

SCHOOL TRANSITION COMMITTEE MEETING #3
(New CH Bray / Queen's Rangers)

Wednesday May 29, 2019
6:00 pm

Queen's Rangers Elementary
1886 Governor's Road, Copetown

In Attendance:

Superintendent – Jane Macpherson
Executive Assistant, Recorder – Michele Lambie
Principal, C.H. Bray – Sean Malcolmson
Non-Teaching Rep, C.H. Bray – Caroline Harding
Parent Rep, C.H. Bray – Karen Lane-Green
Teacher Rep, C.H. Bray – Stephanie McDonald
School Council Rep, Queen's Rangers – Michele Money
Parent Rep, Queen's Rangers – Jessica Neil
Student Rep, Queen's Rangers – Olivia Neil
Teacher Rep, Queen's Rangers – Jaime Dube-Ringel
Community Rep, C.H. Bray / Queen's Rangers – Jessica Schoug (YMCA Area Manager)

Regrets:

Trustee – Chair of the Board, Trustee Wards 11 & 12 Alex Johnstone
Principal, Queen's Rangers – Tammy McLaughlin
Temporary Principal, Queen's Rangers – Michelle Rodney Bartalos
Teacher Rep, C.H. Bray – Stephanie McDonald
Community Rep, C.H. Bray / Queen's Rangers – Jessica Schoug (YMCA Area Manager)

6:03 pm Start Up

1. Welcome and Introductions

- Superintendent Jane Macpherson thanked the Committee for their commitment and contributions through these initial stages of our transition process
- Jane Macpherson conveyed regrets from Chair/Trustee Alex Johnstone and Queen's Rangers' Principal Tammy McLaughlin and Temporary Principal Michelle Rodney Bartalos who were not able to attend tonight's meeting due to unforeseeable commitments

- Principal Tammy McLaughlin forwarded information items to Jaime Dube-Ringel to be shared with the Transition Committee
- Greetings were extended to the school community members sitting in the “gallery”, as they are always welcome to listen, but do not participate in the Transition Committee’s decisions. Ms. Macpherson invited members of the gallery an opportunity for further discussion if requested, either as a group or individually
- Minutes from these Transition Committee meetings will be posted on the Board’s website
- Tonight will be our final Transition meeting for this school year, and will recommence in the fall 2019

2. School Closing and Celebration dates

Principals confirmed School Closing and Celebration dates with the Committee:

- CH Bray – June 20th at 9:15 am
- Queen’s Rangers – June 25th at 2:45 pm

3. Board Items

Board Decision – New School Name

- On May 13, 2019, the Board of Trustees final decision and announcement of the new school name “*Spring Valley Elementary School*”

Principal Announcement

- On May 24, 2019, *Sean Malcolmson* was announced as the new Principal for Spring Valley
- Principal Tammy McLaughlin is transferring to Richard Beasley in September 2019. Ms. Macpherson, the Transition Committee and Queen’s Rangers community imparted their heartfelt appreciation for all of Ms. McLaughlin’s dedicated work and inspirational leadership

Bell Times (9:30 am – 3:50 pm)

- An information letter (May 17/19) communicating the new Bell Times for the upcoming school year was discussed with the Transition Committee
- The rationale behind the later start time was driven by Transportation, in their efforts to reduce the number of unfilled bus routes that may cause delays for the 2019-20 school year, as the Board’s ongoing commitment to address bussing issues
- Bus drivers have their preferred routes whereby they become familiar with the school community. Therefore when drivers are shifted to another route, typically they quit

resulting in decreasing the driver pool and adversely impacting families/schools (e.g. late posting of bus delays; 45 minute/1 hour wait times)

- *The benefits of a later start time include:* enabling HWSTS to be more efficient in utilizing contracted bus routes; have drivers who are dedicated to driving rural routes; provides financial incentives for drivers by giving them the opportunity to increase their hours with additional routes; avoid bus route duplication; reduce student ride times; and ensures students' safety by having a driver who is familiar with the unique aspects of their routes and the children who ride their buses
- *The Board recognizes that these late start times are not an ideal solution and will be challenging for families to adjust to the new schedule, however it is a necessary measure to alleviate the driver shortage pressures on the system*

Q&A – New Bell Times

Q1. The late bell times will make it difficult for parents to get their children to after school activities. As a result, more parents will be picking up their children at dismissal, which will increase traffic congestion and effect student safety.

A1. Purposeful parking lot planning is currently underway with Facilities. The Board recognizes that it is crucial to have a clear communication for the community to assist with traffic flow and ensure student safety.

Q2. The new bell times are concerning to parents because they don't know when their children will arrive home.

A.2. The new bell times will allow parents to have a more accurate pick up/drop off times, that otherwise were not possible when bus routes are open/unfilled due to unpredictable driver unavailability.

Q3. Why are only the new schools having late bell times?

A.3. All HWDSB schools' bell times will be under review to maximize driver resources to minimize the impact that the driver shortages are having on families. Existing HWDSB schools already have established routes with drivers, and consequently it is more practical to change the bell times for new schools that will require new bus routes.

Q4. Was there any consideration for later bell times for high school students, as studies have shown it to be more beneficial to their learning than earlier start times?

A.4. Yes. However, the timing of the Board's motion for these new bell times were proposed later in the school year. Therefore, making changes to all existing schools for September would be too disruptive to the system. The monumental task of reviewing all elementary/secondary schools bell times and bus routes will be a priority of HWSTS and

the Board next year, thus allowing the system time to make informed decisions to effectively utilize our resources, promote student learning and safety.

