

West Accommodation Review Committee Meeting

Education Centre Board Room

February 8, 2011

Minutes

ATTENDANCE:

Committee Members

Chair –Superintendent Sharon Stephanian

Voting Members –Lawrie Cook, Allyssa Horning, Deborah Knoll, Christopher Austin, Heather Macdonald, Rosemary Bellefeuille, Boris Williams, Lori King, Phyllis Chasty, Bea Howell, Sharon Ricci

Non-Voting Members – John Laverty, Krys Croxall, Judith Bishop, Alex Johnstone, Jessica Brennan, Judy Langsner, Rick Hart, Paul Barwinski, Em Del Sordo, Laurie Swackhammer, Brian Lenart, Dan Thomson, Maria Rikic-McCarthy, Michelle DesRochers, Anne Waldie, Gudrun Anderson

Regrets

Voting Members - Deborah Beedie, Judy Shen

Non-Voting Members – Lloyd Ferguson, Brian McHattie, Russ Powers

Resource Staff

Daniel Del Bianco, Don Hall, Jim Wibberley, Superintendent Peter Joshua, Ellen Warling, Steve Stirling, Kevin Morton

Recording Secretary

Tracy McKillop (formerly Skinner)

1. Call to Order – Superintendent Stephanian called the meeting to order at 6:12 p.m. Superintendent Stephanian commenced the meeting with introductions and reviewed the house rules.

2. Agenda

2.1 Addition and Deletions – There was discussion around the meeting times so the Chair suggested that this be re-addressed and added as 3.3.3 to the Agenda.

2.2 Approval of the Agenda – The agenda was approved as amended. Superintendent Stephanian apologized for the late delivery of the agenda and the minutes. The Board e-mail server had been down for a few days.

3. Minutes of the Meeting of January 18, 2011

3.1. Errors or Omissions – There were no revisions.

3.2 Approval of the Minutes -The minutes were approved by consensus.

3.3 Business Arising from the Minutes

3.3.1 Binder Updates – Mr. Del Bianco spoke about the updated School Information Profiles (SIP) which were distributed to the Committee and now includes sections two and three. The committee also received the “Non ARC” SIP for Saltfleet District High, Waterdown District High and Westmount School. School overviews for each of the schools – Ancaster High, Highland, Parkside and Westdale were added.

3.3.2 Clarifications – It was noted that the school overviews should be filed behind the yellow tabs located under the school profile tab. The old SIPs are to be replaced with the newer, larger version of the SIPs. The update cover sheet which was distributed along with the updates indicated that there were two maps distributed however it should only have read “one” map.

3.3.3 Agenda Addition – The start time of the meeting was discussed and consensus was reached that the time would remain as 6:00-9:00 p.m. The Chair also shared that food has been brought in and will be available for the committee members at 5:30 p.m.

4. Information Items and Follow-Up

4.1 Timelines and Benchmarks – A flow chart outlining the meeting dates and objectives was included in the handout package. Mr. Del Bianco shared that the timelines chart can be adjusted if necessary as this is just a guideline. There were no questions raised.

4.2 Public Meetings and Organization – Mr. Del Bianco informed the committee that the public meeting provides an opportunity to present an update to the public regarding what has taken place at both working meeting one and meeting two. The intent is to provide a brief overview of the ARC process, the SIPs and the program strategy as well as the recommendations from the Senior Administration team. This meeting will allow the committee an opportunity to listen to the questions and comments of the community. The meeting is scheduled for Westdale at 6:00 p.m. The public meeting will be advertised in the media.

Questions - there were no questions asked at this time.

4.3 School Tours – Mr. Del Bianco indicated that the school tours will provide the members of the committee a better understanding of the SIPs and the opportunity for them to see the properties first hand. March 26, 2011 was the proposed date and a tentative agenda was included in the handout package. Mr. Del Bianco informed the committee that due to the number of schools this will be a full day event. He feels that this is an important component that all members should work toward participating in. The members will meet at Westdale and board the bus. A box lunch will be provided. The committee members indicated that they required more time to check their schedules and could this be discussed after the public meeting. Superintendent Stephanian stated that this is only a proposal and that the committee members are invited to give their feedback on the date as well as the agenda.

Question/Comments from the Committee:

- A committee member asked if the tour was mandatory and Superintendent Stephanian indicated that it is not mandatory however it is a good opportunity to see what the schools have to offer.
- The next question raised was can the committee add to the tour. This member felt that it was important to visit the surrounding areas of Parkside due to the fact that it does not have playing fields right outside of the building and they would like to have that area considered.

5. School Information Profiles – Dan Del Bianco

5.1 New Information – Mr. Del Bianco had four groups set up – one for each school. He advised that by breaking up into groups it would allow for more intimate discussions and the opportunity for the members to go over the SIPs and ask any questions that they have. A member of Facility Management was available to work with each of the groups and answer some of their questions and concerns. Forty minutes was allotted for the group discussions. Mr. Del Bianco shared that it may not be enough time to go over the SIPs in detail however it is a starting point.

