

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB)

North Accommodation Review Committee Meeting

Sir Winston Churchill Secondary School

October 25, 2011

Public Meeting #3

Minutes

Attendance:

Committee Members

Chair –Vicki Corcoran

Voting Members –Anna Busse, Michele Cameron, Michael Chalupka, Lisa Deys, Annie Fu, Laura Gill, Marie Jackson, Rick Kunc, Prema Rao, Joyce Schneider, Dawn Spencer, Grant Thomas, Barb Wachner, Jane Withers

Non-Voting Members – Robert Barlow, Scott Barr, Marco Barzetti, Danielle Bawden, Paul Beattie, Judith Bishop, Marilyn Bratkovich, Lawrie Cook, Glenn Cooke, Geoff Coombs, Mark Currie, Jim Holubeshen, Peter Joshua, Nancy Leach, Ray Mulholland, Don Pente, Bob Pratt, Pam Reinholdt, Pat Rocco, Michael Root, Tim Simmons, Todd White

Regrets

Voting Members –Sandra Binns, Jane Henry, Mohamud Mohamed

Non-Voting Members –Chad Collins, Jason Farr, Bernie Morelli, Sam Merulla, Maria Pearson, Carol Town

Resource Staff

Daniel Del Bianco, Jim Wibberley, Kevin Morton

Recording Secretary

Tracy McKillop

1.0 Welcome and Introductions – Vicki Corcoran

Superintendent Vicki Corcoran welcomed everyone to the third North ARC public meeting and thanked them for their interest in the process and the contribution that they will make to the accommodation review. She also shared that she will be working with a co-chair appointed by the Committee. Mr. Grant Thomas is a member of the North ARC as a community representative. Superintendent Corcoran

introduced each of the Committee members as well as the Resource Staff, Jim Wibberley and Daniel Del Bianco and Mr. Kevin Morton from the Facilities Department.

2.0 Opening Remarks – Vicki Corcoran

Superintendent Corcoran stated that at tonight's meeting we will do four things:

The first is to provide an overview of the accommodation review process.

The second is to offer a look at the work completed by the North ARC at its meetings. If you are interested, all the information the Committee has received and approved minutes are available to the public on the Board's website.

Thirdly we will share the accommodation options developed by the North ARC and what the next steps will be.

And the fourth piece is to provide members of the community the opportunity to ask questions and make comments.

3.0 Presentations - Daniel Del Bianco, Mark Currie and Scott Barr

3.1 Brief Overview of the Accommodation Review Process – Daniel Del Bianco

To view the presentation please click on the following link: <http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/arc/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/North-ARC-Public-Meeting-3-October-25-2011.pdf>

Mr. Del Bianco reviewed "Why we are here tonight" as well as the ARC process. Mr. Del Bianco explained the Terms of Reference <http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/arc/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/Secondary-North-TOR1.pdf> well as the difference between the working group meetings and the public meetings. He shared that the ARC works hard to achieve a recommendation and upon completion this report will go to the Board of Trustees (BOT) where they have a minimum of 60 days to make a final decision. Mr. Del Bianco shared the ARC timelines and stated that all of this information is on the Board web site http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/arc/?page_id=8

Why we are here tonight?

- Provide an overview of the Accommodation Review Process
- Review the work completed by the Accommodation Review Committee (ARC)
- Review of "Concept Options" created by the ARC
- Next Steps of the ARC
- Receive input from the community on the ARC process and concept options

The Accommodation Review Process

- The process follows Ministry of Education guidelines, Board Policy and the Terms of Reference
- There are Committee working meetings and public meetings
- All meetings are open to the public
- The Accommodation Review Committee (ARC) is tasked with developing an accommodation solution that will address the long-term requirements of the community

ARC Recommendations

- The ARC will prepare a report that will be presented to the Board of Trustees
- This report will include the ARC's recommendations
- The Trustees will also receive a report from Senior Administration with their recommendations to the Board of Trustees
- The Board of Trustees will make the final decisions

ARC Timelines:

- 10 Working Group Meetings
- 4 Public Meetings
- Work scheduled to conclude in January 2012
- After receipt of final report Trustees have to wait a minimum of 60 prior to voting on a final decision

The mandate of this committee, acting in accordance with the Board's Pupil Accommodation Review Policy, is to produce a report to the Board that encompasses the following:

a) Accommodation: Develop recommendations to maximize the utilization of Board facilities in the review area with a target of 100% utilization for a future ten-year period

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.

