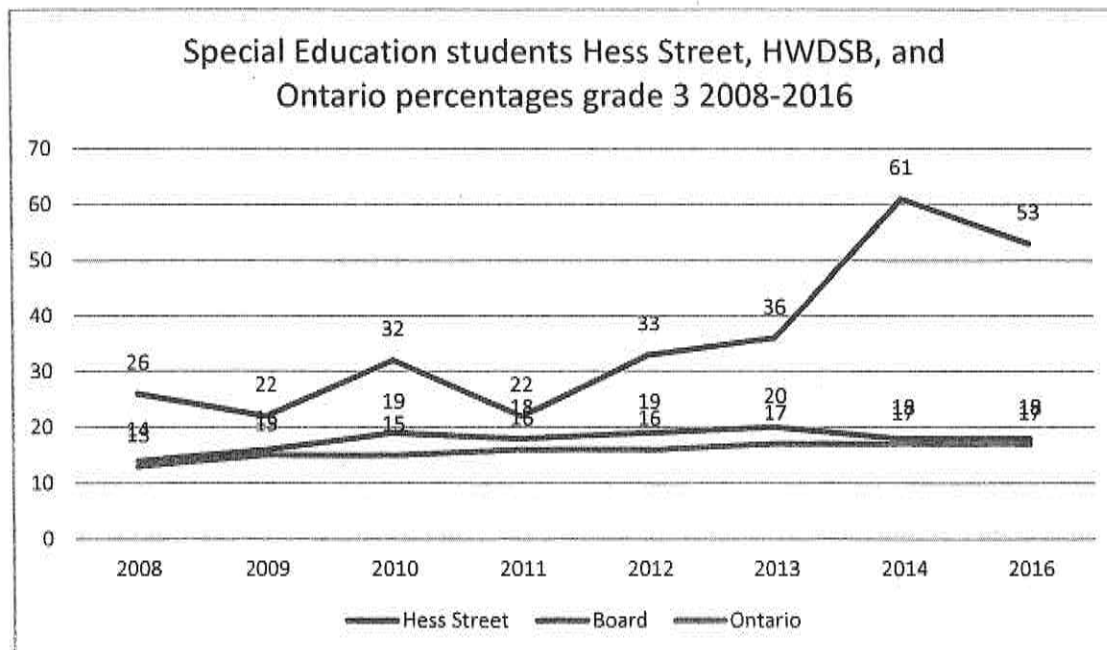
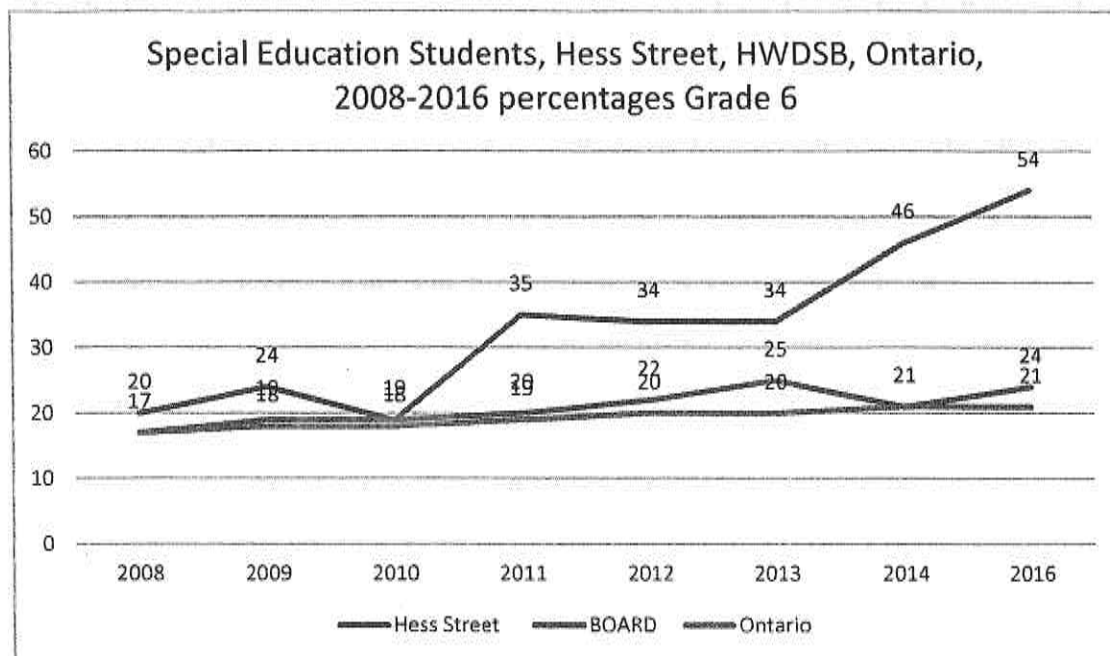




