



**Grand River South/Sunnyside Elementary Schools Pupil  
Accommodation Review  
Minutes of Accommodation Review Committee Meeting # 1  
February 4th, 2010 - 4:30 pm**

The first meeting of the Grand River South/Sunnyside Accommodation Review Committee (ARC) was held at Sunnyside P.S., on February 4th, 2010.

Committee Members Present:

Gregg Bereznick, Area Superintendent, Ron Dallan, Manager of Capital Projects, Facility Services, Dayle Buller-Power, Principal of Lackner Woods P.S., Heather Preddie, Principal of Rockway P.S., Jane McVeigh, Principal of Sheppard P.S., Jeff Lovell, Principal of Sunnyside P.S., Julie Lobsinger, Principal of Wilson Avenue P.S., Rebecca Jutzi, Vice Principal of Sunnyside P.S., Andrea Michelutti, Vice Principal of Howard Robertson covering for Maria Lotimer, Darren Batt, Vice Principal of Franklin, Al Watt, Vice Principal of Wilson Avenue P.S., Richard Briston, parent – Franklin P.S., Stuart Gallacher, parent – Lackner Woods P.S., Naz Ritchie, parent – Lackner Woods P.S., Christine Lassel, parent – Rockway P.S., Jennifer Childs, parent – Sheppard P.S., Diane Kewley, parent – Sheppard P.S., Kelly Kempel, parent – Sunnyside P.S., Edda Kerr, parent – Sunnyside P.S., Bonnie Heimbecker, parent – Wilson Avenue P.S., Robert Dean, parent – Wilson Avenue P.S., Mary Hingley, recording secretary, Nathan Hercanuck, Senior Planner, Lauren Manske, Planner and Chris Smith, Manager of Planning, for the Waterloo Region District School Board.

Regrets:

Jane Pritchard, Principal of Franklin P.S., Maria Lotimer, Principal of Howard Robertson P.S., Katie Anderl, Municipal Rep – City of Kitchener.

Mr. Smith addressed Area Superintendent Gregg Bereznick, the school Principals and Vice Principals before the ARC meeting began and gave a brief outline of the Accommodation Review process and their roles, for those that were not able to attend the Public Meeting on February 2, 2010.

**1. Welcome/Introductions**

Chris Smith, Manager of Planning opened the meeting at 4:35 p.m. and had the committee members introduce themselves. Thanks were extended to the ARC for volunteering their time and commitment to this process.

- Mr. Smith also asked if any of the parent reps were at the first Public Meeting held on Tuesday, February 2, 2010 at Grand River C.I.
  - A few of them replied that they had attended.

**2. Background/Explanation of Accommodation Review Process**

- Binders were distributed to the membership to keep all of the information regarding the accommodation review together.
- An extra binder was provided to each school to have available for public access.
  - Principals will be asked to keep the binders up-to-date with new materials from the meetings.
  - The school binders should be kept in an accessible location for the public.
- What is a Pupil Accommodation Review?
  - A formal public process that ensures a decision taken by a school board regarding the potential future of a school, or group of schools (closure or consolidation) has the full involvement of an informed local community.
  - a process based on a broad range of criteria regarding the quality of the learning experience for students.
- Why an Accommodation Review in the Grand River South/Sunnyside Area?
  - Localized residential development putting pressure on a few facilities, most notably Lackner Woods P.S.
  - As a temporary measure, students from this area are being bussed to Sheppard P.S.
  - Lower/declining enrolment in other areas.
  - New direction in curriculum/school organization (leaning towards a JK-8 curriculum).
  - Current enrolment and capacity for the schools in the review area was presented to the ARC.
  - to view the presentation, please visit the Board's website at:  
[www.wrdsb.ca/about-us/planning/accommodation-reviews/grand-river-south/sunnyside-elementary-schools-accommodation-review](http://www.wrdsb.ca/about-us/planning/accommodation-reviews/grand-river-south/sunnyside-elementary-schools-accommodation-review)
  - Total enrolment refers to the number of students registered at the school, and Full Time Equivalent (FTE) counts Kindergarten students as .5.
  - With the implementation of the Early Learning Program (ELP), or all-day every day Kindergarten we will only work with the total number of students going forward.