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

g) Scope: Delta – Glendale – Orchard Park - Parkview - Sir John A. Macdonald – Sir Winston Churchill

h) Timeline: Final ARC Report Due on January 12, 2012

Initial Information Presented to the North ARC:

- School Information Profiles (SIP)
- Accommodation recommendation prepared by senior administration
 - Close Delta and Parkview (June 2013)
 - Relocate students to existing facilities (September 2013)
- Correspondence from the community

The Committee have looked at the School Information Profiles (SIP) which are profiles of all the schools involved in this ARC and contain 181 items.

Mr. Del Bianco shared the Staff Recommendation. He explained that the Board is mandated to come up with a recommendation by the Ministry. Mr. Del Bianco indicated that the Board decided to put their recommendation out early in the process to initiate discussion. The Program Strategy has been shared with the Committee as well as the correspondence that has been received to date.

Mr. Del Bianco ended by encouraging everyone to view the web site or feel free to attend the meetings.

3.2 Work Completed by the North ARC – Mark Currie

Mark Currie shared what the Committee has been working on since the last public meeting as well as the additional information that was requested by the North ARC Committee.

Since Our Last Public Meeting

- 3 Working Group Meetings
- 1 Joint meeting with the South ARC to review vocational school programming
- 3 presentations from community groups
- Finalized our accommodation option

Additional Data Requested by the North ARC:

- French Immersion enrolments by school
- Projected enrolments vs. actual enrolments (2006-2010)
- Ministry of Education enrolment trends (2002-2014)
- Social Planning & Research Council Report (2011)
- HWDSB Facility Management Dept. presentation
- HWDSB summary of secondary capital expenses (2000-2010)
- HWDSB summary of leased space
- HWDSB summary of community continuing education
- SEAC presentation regarding Mountain/Parkview schools

Summary of Working Group Meetings:

• Working Group Meeting #6 (June 14, 2011)

- Presentation: Terry Cooke, Hamilton Community Foundation
- Presentation: HWDSB Facilities Management Department
- Develop concept options in break-out groups
- ARC developed 4 concept options and directed resource staff to further explore them over the course of the summer

• Working Group Meeting #7 (September 13, 2011)

- Presentation: Paul Johnson: Director of Neighbourhood Development Strategies, City of Hamilton
- Large group discussion and review of concept options
- Proposed Boundaries
- Financial Impact
- ARC eliminates 1 of the 4 concept options and the staff recommendation

• Meeting with the South ARC to discuss vocational programming (September 15, 2011)

• Working Group Meeting #8 (October 4, 2011)

- Debrief of meeting with the South ARC
- Large group discussion and review of 3 remaining concept options
- ARC eliminates 2 concept options and votes to proceed to *Public Meeting #3* with Option #3

A chart was displayed which showed the additional options that were considered by the North ARC Committee.

3.3 Accommodation Option Create by the North ARC - Scott Barr

Mr. Scott Barr shared the North ARC Recommended option #3 which is:

*Closure of Delta, Parkview and Sir John A. Macdonald
Construction of a new school on a centrally located site*

Mr. Barr shared the enrolment and capacity challenges faced by the North ARC and the utilization changes that would occur under the ARC option #3. He shared the rationale for their option as well.

Rationale for ARC Recommended Option:

- Fulfills Mandate of the Committee
 - Opportunity for enhanced programming at new facility
 - Improves facility utilization
 - Increased long-term enrolments at the remaining facilities
 - Results in a positive impact on the long-term maintenance, operational and renewal costs of the Board
 - unfunded liability
- Even distribution throughout the North cluster of schools
 - Minimize travel times/ distances for students
- Consistent with what we have heard at our public meetings and delegations at our working group meetings
- Renewed presence in the downtown core

3.4 Next Steps – Scott Barr

Mr. Barr shared the next steps for the North ARC.

Next Steps of the North ARC:

- **Working Group Meeting #9** (November 15, 2011)
 - Review community input from Public Meeting #3
 - Determine implementation strategy
 - Finalize program strategy
- **Public Meeting #4** (December 6, 2011)
 - Present ARC recommendation and program strategy
- **Working Group Meeting #10** (January 10, 2012)
 - Review community input from Public Meeting #4
 - Finalize ARC report
- **Final ARC report is due January 12, 2012**

Co Chair Grant Thomas reviewed the meeting norms which were distributed to the public along with the Agenda. He shared that it was important that there be a full and respectful dialogue about the matters before this Committee and these norms would help to achieve that.

4.0 Questions/Comments from the public:

Q. There was concern expressed regarding merging all of the students into one school. How are you going to deal with issues if we add more students than we currently have? Bullying and self esteem issue are not being dealt with now.

A. Superintendent Pat Rocco shared that we have a lot of inclusive schools with mentorship programs. The larger piece is that there will be a thorough transition plan so staff, students, and the new administration will be the key in merging these three schools and this will be an ongoing process.