Table 7



### Student Achievement: Reading

In Grade 3 EQAO reading scores in 1998 and 2001 were above **Board averages**. Now nearly three quarters of grade 3 students do not meet provincial expectations; results stand 49% **below** the Ontario average; and Hess is one of only 2% of schools in the Province whose reading scores are below 34%

In Grade 6, improvements made up to 2006 have not been sustained. Over half the students do not meet Provincial expectations. Achievement is 35% below the Ontario average.

Table 8

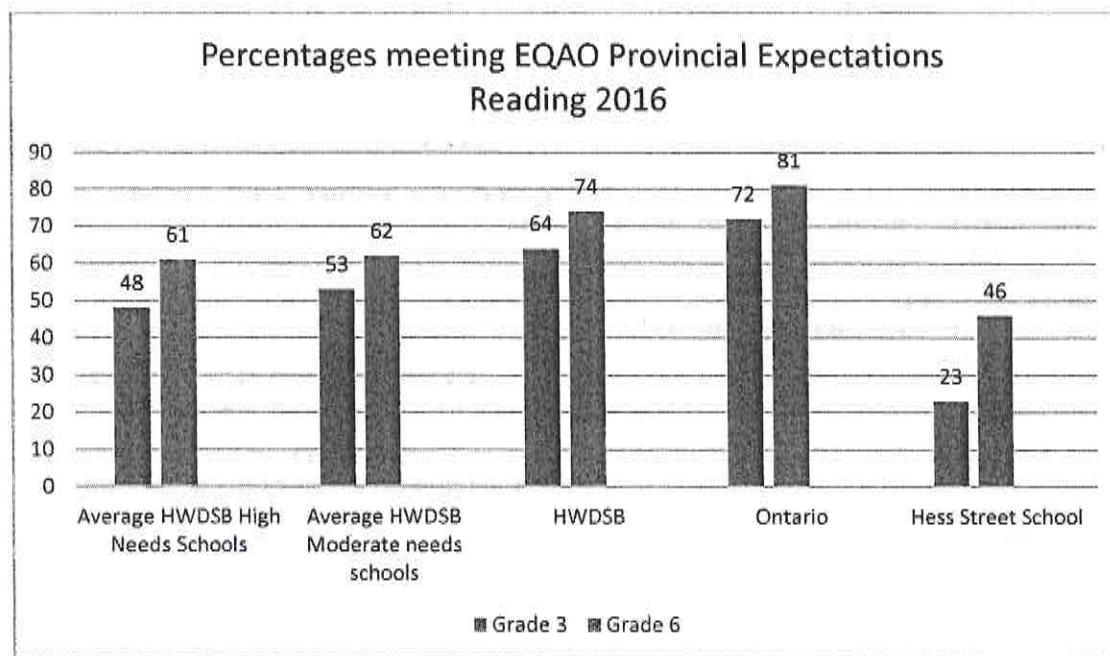
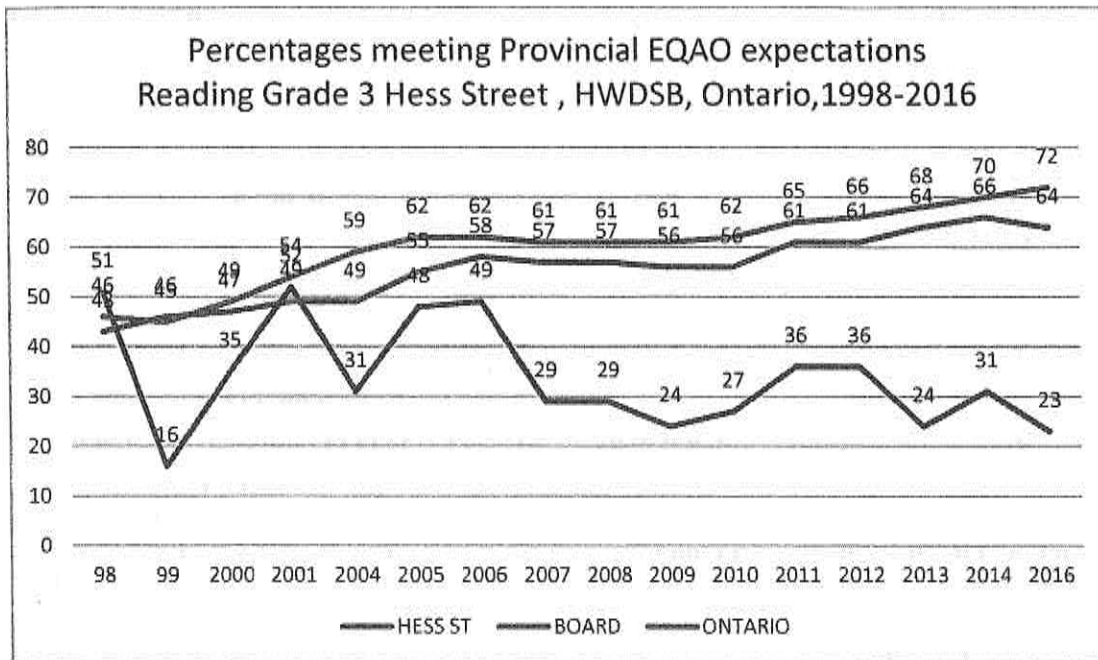