Q – Will the numbers increase from FTE then?

R – Yes, and we will just work with the total number now.

- What is the role of the Accommodation Review Committee (ARC)?
  - The purpose of the ARC is to conduct an accommodation review of a particular school or schools within a given planning area of the Board in order to advise and provide recommendations that will inform the final decision made by the Board of Trustees on whether a school or schools should be either closed or consolidated.
- The ARC consists of:
  - 2 parents from each school community.
  - The principal from each of the schools in the review (Franklin, Howard Robertson, Lackner Woods, Rockway, Sheppard, Sunnyside and Wilson Avenue Public Schools).

- The school area superintendent(s), in this case: Gregg Bereznick
- Area municipal representation (City of Kitchener). They give us perspective on development and other municipal issues. We have secured a rep from the City of Kitchener, and they will present to the ARC at our 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> meeting. They will be unable to attend each ARC meeting; however, they will be available to us for any questions we may have.
- Up to 2 community representatives (e.g. K-W Social Planning Council, neighbourhood associations).
- Waterloo Region District School Board Planning and Facilities staff.

Q – Who gets the community reps to sit on the ARC?

R – We are still working on this, we have some calls out and hope to hear back shortly.

- Voting members of the ARC: Parent reps, community reps and municipal reps.
- Non-voting members: Planning staff, Superintendent, Principals, Vice Principals, other Board reps
  - Decisions will be determined by consensus whenever possible; however, if consensus cannot be reached, a majority vote will consist of 50 percent plus 1 of the voting members present at the meeting the day the vote is held. A vote cannot be held without a quorum (a quorum consists of 50 percent of the voting members of the committee).
- ARC Meeting Procedures:
  - The ARC shall meet at an agreed upon schedule and location.
  - ARC meetings are not public meetings; non-members may attend the meetings provided they are invited by the ARC. For example, we may call upon Jim Berry, Assistant Superintendent Learning Services (Special Education) to attend a meeting as scenario development progresses to provide his perspective in terms of Special Education.
  - Minutes and secretarial support for the ARC will be provided by the Board's Planning Department.
  - An agenda for ARC meetings will be prepared by the Planning Department and sent to the ARC members prior to each meeting. Minutes from the previous meeting will accompany the agenda for ARC approval.
  - Agendas, minutes and presentations, once approved from each ARC meeting and Public Meeting will be posted on the Board's website:

[www.wrdsb.ca/about-us/planning/accommodation-reviews/grand-river-south/sunnyside-elementary-schools-accommodation-review](http://www.wrdsb.ca/about-us/planning/accommodation-reviews/grand-river-south/sunnyside-elementary-schools-accommodation-review)

### **3. Role of the Accommodation Review Committee/Terms of Reference**

- **The ARC is responsible for:**
  - Review Objectives
  - Accommodation scenarios/options
  - Accommodation Report and Recommendations
  - School Information Profiles
  - Public Information and Access

- Community Consultation and Public Meetings
- Pertinent material is in your ARC binders under the Board Reports and Policies tab, as well as reference criteria and the Terms of Reference. Additional information, policies and guidelines can be found on our website at: [www.wrdsb.ca](http://www.wrdsb.ca). If you can't find a specific reference material, please let Planning know and we will get it to you.
- **Public Information and Access:**
  - ARC's are to ensure that all information relevant to the accommodation review is to be made public by posting it in a prominent location on the Board's website or making it available in print upon request.
  - All information that is used to determine the value of a school must be publicly available.
  - Where relevant information is technical in nature, it is to be explained in plain language.
- **Community Consultation and Public Meetings:**
  - Consultations must be based on the customized School Information Profiles in order to elicit input from the various perspectives around the value of a school.
  - The ARC must seek input and community feedback on options for accommodating students who would be affected by a school closure.
  - A minimum of 4 Public Meetings are to be held to consult and present the Accommodation Report and Recommendations. (*Mr. Smith noted that ARC members are not required to attend the public meetings; however, they may find it beneficial*).
  - Minutes reflecting the full range of opinions expressed at the meetings are to be kept, and made publicly available.
- **Proposed Accommodation Review Timeline:**
  - November 30, 2009 – January 11, 2010: 30 day minimum period between Board announcement of Accommodation Review and first public consultation (not including winter break).
  - February 2, 2010 – May 11, 2010: Public consultation period, minimum 90 days (not including March break). Minimum of 4 public meetings.
  - May 17, 2010 – September 24, 2010: Minimum 60 day period (not including summer break) between ARC submission of Accommodation Report and Trustee vote on recommendation.

