



**Breslau/Stanley Park and Grand River South/Sunnyside  
Elementary Schools Pupil Accommodation Review  
Minutes of Public Meeting # 1  
February 2, 2010  
Grand River C.I. – 7:00 p.m.**

The first Public Meeting of the Breslau/Stanley Park and Grand River South/Sunnyside Elementary Schools Pupil Accommodation Reviews was held at Grand River C.I. on February 2, 2010.

1. Welcome/Introductions

- Chris Smith, Manager of Planning welcomed members of the public, school communities, and Board staff present for the evening, and made the following introductions:

Jeff Lovell, Principal of Sunnyside P.S., Dayle Buller-Power, Principal of Lackner Woods P.S., Pauline Shiry, Principal of Mackenzie King P.S., Jane McVeigh, Principal of Sheppard P.S., Julie Lobsinger, Principal of Wilson Avenue P.S., Jane Pritchard, Principal of Franklin P.S., Rob MacQueen, Principal of Stanley Park P.S., Nathan Hercanuck, Senior Planner, Lauren Manske, Planner and Mary Hingley, Recording Secretary.

Gregg Bereznick, Area Superintendent for the schools involved in both accommodation reviews has sent his regrets.

Approximately 96 members of the public were also in attendance.

- Mr. Smith noted that the purpose of tonight's meeting is to tell you about the Elementary Schools Accommodation Reviews running concurrently in the Breslau/Stanley Park and Grand River South/Sunnyside school communities.
- Comments sheets were available at both entrances of the lecture hall tonight, as well as a sign in sheet (which is a Ministry requirement).
- When you leave, you should have a better understanding of:
  - What is an Accommodation Review?
  - How can you keep informed?
  - How can you participate?
  - When can you expect to hear the results?
- We don't however have any proposed solutions tonight because they haven't been developed yet.
- Some of you may have followed the same process that the Catholic Board recently went through covering some of the same area of Kitchener, so you may be more familiar with the accommodation review process.
- The areas involved in the 2 accommodation reviews are right beside each other, and since we are running them at the same time, we felt that a joint first Public Meeting to advise the public of the process made sense. The balance of the public meetings will be held

separately for each review area; however, you are welcome to attend any of our public meetings.

- You will notice that Lackner Woods and Franklin public schools are involved in both reviews, because those two schools have some of their students go on to the senior 7/8 programs at Stanley Park or Sunnyside public schools, respectively.

Mr. Hercanuck led the group through tonight's presentation to explain:

- why we are undertaking the accommodation reviews
- the accommodation review process
- describe the make up of the Accommodation Review Committee (ARC) and their roles and responsibilities
- describe the School Information Profiles and how you can access information
- where we go from here
- link for tonight's presentation:

<http://www.wrdsb.ca/sites/www.wrdsb.ca/files/2Feb.10publicmtg.presentation.pdf>

- As a whole, the Breslau and east Kitchener area represents 12 elementary schools spread over a large geographic area.
- Organizing the larger area of concern into two concurrent accommodation reviews, provides a greater focus on local issues in each of the communities, while keeping the Accommodation Review Committees (ARC's) a reasonable size.
- It is recognized that due to the adjacent nature of the two reviews, over the course of the process it may be necessary to hold joint ARC meetings to facilitate the sharing of information, and coordinate inter-review scenario development.

## 2. What is an Accommodation Review?

- Each year the Board Planning Staff reviews the enrolment and accommodation situation in the Board to see if there are any areas of concern.
- If further analysis indicates that measures being implemented, such as the construction of a new facility, approved boundary changes, or local demographic factors will not resolve the situation in the short term, staff will bring forward recommendations to undertake a boundary study or an accommodation review to develop intermediate or long-term solutions.
- An accommodation review is the study of schools in an area of the Board's jurisdiction, to determine the future of a school, or group of schools.
- An accommodation review is a formal process with prescribed minimum timelines and structure. It is led by an Accommodation Review Committee (ARC).
- An accommodation review can ultimately result in recommendations to close one or more schools and/or consolidate schools; which means having students from two or more schools at one location. It can also result in changes to attendance boundaries and program changes, such as a JK-6 school becoming a JK-8 school. Recommendations can also be made for new construction such as additions, major upgrades or a brand new school.

- This process is based on a broad range of criteria regarding the quality of the learning experience for students, the physical assets, development activity and enrolment projections, etc., put together by the Ministry of Education to ensure the full involvement of an informed local community – a transparent process.
- This is the first Public Meeting of at least four that we will hold throughout the review process. The dates for these meetings are not finalized as they will depend on the time needed to do the review, and to come up with the appropriate solutions.