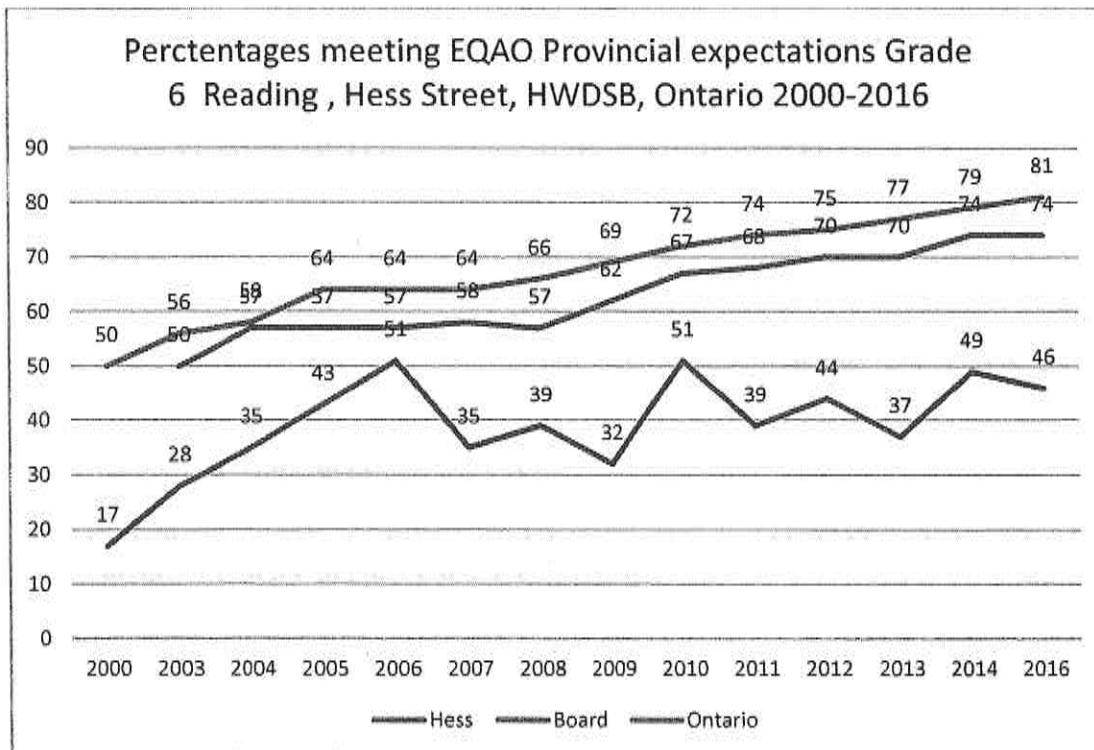


Table 9



Note data missing 2002, 2003, 2015

Table 10



Note data missing 2001, 2002, 2015.

## Mathematics

Up to 2007, Hess Street School students were improving in math in the EQAO tests. Grade 3 students often obtained scores in EQAO which were at or above Board averages.

Math scores at Hess Street School have been declining since 2007

In 2016 the Grade 3 score was the lowest the school has ever obtained since EQAO tests began, and is 40% below the provincial average

In Grade 6 the score is 21% below Ontario average and only 2% above what it was in 2000.