5.2 Review and Customizing - Upon the return from the meeting where questions and concerns were documented Mr. Del Bianco indicated that these will be addressed at the next working committee meeting. He asked that all of the documented questions and concerns, of each group, be handed into Tracy McKillop at the end of the meeting.

6. Presentations

6.1 Recommendations of HWDSB Senior Administration – Ken Bain, Associate Director of Education – Associate Director Bain informed the committee that the Ministry policy requires Senior Administration to provide their recommendation to the ARC and the public during the ARC process. There is no stipulation as to when the recommendation is to be presented however HWDSB's Senior Administration team felt that they would share it early in the process. He shared with the ARC Committee that this is a point in time recommendation and their best thinking at this time. He also said that the committee members could endorse it, set it aside, modify it or simply throw it away. Associate Director Bain stated that the Senior Administration team will be kept abreast of the questions and recommendations of the ARC and this information may change or impact the Board's final recommendation. He then went on to explain why we have an Accommodation Review and shared that we have empty spaces in our schools. If we can combine some of the schools and increase enrolment then larger Secondary School environments can mean the following for students:

Program Benefits

- Provide greater options for students
- Broader course selection
- Flexible student timetables
- More opportunities for all pathways

Financial Benefits

- Vast majority of grants are provided on a per pupil basis – therefore spreading the funding over fewer schools allows for greater benefits
- Renewal – removing those schools with high renewal needs would allow the Board to reallocate those funds to the remaining schools.

Associate Director Bain spoke of the Reference Criteria as outlined in the Board policy:

- a) Facility Utilization
- b) Permanent and Non-Permanent Accommodation
- c) Program Offerings
- d) Quality of Teaching and Learning Environments
- e) Transportation
- f) Partnerships
- g) Equity

Associate Director Bain showed a chart which outlined the current situation, the on-the-ground capacity, enrolment utilization for 2009/10, 2015/16, 2020/21, the current FCI and the 10 year FCI. He also spoke of the schools located in the West ARC and their associated boundaries.

Associate Director Bain explained the west ARC Cluster Proposed Recommendation

- Close Parkside in June 2013
- Relocate the students to the existing facilities effective September 2013.

Associate Director Bain then displayed a chart showing the enrolment percentage changes that would result from the above listed closings. The money from the sale of Parkside will be reinvested into the remaining schools. Associate Director Bain went on to explain that the new program changes will be shared at the meeting in April and that all of the students can be accommodated in the existing schools and new boundaries will need to be defined. This is something that will be addressed over the upcoming months. This recommendation is a starting point for the ARC to build from. It is completely up to the ARC what they choose to do with this option. He stressed that this is the Board's best thinking at this point in time and that this may change after the ARC makes its recommendation. Associate Director Bain felt that it was advantageous to hear the new program strategy prior to hearing questions and comments from the committee. He stated that the Board is undertaking to introduce the new program changes along with the changes which may occur once the Board of Trustees has made their final decision.

6.2 Program Plan – Peter Joshua and Vicki Corcoran – Superintendents

Presentations – Superintendent Joshua stated that tonight’s presentation provides an important high level look at the program strategy, its guiding principles and its connections to the Education in Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board report that was presented at the last meeting. He explained that the program strategy is all about a focus on how we can best support your child (student) in learning, achieving and preparing for life during and beyond secondary school. Superintendent Joshua shared the definitions of the program strategy which included:

Personalized Learning - this puts the learner at the centre and provides assessment and instruction tailored to a student’s particular learning and motivational needs.

Pathways – this is a combination of courses that lead to graduation and to a post secondary destination which may include apprenticeship, college, university, community or the workplace.

Specialization – these are programs that allow students to explore their interests. In addition to the programming offered at neighbourhood schools there would be alternative programs which focus on such things as sports, academics, science, arts and languages. An example of this is the program that is offered at Westmount Secondary School. Westmount is a system school - only one of six in our province.

Equity – all students have access to programs when and where they need them and where all students participate to the best of their abilities.

Tiered Intervention – a method used to meet the abilities and preferences of students where the level of support or programming is adjusted appropriately for each student.

The Program Strategy intertwines support to all schools. Superintendent Corcoran stated that the first criteria used to assist students in choosing an appropriate program pathway is their individual learning profile and level of independence. What is the goal for the student at the end of his/her secondary years and what is the best plan to achieve that? With the focus on “Learning for All” the schools need to provide inclusive and supportive environments that encourage the engagement and involvement of all students in all aspects of the secondary experience.

Superintendent Corcoran spoke of the Spectrum of Programs that would be available in all schools:

Student Support Centres – would provide support to students who are fully integrated into regular class and earning credits.

Student Alternative Support Centres – would be a new support program designed to support students in regular programs but who have anxiety-related or other mental health concerns and require targeted socio-emotional support in order to succeed in their chosen pathways.

A Comprehensive Support Program – is a program that would provide targeted, yet credit-bearing support in the core areas of literacy and numeracy plus inclusion into regular courses.