### 3. Ministry Guidelines/Timelines

- As previously mentioned, an Accommodation Review is a formal public process with prescribed minimum timelines handed down by the Ministry of Education that may result in boundary changes, program changes, construction of a new facility (additions or whole new buildings) but could also lead to school closures or consolidations.
- According to the Ministry of Education guidelines, from the date the Board of Trustees authorizes a pupil accommodation review there must be a minimum of 30 days (not including winter, spring or summer breaks) before the start of the public consultation period.
- The public consultation period includes a minimum of four public meetings.
- The ARC and Board administration will complete and consult on the School Information Profiles, develop the Review Objectives and scenarios to accomplish those objectives.
- The ARC writes and submits an Accommodation Report (that contains recommendations) to the Board of Trustees.
- From the date the report is submitted, there must be no less than 60 days until the Trustees can vote on the recommendations (again, not including winter, spring or summer breaks).
- According to the Ministry guidelines and Board policy, after the submission of the ARC's report and recommendations, Board staff have the opportunity to submit their own report to Trustees. This Staff report may contain recommendations that mirror or differ from those contained in the ARC report (provided there is substantial reason for the differences).
- Under the current Accommodation Review Policy, this Board has completed one Accommodation Review in its entirety, and that was in the South-East Galt community of Cambridge.
- In that case the Staff report recommended the same solution as the ARC, which demonstrates the collaborative nature of this process and the hard work of the committee members.

### 4. Why an Accommodation Review in these areas?

Mr. Hercanuck outlined the reasons for a review in these areas:

- This year one of the areas that we looked at for potential boundary study or accommodation review was an area of East Kitchener and southern Woolwich Township which has been on our radar for some time.

- This area contains 3 distinct components related to the elementary program models run by the Board. Breslau P.S. operates as a JK-8 facility, servicing the southern portion of Woolwich Township including the former Town of Breslau, and an area within the City of Kitchener west of the Grand River.
- Adjacent to the Breslau P.S. catchment is the Stanley Park P.S. family of schools.
- Stanley Park is the senior 7/8 school which receives students from Mackenzie King, Smithson, Crestview and portions of Lackner Woods and Franklin public schools.
- South of Stanley Park is the Sunnyside P.S. family of schools.
- Sunnyside provides the senior 7/8 program for Wilson Avenue, Howard Robertson, and portions of Lackner Woods and Franklin public schools.
- Recent municipal servicing brought across the Grand River to Breslau has allowed typically dense urban residential development to proceed within the town.
- This development has significantly increased enrolment at Breslau P.S. to the point where not all students can be accommodated within the built facility; therefore, it's operating with 8 portables.
- Further development planned in the coming years around the school is projected to place additional enrolment pressure on the built facility of Breslau P.S. if no action is taken.
- The main feeder schools to Stanley Park P.S. are all single storey facilities built in the 1950's and 1960's. Schools in neighbourhoods of this age are often grouped close together and are smaller facilities compared to what we would build today. Also typical is that the housing in these neighbourhoods no longer yields the same enrolment it once did, as birth rates and family size have declined over the decades. In some cases this has left the Board's facilities underutilized and some school organizations small.
- Localized development is also putting pressure on Lackner Woods P.S. which is operating with 8 portables currently.
- Lackner Woods P.S. opened in 2001 to relieve enrolment pressure at other school in this area due to development.
- Further development in the area was planned; however, the timing was unclear as there were issues related to municipal servicing, airport noise exposure and the extension of Fairway Road. By 2006 some of these issues were resolved and a portion of the planned development was allowed to proceed.
- To avoid enrolment from this development overwhelming Lackner Woods P.S. the Board implemented a boundary change directing a portion of their existing boundary to Sheppard P.S., which would act as a holding school until a long-term accommodation strategy for the area could be developed. Which we hope this process will accomplish.
- While it is possible that a boundary study could have addressed some or all of these issues, the Board ultimately decided that the additional options available under the more formal accommodation review process could provide the Board with more long-term, sustainable solutions for student accommodation.
- Specifically, the accommodation review process allows the Board to evaluate a broader range of options to address issues around the size and location of facilities relative to the population they serve, as well as the disparate elementary program models operating across the area.