C. Class size affects education. Poverty affects this as well. We can not handle bullying now so you think that you are going to be able to do that in a larger school.

C. I am appalled and this in no way should be an option.

Superintendent Peter Joshua spoke of class size and program. He shared that the attention and class sizes will be appropriate for the students. In this new school the plan is to continue to support the students with the specialized programming in order for them to feel comfortable and safe.

C. This is a very large population of school.

A. The model is based on students having flexible schedules because not all of the students will be in the school at the same time and not the same way.

Mr. Del Bianco clarified the sale of the land would be sold at fair market value not for one or two dollars. The three schools equal almost 9 million dollar based on a fair market value. The Board has a fixed income so they have to make a decision of where they are going to apply the fixed income. The Board has to spread that funding over 115 schools. Mr. Del Bianco shared that the Board can't ascertain the land for the new school until the Board of Trustees (BOT) have made their final decisions.

C. A woman shared that she has been dealing with her daughter's issues for years and now that she has been in Parkview for two years she has not had to worry about her. She feels that she is not hearing any consideration for the Parkview students.

Superintendent Joshua stated that the Board will provide small class sizes of specialized programming with the same resources. He shared that the Board is very mindful that this is necessary and they will continue with these supports. The Board will have an appropriate transition plan in place for these students.

Mr. Barr stated that the Committee will be discussing programming at the next working group meeting and they will be definitely be looking at the needs of the students.

C. A student spoke of bullying and how she has suffered from bullying. She feels that students with IEP's won't want to come to school and they will skip school.

Superintendent Joshua spoke of a small class environment and the need for safety and shared that it is very much a part of the program strategy. Specialized programming is going to be in place and when the students are ready then they can work toward inclusion.

Q. What will happen to the Delta property?

Kevin Morton shared that this is a recommendation only. The process will not start until a final decision has been made. Mr. Del Bianco stated that there is an entire process that needs to be followed before any property is sold.

C. It isn't programs that we worry about it is the bullying that we worry about. Putting these kids within a regular school should not even be a possibility.

A. The wing was not mentioned tonight. An annex/wing would be attached to the new school and if and when the students are ready to transition they can join some classes in the composite school.

Q. A teacher at Parkview who has taught for 25 years with high risk students shared that a sense of belonging is the only thing that will make these kids a success. Alt Ed programs came out of the Harris government. Are we going to repeat history again? These students need a school of their own. They will not join any extra curricular programs in a large school. Inclusion does not work for these kids and the written theories do not work. Experience tells me that these kids need to feel safe and secure.

C. A student with ADHD and a learning disability shared that she went to Parkview and now goes to Sir Winston Churchill. She would not be where she is today without Parkview.

Superintendent Joshua shared how important the annex is for those students who want to be separate and as long as they want that type of support then they will have it.

Michael Root stated that he has been speaking for a small school and stated that the Committee and Board are not hearing the voice. These students don't want an annex they need to be in a small school. Rationality is nothing without emotions. We have decided to close three and have a new school. He indicated that this is the time to say what needs to be said about programming.

A Committee member shared that he was a Principal at Parkview and cares deeply about the students. He stated that in meetings there are always different opinions amongst the members. At a working group meeting he stated that if the Committee is to make a recommendation and follow the mandate then they need to address the utilization challenge of the physical building then discuss the programming.

C. Please keep Parkview open. These children need a separate school and can we join the kids from Mountain and Parkview and have a school for these students.

C. Cody asked the Committee to stop treating them as numbers and treat them as human beings.

A Parkview parent shared that the school and staff really saved his daughter and they supported them. We need these small schools because there is just too much bullying. The school has done so many great things.

C. A Special Ed student stated "you need Parkview and we need to be your first priority. I am standing up and speaking about what is important to me and I would never have been able to do this before."

C. Scott Park is still vacant. We have a huge French immersion population in our area and so many of our kids go to Westdale so why not put the program into Delta. You are killing our community.

Q. Has the Ministry been consulted about the closure and the effects on Parkview students?

A. That would not fall under the ARC's mandate.

Q. Statistically how do other Boards handle a situation like this?

A. There are 72 school boards and there are some parameters mandated by the Province for Special Education as well. How that is set up is determined by the Board. Each Board can set the program up as they see fit. We as a large Board have varying classes.

Mr. Del Bianco stated that the Ministry puts the ARC process on the ARCs plate.

Q. What are the qualifications of the School Board or are there any external agencies that would support or disagree with the effects on the Parkview students?

Superintendent Joshua stated that the Ministry does give a mandate on what students need. I am not really sure how to answer that question.

Q. Should we be pushing the Trustees to hear our concerns? There is a very large piece of the puzzle that is not being heard. The message is loud and clear regarding the small school. These students have been able to stand up and speak and share how they have developed in the smaller school. They have given just cause why the stand alone school is necessary for them.

