

## Rural Schools Advisory Committee Meeting

### MINUTES

Wednesday, March 1st, 2017

7:00 pm to 9:00 pm

Education Centre, Room 181A & 181B

Item	Notes
<b>Agenda, Welcome and Introductions</b>	Chair Susan Van Egdom lead tonight's meeting.
<b>HWDSB Updates</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water</li> <li>• Transportation</li> <li>• Facilities and Construction</li> <li>• Pupil Accommodation Reviews</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Water:</u></b> Superintendent Bill Torrens has been in consultation with our Health &amp; Safety and Facilities Department in regards to the water quality, specifically the high concentration of sodium in the water. The water table is tested regularly for sodium levels to determine if they are above the regulated MAC (Maximum Allowable Concentration). Facilities are challenged by the aspects of retro-fitting the types of filters that can be used in these older school buildings. The following sites continue to be challenged with water issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flamborough Centre, Beverly Central, Greensville, Balaclava, Spencer Valley and Dr. Seaton.</li> <li>• Spencer Valley and Dr. Seaton are still on bottled water as directed by Public Health. Facilities are exploring alternatives for these schools.</li> <li>• Queen's Rangers previously had a water quality issues but has now been resolved, however Public Health requires the water quality to be satisfactory for 6 months before permitting public consumption.</li> <li>• Michaelle Jean has reported that although the school states the water tastes different, Public Health deems it safe for drinking.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Transportation:</u></b> issues have decreased since January, in regards to driver shortage and excessive lates. However, it is recognized there are ongoing challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some schools continue to have multiple runs.</li> <li>• Maintaining regular bus ride times within the 60 minute threshold.</li> <li>• French Immersion community stop model rather than door-to-door.</li> <li>• Bus notifications to parents are sometimes communicated <i>after</i> the scheduled drop off/pick up times.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Facilities and Construction:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• West Flamborough (Greensville/Spencer Valley; Dr. Seaton/Beverly Central) continues to work through their respective site plans approval processes with a target opening date of September 2018. Although there appears to be no recognizable issues to jeopardise this timeline, concrete dates will not be announced in the event there are unforeseen delays.</li> <li>• Monday, March 6th, Mount Hope is targeting to open their new gym.</li> <li>• Board will be providing funds for new gym equipment.</li> <li>• To alleviate the overpopulation at Bellmoore, Facilities are working on a new school in the Summit Park area.</li> </ul>

	<p><b><u>Pupil Accommodation Reviews:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to work with the Ancaster PAR, including Queen’s Rangers, Fessenden, Rousseau, CH Bray and Ancaster Senior.</li> <li>• Public PAR Meeting on March 9th, to share information including community involvement to generate options that will be reported back to the Trustees in March/early April.</li> <li>• Michaelle Jean is being considered for 2018, in assisting with the population growth in Binbrook.</li> <li>• Last update to the Beverly Central/Dr. Seaton consultation, is that both communities opposed the two schools being blended together during the construction period. Consequently, Facilities will address potential issues as independent functioning schools, which was approved by the Board of Trustees on Monday, February 27th.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Yammer Training Session (Please bring a personal device)</b></p>	<p>Upon recommendation from the previous Rural Schools Advisory Committee Meeting, a “Yammer “training session was offered, however was declined by present members who are currently using this communication tool.</p>
<p><b>Dialogue: Supporting Rural Schools</b></p>	<p><b>Superintendent Bill Torrens: asked this committee in terms of sense of community; do members feel that rural communities are not as supported as city schools – what kinds of supports could be offered as a representative of rural schools that could be shared with Superintendents? What could this look like in terms of programming, are there new and different programs?</b></p> <p><b><u>ACTION ITEM: SHSM – Programming – Rural Schools:</u></b>          The committee discussed SHSM Programming as it relates to Rural Schools. The committee agreed that both an Agricultural Program as well as a Horticultural Program would support the Board’s seven Strategic Directions as well as being in alignment with the Province in advocating for special programming in rural schools. It is expected that Community Partners will encourage collaboration and assist in providing learning opportunities to students in the area.</p> <p>The City of Hamilton is home to a large rural community and expanding agricultural based economy. There are four HWDSB secondary schools which service rural Hamilton students; and the Ministry of Education is encouraging Ontario School Boards to expand their Specialized High Skills Major course offerings.</p> <p>It was moved by Jessica Zylstra (Millgrove), that Rural Schools Community Advisory Committee:</p> <p><b>RECOMMEND: That staff explore the feasibility of:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Introducing an Agriculture Specialized High Skills Major in HWDSB and;</b></li> <li><b>Expand the current Horticulture Specialized High Skills Major to second location within the district.</b></li> </ol> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Carried Unanimously.</b></p> <p><b><u>Inclement Weather:</u></b> Rural road conditions are often significantly different from the city, as urban streets are constantly plowed. Therefore, many rural parents will keep their children home if they are concerned about the safety of the roads. The Board’s personnel have spotters to inspect road conditions, throughout the entire system. It is important to note that due to the death of an HWDSB teacher, who was in a car accident while driving to school on a day when “buses were cancelled but schools remained open”, is the reason why the Board cancels <i>both</i> transportation and schools.</p>

	<p><b><u>Transportation and Secondary School Choices:</u></b> Transportation continues to be a challenge to rural school communities which can impact their secondary school choices, in terms of accessibility, to attend specialized programs within HWDSB, i.e. aviation, IB programs at Ancaster High.</p> <p><b><u>Communication:</u></b> Recommendations for enhanced methods of communication to rural school parents, to make them aware of specialized programs currently available in different secondary school sites, as information may not be received from their child.</p> <p><b><u>Transforming Learning Everywhere:</u></b> On-line courses, with the assistance of a Guidance Councillor as an alternative to attending class, thus allowing to free timetables to accommodate other electives; and the opportunity to experience a self-directed learning pace/approach. However, it must be recognized that on-line learning can be a challenge to some rural school families who do not have accessibility to internet within their home location.</p> <p><b><u>After-School Programs:</u></b> Principal Doug Dunford said there are some schools that have after-school programs (e.g. School Scholars) which have been very successful in many rural schools. However, these programs do not receive transportation, which may be a deterrent depending upon the rural community, and whether the parents are accustomed to driving their children to after-school community programs.</p> <p><b><u>Elementary/Secondary Collaboration:</u></b> Dr. J. Seaton, Principal Eddie Gratton has been successfully collaborating with Dundas Valley Secondary School's Manufacturing department, whereby encouraging students early in their elementary years serves to promote Positive Culture &amp; Well-being within HWDSB, as well as prepares the pathway for future career choices/opportunities.</p> <p><b><u>School trips:</u></b> can be affected by their rural locations in terms of transportation, as there is no access to city buses, thus impacting upon excursion choices, i.e. fewer walking trips; trips must include bussing expenses (unless transportation is supported by Board funded programs such as "Swim to Survive").</p>
<p><b>All Other Business</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Set Date of Final Meeting</b></li> </ul>	<p><b><u>ACTION ITEM: Motion – Next Meeting:</u></b> Members of the Committee have satisfied the requirements of the meeting threshold for the 2016-17 academic school year and have concluded that this meeting would be their last meeting as there are no further action needed by the committee at this time. It was moved by Jessica Zylstra (Millgrove)</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Carried Unanimously.</b></p>
<p><b>Next Steps</b></p>	<p><b><u>Next Meeting:</u></b> The Committee is recommending that they meet in October 2017 for an update on the recommended action of adding 2 SHSM Programs to rural schools, along with the standing updates on facilities, transportation, accommodation and water.</p>