## 5. Accommodation Review Committee (ARC)

- Each ARC will seek the following representation:
  - Two parents from each school community in the review area.
  - The principal from each school in the review area.
  - The school instructional superintendent.
  - WRDSB Planning and facilities staff who will act as a resource to the ARC.
  - We ask for local municipal Planning staff, in this case the City of Kitchener and Township of Woolwich who will bring a perspective on local development and other municipal issues.
  - Up to two reps from local community organizations, such as the YMCA, K-W Social Planning Council or neighbourhood associations, etc.
- ARC responsibilities:
  - Responsible for the School Information Profiles; this is a generic template that will be filled out for each school.
  - Setting Review Objectives, which are statements describing what the eventual solution will hope to accomplish.
  - Develop scenarios that seek to meet the review objectives and through public consultation will further refine those scenarios to come up with the eventual Accommodation Report and Recommendations for presentation to the Board of Trustees.
  - Responsible for Public Information and Access. The presentations and minutes of each ARC and Public Meetings will be posted on the Board website as well as relevant background information, reports and Board policies.
  - Each school in the review area will have a binder kept in the main office which contains all the same information, so that people without computer access can keep updated.
  - The ARC will facilitate the Community consultation and the public meetings.
  - The ARC will be responsible for the Accommodation Report and Recommendations to the Board of Trustees.

## 6. Objectives

- One of the most important processes when conducting a review is the setting of objectives. The objectives tell us what we want to accomplish, without predetermining an outcome.
- We also need objectives in order to develop and evaluate scenarios.
- We do not place any weighting on the objectives or rank one higher than the other.

## 7. School Information Profiles

- One of the ARC responsibilities will be to complete a School Information Profile for each school in the review area.
- The profiles have four sections:
  1. Value to the Student
  2. Value to the Board
  3. Value to the Community
  4. Value to the Local Economy

- The goal of the profiles is to ensure that each member of the ARC and the general public has all the relevant and same information about each school.
- In past reviews we have organized school tours for ARC members to see the facilities first hand, and the issues and opportunities for those facilities.

## 8. Next Steps

Mr. Hercanuck outlined the next steps in the process:

- To convene the ARC's for each review area and determine the issues as seen by the school communities.
- Out of these issues the ARC's will develop review objectives to respond to the issues and then work on scenarios to meet those objectives.
- We will hold a minimum of 3 additional public meetings to consult with the broader public.
- ARC prepares draft Accommodation Report and Recommendations.
- Staff brings Report and Recommendations to the Board of Trustees.
- Trustees vote on recommendations of Staff Report.
- Trustees make any decisions having regard for the work of the ARC.

## 9. Public Information and Access/Contact Information/How to get involved

- All relevant information is available on the Board's website: [www.wrdsb.ca](http://www.wrdsb.ca)
- Hard copies available upon request.
- ARC school binders are available at each of the schools in the review areas.
- You can participate in this review by sending in comments to our email address: [boundaryfeedback@wrdsb.on.ca](mailto:boundaryfeedback@wrdsb.on.ca), by calling us at 519-570-0003 ext. 4419, or by contacting your school reps on the ARC through school council.
- Webpage addresses for the 2 reviews:

<http://www.wrdsb.ca/planning/accommodation-reviews/breslau-stanley-park-elementary-schools-accommodation-review>

<http://www.wrdsb.ca/planning/accommodation-reviews/grand-river-south-sunnyside-elementary-schools-accommodation-review>

## 10. Questions/Comments/Other

- Mr. Smith opened up the floor to any questions/comments.

Q – How do you volunteer to become a member of the ARC?

R – Please check with your school Principal, to see if they have representation already. In the case of Lackner Woods and Franklin schools, they will require 4 reps, 2 for each review.

- Mr. Smith noted that the ARC tries to work by consensus. If it comes to a vote, the only voting members are the school reps, and the municipal and community reps, Board staff does not vote. The Trustees however, make the final decision regarding any recommendations.

Q – The 4:30 pm start time for the ARC meetings is not good for most people.

R – The first meeting has been set at 4:30 pm, but we will work with the group at the first ARC meeting to see if this time needs to be adjusted. If you are a rep and cannot make it until later, let us know and we will work at doing what is best for everyone. We understand that family/work commitments arise and that is why we ask for 2 reps from each school, so if one is unable to come, hopefully the other is present.

Q – After the decisions, when would things happen?

R – It does depend on the scenario that gets recommended, i.e. new school construction, additions, property acquisition and Ministry approvals. It could be 3 years for new school construction; other phased in changes could be 2 to 3 years away.

R – What is the maximum length of time for the Trustees to make their decision?

Q – The Ministry of Education sets the guidelines. Once the recommendation has been presented to the Board, there is a mandatory 60 day waiting period before the final vote (not including spring, summer or winter breaks). There is no maximum set.