Table 11

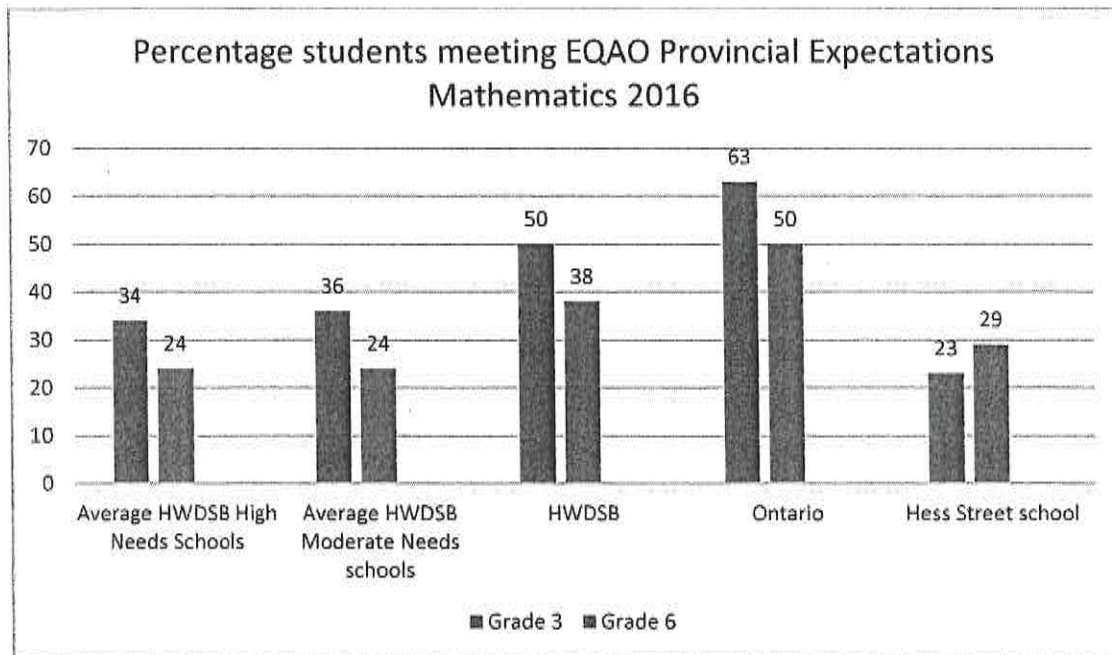
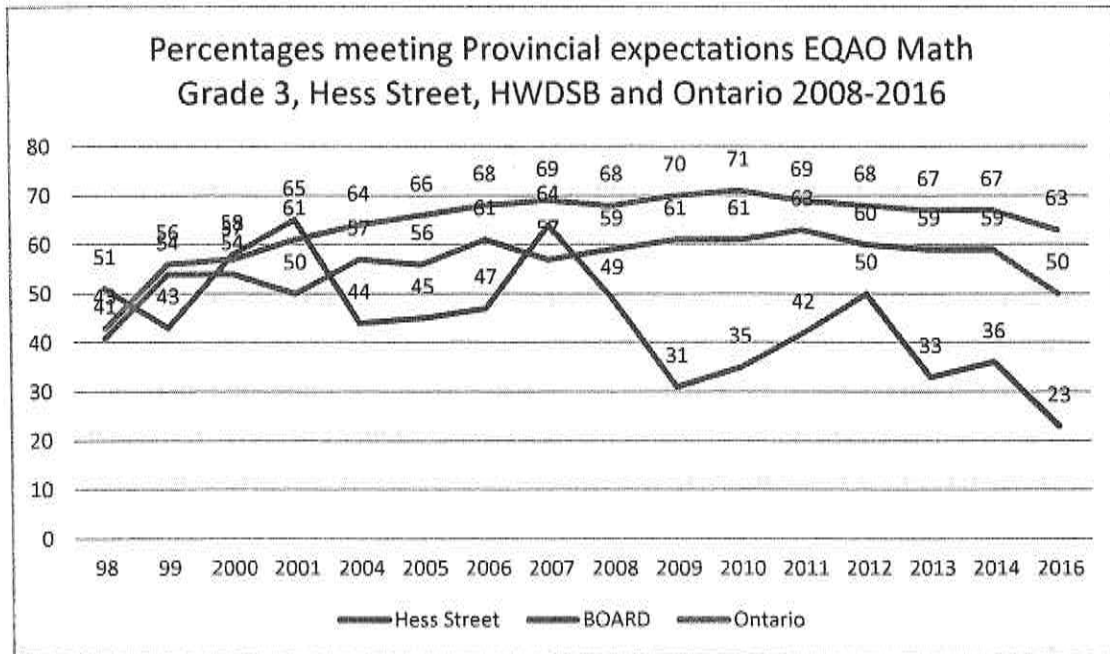
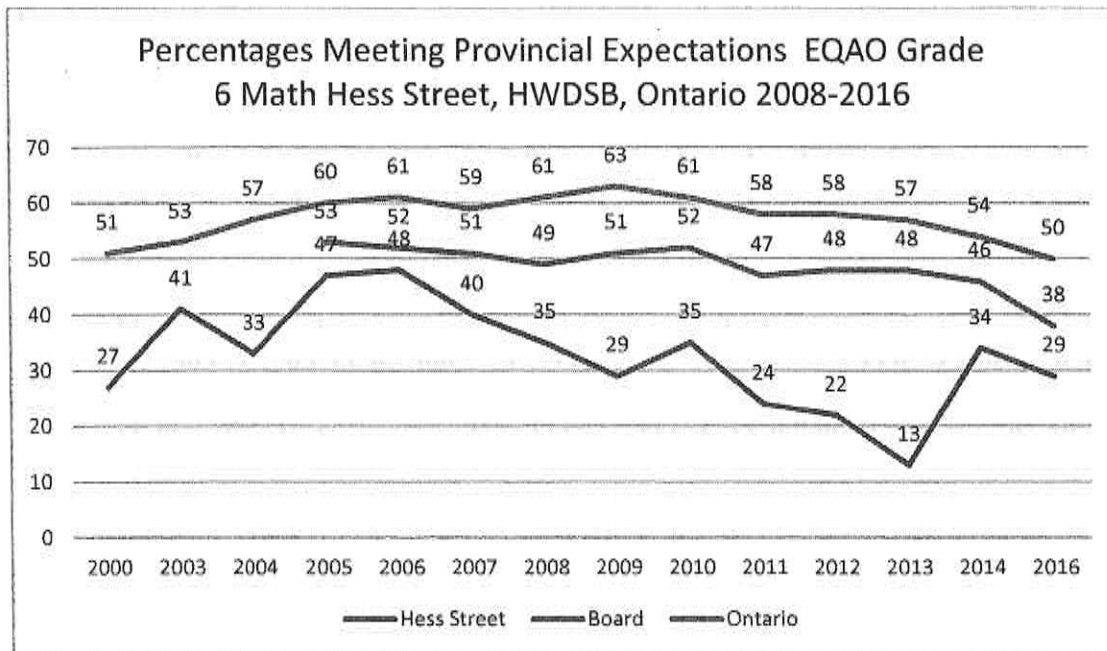