Mr. Hercanuck stated that these dates are fairly aggressive; we expect this review will likely go into the fall of 2010.

Q – What is the basis for the 60 day waiting period before the final Trustee vote?

R – It is intended to give the Trustees time to review the recommendations, prepare counter arguments, challenges if necessary. Implementation of the recommendations could take a couple of years, depending on the scope of the changes.

- **Next Steps:**
  - ARC to discuss issues and develop Review Objectives
  - ARC to review and fill out the School Information Profile Templates, and modify if necessary
  - ARC to discuss existing conditions, accommodation options and recommendations

#### **4. Discussion of Issues/Setting of Review Objectives**

Mr. Hercanuck explained the important job of setting review objectives.

- The objectives are generic statements describing the desired goals of the Accommodation Review.
- The objectives are derived from the issues brought up by members of the ARC and general public and the Accommodation Review Reference Criteria.
- Setting review objectives is a **key** step of this process.
- We will brainstorm some ideas at the first few meetings, and bring forth issues that we hope to do better with. For example, an issue could be the length of the bus ride that the students have going from the area next to Lackner Woods P.S. to Sheppard P.S.
- The review objectives will be “draft” in the beginning, and we will take them to the public meetings for feedback. The objectives can be altered if necessary as we proceed.
- The objectives are critical to the process, especially at the stage of reviewing scenarios.
- They will be used to measure success of the scenarios brought forth in addressing them.

Mr. Hercanuck explained the Accommodation Review Scenarios.

- Scenarios/options are created to address issues and objectives raised and developed by the ARC, the general public and the Accommodation Review Reference Criteria.
- Accommodation Scenarios can include:
  - boundary changes between facilities in the review area
  - program changes at facilities within the review area
  - new construction (renovations, additions, whole new facilities)
  - school closure/consolidation
  - maintaining the status quo (doing nothing)
  - any combination of the above
- Due to the adjacent nature of the Grand River South/Sunnyside review area to the Breslau/Stanley Park review area, there may be scenarios that overlap. Joint ARC meetings may occur.
- Accommodation Report and Recommendations:
  - ARC’s must complete an Accommodation Report, using the customized School Information Profiles that will make recommendations regarding the future of the schools being considered and submit the report to school board administration.
  - The needs of all students within the Grand River South/Sunnyside review area are to be considered.
  - ARC’s must share the Accommodation Report, in plain language with the community at a public meeting (usually Public Meeting # 4).

Q – Are there any statistics on the success of past ARC's?

R – Our Board has just completed one pupil accommodation review so far under this new process and we are at 100% success rate. We do not know the numbers for across Ontario; however, Ms. Manske added that the Waterloo Region Catholic Board has done 3 ARC recommendations and are 100% successful. This speaks to the public and community involvement in the process. The Board's recognize the hard work done by the ARC's.

Q – Does money dictate the outcome?

R – Not necessarily, cost is not the only consideration. It is an important factor of course; the Board does not just go with the cheapest option; however, it has to be affordable.

## **5. Explanation of School Valuations – School Information Profile**

Mr. Hercanuck advised that the ARC may customize the Board's generic School Information Profile to the schools under review.

- The School Information Profile includes four considerations:
  - Section 1: Value to the Student
  - Section 2: Value to the Board
  - Section 3: Value to the Community
  - Section 4: Value to the Local Economy
- The profiles are a tool to gather facility, program, transportation, security, community use, etc, information. We then collate the information.