C. The students are going to get bullied. What classrooms are going to be on our side? Mountain and Parkview should have there own school.

C. All of the buildings that have been sold are sitting empty and they are falling apart. Fix the old buildings and have teachers for the students who need them.

Mr. Del Bianco shared that there are 5500 students in the north cluster. It has been a challenge for the ARC Committee to come to a decision. We want to keep the Parkview students together and have the programming for them. We have all of the Communities not wanting a school closed in their area. It is easy to say don't close our school; however, give us some concrete ideas to come up with solutions. Our funding is based on students. The reality is the enrolment is going down so the funding is going down and this is the biggest challenge. The Committee says how do we address the needs of the North cluster. For every dollar of funding there is 18 dollars of need. This is the challenge that we face.

Nancy Leach shared that if the Committee got bogged down with emotion then they would not get anywhere. At every meeting we had 80 -90 % of the Committee who were concerned about the students at Parkview. We are not eliminating the program only the building because the building is a mess. We want to keep the program separate. So help us to do that, work with us, don't stand and attack us. We can't make a recommendation for another ARC and we have to work within our own Terms of Reference.

Steve Calverley stated that he has attended the entire working group meetings and wanted to thank the Committee for having presentations from the Community. At the last working group meeting there was something much more concrete about what would be available for Parkview students so are we slipping away from that. Until the matter of the Parkview students is heard and dealt with it will be a real show stopper. I understand that there is analysis; however, I believe that these students need to be adequately supported. We need the Parkview students more than they need us.

C. I am concerned that you are going to open a program at Glendale and then not have the enrolment to run the program. What are you recommending for French immersion (FI)?

Superintendent Joshua shared that the Board would not start a FI program unless there was a viable need. It is dependent upon student interest and student demand in order to have a viable program. Programming will be addressed at the next public meeting.

C. A lady spoke about the sense of belonging at Parkview. What would be the impact of closing down the three schools?

Mr. Del Bianco shared that the Community Groups that presented to the Committee indicated that a new facility in the downtown core would benefit the Community. All three community groups expressed the importance of revitalizing the downtown core. They are looking at supporting this in their own way along with the Board of Education. The area would be between Sir John A Macdonald and Delta.

C. A Delta student shared that he applied to Westdale for FI and was told that it was at Delta. He indicated that he can't afford \$71.00 for a bus pass to attend another school.

C. A resident in South Sherman area shared that she is excited about the work that is being done in the downtown area. She asked "how are you going to get the students to the school?" How are kids going to have access to e-learning when they reside in the code red district?

Superintendent Joshua shared that e-learning and distance learning is just one option. There was concern about too many students in the building and meeting the student's needs so this is just one option. Flexible time tables are another option.

C. A concerned citizen acknowledged the staff from Parkview that took a risk and spoke out in public. She stated that "senior management defend integration yet your staff and your students are telling you that it is not the reality." She indicated that she was dumbfounded that it is not having an impact on the Senior Staff or the ARC. She stated "you need to have a plan or a vision. Why is enrolment down? I would like to say that we have the best education system in Hamilton and I don't feel that we can say that."

Mr. Del Bianco stated that the Staff did not have a choice they are mandated by the Ministry to come up with a recommendation. They decided to come out with their recommendation early so that they did not want the communities to think that they were hiding something. The Trustees do not have to choose one or the other of the recommendation. They can chose A or B or a hybrid of either.

Michael made an apology to Rick Kunc for any offence that was directed at him. Michael indicated that if the Committee were to recommend as a Spec Ed facility and right size it that would benefit the Parkview students. What is optimal? What do students need? This is an ideal time to step outside the box and make a recommendation to the Board of Trustees.

C. I resent having to send my child to a phantom school downtown. Some of these people can't afford to eat let alone spend money on bus passes. Some families share one bus pass.

A. Transportation will be addressed as well as part of the ARC recommendation.

Q. What happens if we do not have land for a new school? Do we have a plan B? If a new school was built where Ivor Wynn is with an annex for the Parkview School would the Parkview students be happy?

Let's think about the students. Are we serving the students who are ready to begin a bit of integration if they are at a separate school opposed to in an annex? What is best for all of the kids?

C. A woman asked the Committee to explore what they gain out of a shiny new school. What has bearing is what is in the bricks and mortar not the newness of the school. There is no merit in the bricks and mortar and not everyone can afford bus passes.

C. We want our kids to walk and get physically active; however, the students are not going to go downtown because it is too far. We need community schools and it is about the students not the dollars.

The Chair shared the dates of the next two meetings and thanked everyone for coming and sharing with the North ARC Committee.