Table 12



Note data missing for 2002, 2003, 2015

Table 13



Note data missing for 2001, 2002, 2015.

**From:** Barbara Stares  
**Sent:** January 20, 2017 2:21 PM  
**To:** Accommodation Reviews  
**Subject:** procedures and concerns

Sue?

Just wondering

1. How to get items on the agenda of the next working meeting
2. How best to act as a conduit of community opinion to the ARC

and if we can have discussion at the next working meeting about

1. the practice of timing agenda items
2. the impact of the LRT, especially during its 5 years of construction, on walkability of catchments, bussing times, airquality.
3. The reliability of enrollment projections in these changeable times.

Thanks,  
Barb

**Summary of Consultation Findings  
West Hamilton City Public Meeting  
January 11, 2017**



As part of Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board's (HWDSB) Policy Accommodation Review process, the public is invited to provide feedback on staff recommendations. On January 11, 2017, the West Hamilton community was invited to a community meeting held at Sir John A. Macdonald Secondary School. Attendees were asked to provide HWDSB with feedback through participation in discussion groups where three questions were asked:

- What do we need to consider? What do you want to see in a school community?
- What is working well in your current school community?
- What additional factors would you like the advisory committee to consider?

Facilitators supported the discussions at each table by recording the conversations. Facilitator notes were then shared with E-BEST, HWDSB's research department. E-BEST conducted a thematic analysis of the conversations.

In total, **174** community members signed in as participants in the consultation, including representation from Bennetto, Central, Earl Kitchener, Hess Street, Ryerson, and Strathcona school communities. However, not all participants signed in so it is estimated that well over 200 school stakeholders attended the event. Community groups who provide supports in the West Hamilton community also participated. Trustees, committee members, and HWDSB staff also attended to support the consultation.