Q – There are lots of pages to these profiles, seems like a lot of work, when will we see the completed ones?

R – The school principals are currently working on their portions of the profiles, as well as facility services, security and rentals. We do hope to have them ready for the second public meeting, and also to help with scenario development.

## **6. Roundtable/Questions/Comments**

Q – Is there a section in the school information profiles regarding hazardous material? Will we get to see these issues, because it may have a monetary impact on any recommendations?

R – There is no section like this. Facility Services department does Asbestos Audit Reports, which is a Board and Ministry requirement. We may want to add this to the profiles.

Q – Does the study include moulds?

R – Not at this time, the asbestos audits are legislated. Facilities supervisors do look at other issues, such as mould and they create maintenance work orders to address these.

Q – Regarding the school tour, would we see all of the schools in the review area at one time? It seems like a lot to see all at once.

R – Yes, that's probably the best way; it gives the ARC a chance to see each school site, to view their challenges and opportunities. You can take notes or pictures if you wish. It's helpful to see the older multi storey schools right up to the brand new accessible additions at Franklin and Wilson Avenue Public Schools. The ARC puts a spotlight on the schools in the review.

Mr. Smith asked the ARC to start thinking about the issues in this review, and to perhaps come up with some objectives for the next meeting. He noted that Planning can bring some draft objectives forward as a starting point.

Q – Can you email some sample objectives to us prior to next meeting?

R – Yes, we will send them with the agenda prior to the February 18<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Q – I am representing my community on this ARC, what is the best way to do that? Post something at the school?

R – You could work with the school principal to have info brought forward at school/parent council meetings. There is the boundary feedback email address, and information on the website. Notices go out for the Public Meetings to every student in the review area; you could encourage your school community to attend to give their feedback.

Q – Will we have access to where the students live in this review?

R – Yes, we can create scatter maps (they will show dots only - approximations of where our students live – no names are displayed for security reasons). We can show you how we assemble the scenarios using enrolment projections and the maps.

Q – Ethnic diversity in the ARC – does not seem to be well represented.

R – ARC Representation comes from the school/parent councils as requested by the administration, as well as from the municipalities involved.

Ms. Manske advised the ARC that according to the Terms of Reference we need to choose/elect a Chair of the ARC.

- Ms. Manske asked the ARC if everyone was in agreement with Mr. Smith becoming Chair of the ARC, with Mr. Hercanuck and Ms. Manske acting in his absence.
  - The group agreed to elect Mr. Smith as Chair.

## **7. Future Meeting Dates and Locations(s)**

- Mr. Smith asked the group if the 4:30 p.m. start time for the ARC meetings works for everyone, understanding that conflicts, family commitments/personal issues arise, making it hard to attend every meeting.
- One member expressed concern that 4:30 p.m. was a bit early for them, and would not likely make it until a bit later.
- Mr. Smith noted that with a group this size, it is a given that not all can make it for the start and he advised to come when you can.
  - It was agreed by the group to continue to schedule the meetings from 4:30 – 6:00 p.m.

Q – What about inclement weather and if the ARC meeting has to be cancelled, how will you notify us?

R – We have all of your email addresses, and we would contact you that way with as much notice as possible; or via the Board website in the case of a major system shutdown.

- Meeting venue was discussed, one central location was discussed, and the group was asked what their preference would be.

- It was agreed by the group that one central location would be preferable.
  - Mr. Lovell kindly offered the Sunnyside P.S. library for future meetings.
  - The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 18, 2010 at Sunnyside P.S.
  - Mr. Smith thanked all for coming, and for their participation in this process. He also thanked Mr. Lovell for hosting and set up of the meeting.
  - The meeting adjourned at 5:50 pm.
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**Future Meeting Dates:**

**Thursday Feb. 18 @ Sunnyside P.S. – 4:30 – 6:00 pm**

**Thursday March 4 @ Sunnyside P.S. – 4:30 – 6:00 pm**

**Tuesday March 30 @ Sunnyside P.S. – 4:30 – 6:00 pm**