Q5. Parents concerned that younger students from Spring Valley will arrive home before their older siblings attending Ancaster Senior/secondary schools. In order to prepare for child care arrangements, is it possible for families to be notified of their bus times prior to August? Also, parents feel that being given the bus route map would be extremely beneficial should families decide to coordinate their schedules with one another.

A.5. *Take-away items for follow-up with Transportation.*

Q6. To accommodate parents' work schedules, can children be dropped off earlier in the morning to the playground? What time does supervision begin on the playground before and after school and is this schedule based on whether it is a 'bussed' or 'walk able' school?

A.6. Regardless if a school is predominately bussed or 'walk able', the Board must adhere to the teachers' contract that mandates supervision to start 15 minutes prior to school and 15 minutes after school.

Q7. CH Bray's students are mainly walkers, how can they become familiar with riding a bus?

A.3. HWSTS has a First Rider program that visits schools every year, to provide a learning opportunity to reduce student anxiety and ensure safe riding practices.

Child Care hours

With the understanding that these bell times affect families who require supervision of their children before and after school, consequently the school provider YMCA were successful in licensing that allows for an *earlier start time of 7:00 am.*

School Parking

Teacher Rep Jaime Dube-Ringel provided the parking update on Principal Tammy McLaughlin's behalf:

- Tammy McLaughlin and her caretaker met with the General Manager of HWSTS last week to discuss a plan for the parking lot
- There will be 25 parking spaces, which will be enough for staff, but there will not be any parking availability for parents
- Buses next year will follow the same format as they do this year: enter parking lot, do a loop, pick up and drop off students at the middle gates area of the fence

- Students will continue to utilize the gym to line up for dismissal and on inclement weather days
- Identification tags for FDK students' backpacks will be provided to the school from transportation to ensure their safety
- Bus colours may continue to be utilized as identification for students, as many students arrive on one bus in the morning and leave on another to go home
- If needed, the outdoor fenced area may be used to help with the additional volume of students
- Parking lot will be repainted and parking spaces for staff will be numbered
- A phone message was left last week for the City of Hamilton planning department regarding the need for a City official to come out to discuss a plan for safe parking spaces for parents along Governor's Road (Hwy #99); and an email follow up occurred this week in regards to a response from the planning department
- Parking updates will be sent to the community once decisions regarding safety and signage have been determined by City officials

Q&A – School Parking

Q1. Parents are concerned with safety in the parking lot with having no spaces to park and pulling up to drop/off pick up their children will further increase congestion in the school parking lot and flow of the bus loading/unloading zones.

A1. Safety is a priority. Clear communication to the community will be necessary to include: strongly encouraging parents to have their children who are eligible riders to take the bus rather than driving; students who need to leave early for appointments (etc.) must leave before the commencement of the dismissal process; communication on specific areas outside of the school property for parents to safely park, including Lion's Park; consideration of opening front door entrance that has an existing sidewalk but would require swipe card. *Take-away items for Principal follow-up with Lion's Park and Facilities*

4. Other Items:

Portables – Queen's Rangers building:

- There will be (4) individual portables, not a port-a-pack
- Currently there is a shortage of portables, due to the multiple school transitions within the Board
- Library will remain inside of the school
- Installation of Wi-Fi for portables and swipe card access (including swipe card access for all entry doors)

Facilities – Queen's Rangers building

- Septic system and well will be cleaned out in the summer
- Upgraded water pressure will be added, and more pressure tanks
- Asphalt will be resurfaced in part of the JK area, after the portables are brought in

Class Profiles:

- Key points are currently being shared with school staffs

Sharing Resources:

- In the process of creating an inventory of schools' resources; equipment/items that are not used will be sent to the Board

Virtual Tours/Skype:

- Videos have already been shared between Dr. Seaton, Queen's Rangers and CH Bray

Playday:

- Currently working on the logistics of the proposed date of June 6th; most challenging is arranging bussing as it is the same day as the Special Olympics and therefore no regular buses are available. Also, CH Bray are having a special evening event on that date. Consequently, may have to change the date which is difficult due to year end trips and graduations. *Principals will take this away for further follow-up with Transportation*

School Council:

- This will be constituted according to Council Policy/Procedure
- The initial meeting will take place over the first 30 days
- Principals will connect the two Council Chairs together prior to the end of the school year, including on setting a date for the first Council meeting
- A new constitution will be developed next year

Communication – agendas

- Agendas for the upcoming school year were 'put on hold' until the new school name was announced
- Staff use various methods to communicate with their families, as some parents' preference is to receive information using apps, which also supports schools' environmentally friendly initiatives
- Operational decisions on school communication, will be a Principal assessment based on the information and effective practices shared by both school communities

Historical items – New School:

- *'Dinko tree'* at CH Bray – Principal Sean Malcolmson has been in conference with Facilities in relation to the school parking plans
- *'Fish fence'* at CH Bray – Principal Sean Malcolmson has invited the school community who are interested in keeping the fish as mementos to take them. Continuing the 'fish fence tradition' or incorporating a 'fish wall' in the new school will be a discussion for the Transition Committee in the fall that will include student voice and following Board guidelines for affixing items on walls
- *Paintings from Queen's Ranger's parent/artist* – Inspirational paintings that adorn the hallways at Queen's Rangers have been gifted to both new schools to commemorate an exciting educational journey ahead in the lives of the Queen's Rangers/ CH Bray/ Dr. Seaton's students
- *Concrete art piece from CH Bray's chimney* – will be incorporated into the new school building

- **Colours/Branding/Mascot:** to be determined in the Fall following Board policy and guidelines, and including support from Corporate Communications

5. Next Meeting:

Transition Committee – *TBD* in September 2019

6:50 pm Closing