The following is a high level summary of these conversations, highlighting common themes. Please refer to the verbatim notes for further information.

## Summary of Findings

### **What do we need to consider? What do you want to see in a school community?**

- The school as the core of the community, a "neighbourhood hub"
- Centrally Located
  - o Walkable for families (especially those that do not have their own transportation)
    - Students educated in home community especially those already experiencing crisis (refugees)
  - o Close to community supports and services (e.g., main library, Mosque across the street, etc.)
- Facility Features
  - o K-8 in one building
  - o A safe environment (not on a major street) that includes a suitable play area and play structures, greenspace, gym, fenced area and is accessible for all students
  - o Multi-use or full-service building that encourages and supports community partnerships and offers varied services such as child-care, medical care, job-training, etc.
  - o Building can accommodate future growth but not go over capacity
- Offers diverse programs
  - o Since most students are immigrants, school needs to offer programs to help students reach the mainstream, such as music (piano, guitar), swimming, after-school programming, and adult education
  - o Comprehensive supports and services for new families (social agencies, community services)
  - o Programs for students with special needs
  - o Promotes multi-culturalism and equity through cross cultural learning and sharing
- Strong teacher, parent and community relationships
- Involved Staff
  - o Caring Staff and Trustees that are active and visible in the community

## What is working well in your current school community?

- Facility Features
  - o K-8 in one building
  - o Green space and a safe recreational area for children to play
- Location
  - o Walkable
    - Many families do not drive. No busing. Increases family time. Students can go home for lunch
  - o Proximity to the arts. Close to Early Years Centre, main library, etc.
- Quality of education
  - o Hess has great teachers
- Programs
  - o Partnerships with art gallery and other community groups
  - o Good after school programs and extracurricular activities
  - o Programming in school so students can be part of the mainstream (e.g., hockey, dance, basketball, etc.)
  - o Unused classrooms support high needs students (limited or no prior schooling or brand new to Canada)
- Relationships
  - o Strong parent – teacher relationships
  - o Strong school/teacher – community relationships (City, not-for profit, Wesley Urban Ministries, Green Ventures Community Garden, etc.)
  - o Strong diverse community. Hess Street School is like a home

## What additional factors would you like the advisory committee to consider?

- Hess Street School is the core of the community. Closing the school would leave a void in the community that would not be replaced with a community centre
- Impact on families
  - o Many families whose children attend Hess Street School come from countries where living conditions were less than ideal. Families feel secure that Hess street is walkable to the family home, so there is easy access between parents and children during the school day
  - o Many children who attend Hess Street School do not speak English. Parents feel it is safer for their children to attend a school that is walkable to home given that their children do not speak English
  - o People made housing decisions based on school location – moving is expensive
  - o This proposal affects the most disenfranchised population
  - o Bussing impacts parents as well as students
  - o Consider closures in neighbourhoods where families have cars (need a walkable school)
- Facility
  - o Consider renting out unused space
  - o Consider using projection data to plan new schools (future growth)
  - o Need better budgeting for school facilities
- Hess is a multicultural school
  - o Students exposed to a variety of cultures. Need to keep cultural community together

- Programming
  - o What will happen to after school programs, summer camps, etc?
  - o Offer French Immersion at Hess
- Suggestions for Public Consultation
  - o Prepare parents before a large meeting
  - o Gather community input prior to presenting Board option
  - o Consider how to communicate with people who do not speak English

## Additional comments/questions

- Why close a K-8 school?
- Suggestions for Public Consultations
  - o HWDSB needs better planning
  - o Provide better visibility of designated areas for languages (larger signs)
  - o More translators
  - o Offer different dates for different languages
  - o Provide readable presentation slides
  - o Answer questions that are asked
  - o If the purpose is to have open discussion, why was the closure of Hess chosen as the proposal?
  - o Why did you start with Hess?
- Projections
  - o Are Hess upgrades necessary?
  - o Need flexible schools as population numbers change
  - o Do you have a 10-year plan that will consider population changes?
  - o Projection accuracy/reliability – mega-schools not optimal for learning
- Costs
  - o Which schools need funding and how much needs to go into each school?
  - o What are busing costs for options A & B?
  - o Costs of closing Hess and how budget could be used to improve Hess?
- Greenspace is not an issue. Relationships and walkability are what matter

*This report was prepared by the Evidence-Based Education and Services Team (E-BEST).*