Superintendent Corcoran then went on to explain the Spectrum of Programs that would be available in all clusters:

Graduated Support Program – this program would be similar to a pilot program that is currently being offered at one site in our system. This program has two parts: The Personalized Support Part of the program is a 4 year program designed to solidify functional skills in literacy and numeracy, provide life skills training and focus on independence skills. Students would participate and be integrated appropriately into the school community. The transition part of the program would last a maximum of three years and involve a planned transition to the community, focusing on skills determined by the transition plan which assist the student in their integration into the community through co-op or work experience placements.

Specific Support Program – would provide such support, plus some inclusion into the secondary school community as personally appropriate. This program would provide intensive, personalized support in various areas, such as life skills, communication and personal care.

Personalized Learning Centres – would provide individualized programs not housed in a regular high school setting. These students would receive the supports necessary to transition back to the regular school environment or to a workplace setting as appropriate.

Superintendent Corcoran stated that there are two other programs which need to be provided as part of the spectrum of services in order to meet the needs of all of our students. These include:

The Extensive Support Program – which would provide targeted support to students requiring extensive and continuous support and supervision, and very personalized support programs. This program would be offered in at least one location in Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board.

The Intensive System Support Program – which is a program designed to support students in very unique situations where none of the existing programs will meet their unique needs, such that an individualized solution must be explored and developed collaboratively with our community partners.

At this point in the meeting Associate Director Bain stated that the recommendation is a long range vision which will support Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board in having well resourced schools and support the students in reaching their optimum goals.

6.3 Questions/Comments from the Committee:

Bea Howell wanted to know if supports were being offered at the elementary level. Superintendent Corcoran stated that a continuum of learning needed to take place for grades three to eight and the Board is currently taking a much closer look at this. Ms. Howell asked how boys fall into this. Superintendent Corcoran asked if Ms. Howell was referring to something that was gender specific and then went on to share that the Board is absolutely targeting this with programs such as “Go Girls and Boys to Men.”

Trustee Brennan was interested in knowing what schools the new programming would target and Superintendent Corcoran shared that the information would be presented to the ARC Committee in April.

The next question raised was why Parkside is being closed and not Highland. Associate Director Bain stated that the size of the property at Highland would allow for expansion.

The follow up question requested a list of changes that would be made at Highland to accommodate the closure of Parkside. Associate Director Bain stated that a list has not been made because at this point in

time the closure is only a recommendation. Once the program strategy has been finalized this will also support the Board in making the adjustments required to be presented to the Board of Trustees.

Trustee Brennan shared that the staff at Parkside are wondering if the school closes in 2013 will the Board stop taking new enrolment in 2012. Associate Director Bain stated that this is not the thinking at this time. The Board did consider a staggered closure however the advice that they received indicated that it is easier to have the end of the school year as the end of the school and the closure.

Another member asked if the parents are going to help make that decision. She stated that some parents may want their children to begin at Highland or may choose to send them to the Catholic Board. Has this been factored into the enrolment projections. Associate Director Bain stated that the enrolment projections do not include that assumption.

Heather MacDonald wanted to know if there was any consideration for a new school in Dundas. Can the Board take the money from the closure of Parkside and put it into a new school. Associate Director Bain indicated that until the Ministry confirms their capital funding HWDSB can not make that decision. If they allocated money down the road then that would have to be readdressed.

Allyssa Horning stated that the Spectator has indicated what schools will be closing. Again Associate Director Bain stated that these are only recommendations at this time and will be present to the Board of Trustees in the spring of 2012. Based on the information at this point in time no school has been approved for closure.

The next question pertained to enrolment projections. If Waterdown were a part of the ARC what would the enrolment numbers look like? Associate Director Bain indicated that he can't talk about it because it is outside of the Terms of Reference. He is bound by the Terms of Reference and so he is unable to engage in conversation about a school that is outside of the ARC. Again the question was raised "why was Waterdown excluded." Associate Director Bain stated that it was excluded because it is at 115% capacity and is over the 100% target rate.

The Chair re-iterated that by mandate the committee is guided to talk about the schools within the ARC.

Heather MacDonald stated that there was discussion years ago about Parkside and Highland closing. She wanted to know if the information from that time would be relevant to the process now. The Chair stated that she was unsure if the Board could answer that question at this time because that was a different ARC. Associate Director Bain indicated that the committee can request the information. Trustee Bishop stated that it came to the Board so there would be a summary. The committee reached consensus to request the information from the previous ARC.

Deborah Knoll wanted to know if there would be a discussion of boundaries and is the ARC Committee allowed to make suggestions that aren't within their scope. Mr. Del Bianco stated that the committee is bound by the policy. He shared that the ARC Committee can suggest that the Board explore options. The boundaries of Waterdown are not within the ARC so what the committee could do is recommend that the Board look at the boundary.

A committee member stated that the Board says "research shows" so she stated that she would like to see where the research came from. Superintendent Corcoran indicated that there is a bibliography at the back of the pamphlet and it is available if the committee would like to request it.

No further questions were asked.

7. **Other Business** – There was a request for the dates and places of the upcoming public meetings. Associate Director Bain shared that the locations were not booked yet due to challenges with the various schools having other commitments however they will be notified as soon as possible.

It was noted that the map from Parkside and the map from Westdale are the same in the school overviews. Can this be changed for the next working meeting?

8. **Adjournment** – The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.