Q – Will we be presenting to new Trustees after the November election?

R – This could be the case, if new Trustees are elected in November and a final decision has not been made.

Q – Regarding French Immersion, is it taken into account if/when boundary changes happen?

R – Yes, it is part of what we look at; generally new schools do not open up with French Immersion (FI). However, the new school in Waterloo: Millen Woods will open with Grades 1-4 French Immersion based on the existing need there and where the current FI students actually live.

Q – Stanley Park is a feeder school; could it still be that after the review?

R – Yes.

Q – The School Information Profiles are long and pretty detailed, who on the ARC fills them out?

R – School Principals, as well as Facility Services, Planning and Security fill out the pieces pertaining to their specific areas. Administration will bring the profiles to the ARC and ARC members can fill in additional information.

Q – Grandfathering, will it play a part in the process?

R – It could, depending on the scenario and recommendation. Grandfathering refers to letting a student and/or sibling remain at a particular school for a specific year or number of years when the boundary has been changed.

Q – If the boundary is changed for Breslau P.S., can the current students choose to stay there?

R – No, there are no choice boundaries. If your home school boundary has changed, your student would make the move. However, grandfathering could apply; the student could have a specific reason to remain where they are, i.e. French Immersion or Special Education.

Q – The ARC reps, what if you have 8 people and only 4 spots available?

R – The schools will need to make that decision; it doesn't hurt to have an alternate or two.

- Jane Pritchard, Principal of Franklin P.S. and Dayle Buller-Power, Principal of Lackner Woods P.S., both advised that they are still looking for ARC representation for their schools, so please contact them if anyone is interested.

Q – If there are boundary changes for the elementary schools, will we see secondary school changes as well?

R – We try to be consistent with the secondary boundaries. We may take the opportunity to clean up those boundaries a bit.

Q – When will we see some scenarios/options?

R – Most likely at the second Public Meeting, this will tentatively take place in late April for both reviews.

Q – Where do the ARC meetings take place?

R – Our first ARC meetings are taking place at the senior schools: Stanley Park and Sunnyside. We will then decide with the group where the best location is for subsequent meetings, whether we stay at one location or move them around to other schools.

Q – What is the capacity of the senior schools?

R – Stanley Park is at capacity and Sunnyside is just a little under capacity currently (both are very healthy, enrolment wise). The Lackner/Grand River South area will bring some enrolment. The Good Schools Standing Committee has set some guidelines for school size, and suggests more than 2 classes per grade for a JK-6 program, and a 7/8 senior program with a minimum of 3 to 4 classes per grade is ideal. Both Stanley Park and Sunnyside as 7/8 schools are easily meeting that suggestion for program delivery.

Q – Does the ARC look at demographic changes? For instance in my neighbourhood, there are a lot of older residents without school-aged children. That may change in 5 years, with new, younger families moving in.

R – Yes, enrolment projections are being done all the time based on birth rates, building permits, future development, etc. New development areas are where the thrust of the enrolment comes from. That is why we have municipal representation on the ARC's. While intensification of older urban areas is a planning thrust right now, we have never had an older established area revert back to its initial enrolment numbers.

Q – If a new school needs to be built, does the Board know where that property might be?

R – This is an issue we will look at. We did have a school site option in the area, but we abandoned it due to the changes that will take place at the airport and established flight paths. The Board does have other options in the area.

Q – Since the Catholic Board just did an accommodation review in this area, can you share info with them?

R – Their review is complete; and we do keep in touch with the Catholic Board; however, we plan for what we have, as they do; and there can be localized issues as a result of each Board's actions.

Q – Will there be an impact with the implementation of all day, every day kindergarten?

R – The Early Learning Program will be implemented over the next 5 years, so we have already factored in the additional numbers (counting a JK/SK as 1 instead of .5).



Q – The Accommodation Review Process looks like a boundary study, what is the difference?

R – A boundary study is a Board process at the Board's direction. An accommodation review is a more formal process with Ministry of Education guidelines. A minimum of 4 Public Meetings must be held, to garner public feedback throughout the process. The big difference is that an ARC can look at school closure or consolidation as a solution.

Q – School closures or consolidation is highlighted and underlined in the presentation, is anything predetermined?

R – The highlighting is **only** to show the difference there between a boundary study and an accommodation review. The ARC and its outcome is not predetermined; public input and feedback are big parts of it.

Q – How often are Accommodation Reviews done? When will there be another one once this decision has been made?

R – We can't come back for a minimum of 5 years, our hope is for a long-term solution here; however, things do change, outside influences occur that are out of our control. We are running out of greenfield development space in this area, and we can't predict what will happen. Overall enrolment is stable in this community however, and the Region is in good shape economically.

Q – Does the Planning Department comment on potential schools sites, or set aside sites for schools?

R – Yes, our Principal Planner looks at and comments on all draft development applications. He looks at community planning, potential school sites, parks and trails. We base enrolment projections on future development. Family size dynamics come into play also.

Q – Land use around existing schools, i.e. Sheppard P.S. being situated next to the Kitchener Auditorium and the expansion talks happening around that. Would you sell school property to the Auditorium?

R – We don't yet know the plans for the Kitchener Aud, but they cannot come onto our school property without Board permission. Once we know their plans we will comment. We might partner with the City, but would not give up land easily.

Q – Does the City own each school property?

R – No, the Waterloo Region District School Board owns every school property; we are not a part of the City jurisdiction.

Q – Could it be suggested that previous ARC's share their experiences, advantages and disadvantages with new ARC's?

R – Each area that comes under review has its own issues. We have just completed one Pupil Accommodation Review under the new process, and that was in the South-East Galt community of Cambridge, so we have that experience to draw on.

- Ms. Manske noted that it is a provincial process and School Boards/ARC members have given their feedback to the Ministry that resulted in an updated guideline/policy effective June 2009.

Q – How much time is needed for the ARC meetings?

R – The meetings are typically bi-monthly; sometimes they can be 3 or 4 weeks apart depending on what stage we are at. For instance, detailing scenarios can take the Planners a while to complete. There are about 10 ARC meetings in total, each about an hour and a half.

Q – New schools being built now are generally JK-8, does the Board have a going forward policy on JK-6, JK-8, or 7/8 senior schools? Are there implications for older schools?

R – We have not built a new senior 7/8 school in many years, and these programs used to much more specialized. The Ministry sees the curriculum more as a continuum through JK-8, but there is no going forward Board policy at this point. We have asked senior administration if we should be developing a policy around this much asked issue. There are proponents of both models, however.

Q – Lackner Woods P.S. as a JK-6 or JK-8?

R – That is what the ARC will look at.

Q – Are there set boundaries for walking to school?

R – Yes, the current Transportation Distance Policy is: JK-3 it is 1.6 km, grades 4, 5 and 6 is 2.0 km, grades 7 and 8 is 3.5 km and grades 9 to 12 is 4.8 km. What we strive for is an elementary school with a good fit for the community/neighbourhood. Do we want to reduce parent driving – yes we do! When the area bounded by Victoria, Ottawa, Lackner Streets and the Grand River grew, we had room at Breslau P.S., so the boundary was changed to take those students by bus to Breslau P.S.

Q – Would you do a household survey in a new area to determine how many students you will gain?

R – Our own Board census is September registration, and we rely on that for school organization planning, as well as our enrolment projections. A household survey could have privacy concerns. Historical factors are looked at and used to guide us; birth rates for example, and we get housing development information from the Region as well.

Q – Lackner Woods P.S. seemed to grow so fast needing so many portables so soon.

R – Yes, it has. As we mentioned earlier, we did have a school site in the area that we hoped to use, but after we saw the airport expansion plans we passed on it for safety concerns.

Q – The boundaries seem to be overloaded already at Franklin and Wilson Avenue, even with the additions at both schools.

R – We can't build a school until we have the students, so we are always in a catch up mode. The additions at Franklin and Wilson Avenue were made possible through the Ministry's Primary Class Size initiative, where the issue was shortness on space due to the decrease in class sizes at 20:1 and needed renovations.

C – A member of the group expressed his thanks to the Planning Department for the explanation of the process we are undertaking. It's nice to know that there are no arbitrary decisions being made, the process invites school community/public involvement and full transparency.

Q – Expand all of Sheppard to go to Sunnyside – can the ARC decide that, and would Courtland have to get involved?

R – Yes, this could be a scenario, and there would be some crossover, and Courtland would be involved in that case, but merely from a boundary standpoint, not closure under this review.

Mr. Smith thanked all for coming, and gave the contact numbers and Board website information for the public to access with any questions or comments:

Website:

<http://www.wrdsb.ca/planning/accommodation-reviews/breslau-stanley-park-elementary-schools-accommodation-review>

<http://www.wrdsb.ca/planning/accommodation-reviews/grand-river-south-sunnyside-elementary-schools-accommodation-review>

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