



**East Kitchener-Waterloo Elementary Schools Pupil  
Accommodation Review  
Minutes of Accommodation Review Committee Meeting # 6  
January 12th, 2010 - 4:30 pm**

The sixth meeting of the East Kitchener-Waterloo Accommodation Review Committee (ARC) was held at Margaret Avenue P.S., on January 12, 2010.

Committee Members Present:

Elke Whitmore, Principal of Bridgeport P.S., Frank Ewald, Principal of Lexington P.S., Kelly Wilkinson, Principal of Elizabeth Ziegler P.S., Leisa Kuntz, Principal of Prueter P.S., Brian Ward, Principal of Margaret Avenue P.S., Jon Lencz, Vice Principal of King Edward, covering for Janet Hale, Elizabeth Brown, Development & Technical Services Dept., City of Kitchener, Carrie Dawson-Thomas, parent – Margaret Avenue P.S., D.L. Brown, parent – Suddaby P.S., Cindy Shirley, parent – Elizabeth Ziegler P.S., Kelly Miller, parent – Elizabeth Ziegler P.S., Michael Reinhardt, parent – Bridgeport P.S., Peter Brown, parent – Lexington P.S., Don Snider, parent – Prueter P.S., Darrell Bridger, parent – Bridgeport P.S., covering for Tara Bridger, Mary Hingley, recording secretary, Chris Smith, Manager of Planning, Nathan Hercanuck, Senior Planner and Lauren Manske, Planner for the Waterloo Region District School Board.

Regrets:

Mark Schinkel, Area Superintendent, Gregg Bereznick, Area Superintendent, Ian Gaudet, Controller, Facility Services, Janet Hale, Principal of King Edward, Darlene Stubbs, Principal of Suddaby P.S., Susie Fowler, parent – Suddaby P.S., D. Welsman, parent – King Edward P.S., Laura Dick, parent – Prueter P.S., Carolyn Laurie, parent – King Edward P.S., Tara Bridger, parent – Bridgeport P.S., Amy Stewart, parent – Margaret Avenue P.S., T. Gilhuly, parent – Lexington P.S.

**1. Welcome/Introductions**

Chris Smith, Manager of Planning opened the meeting at 4:35 pm and welcomed members of the ARC.

**2. Meeting # 5 – Draft minutes approval**

- Mr. Smith asked the group if there were any corrections/concerns with the minutes from the December 8<sup>th</sup> ARC meeting.
  - No concerns or corrections were raised.
  - Minutes from the December 8<sup>th</sup> meeting were approved.
  - Mover: Don Snider and seconded by: Cindy Shirley

### 3. Ongoing

#### **Draft Review Objectives:**

- Mr. Smith noted that Ian Gaudet had proposed 2 small changes to the wording on the draft objectives:
  - on the first objective: change **determine need to keep/utilize** the 410 Falconridge Drive, Kitchener property to **determine need to utilize**.....
  - Mr. Smith asked the ARC if they agreed with this change: consensus was yes.
  - on the fifth objective: priorities for physical accessibility of facilities, add the wording: **through the Accessibility Committee**, a standing committee of the Board.
  - Mr. Smith asked the ARC if they agreed with this change: consensus was yes.

#### **School Valuations – School Information Profiles:**

- Ms. Manske noted that we have almost all of the school valuations returned; we should have them ready for the Public Meeting on January 26, 2010. The completed school valuations will be posted on the website as well.

### 4. Discussion of Preliminary Scenarios: which ones to detail for the Public Meeting

- Ms. Manske led the group through 3 new scenarios, and re-capped the 5 scenarios discussed at the previous ARC meeting.

#### **Scenario 5**

- **Two JK-8 facilities (Lexington and Margaret Avenue), Prueter closes**

#### Questions/Comments

C – 6 school scenario with large enrolment numbers at Bridgeport and Lexington.

C – Lexington could be re-built or re-constructed utilizing the permanent part of the current structure which includes the office and library.

Q – Would the students from Prueter be moved to Margaret Avenue?

R – Yes, as part of the JK-6 component.

Q – What are the walking distances per grade level?

R – JK-3 is 1.6 km, grades 4, 5 and 6 is 2.0 km, grades 7, 8 is 3.5 km and for grades 9 to 12 the distance is 4.8 km.

Q – What would the cost be to retrofit Margaret Avenue to a JK-8 school?

R – We have no costing yet, we would like to narrow down the number of scenarios before looking at costing, as it is very time consuming.

C – Converting Margaret Avenue to JK-8 with an enrolment at 370; this might be hard to manage.

Q – Would the congregated class currently at Prueter go to Margaret Avenue instead?

R – Yes.

C – Margaret Avenue as a JK-8 school, concerned that there is no field facility and the cost of the conversion.

### Scenario 6

- **Two JK-6 facilities (Lexington and Falconridge), JK-8 at Bridgeport, Margaret Avenue closes and students are redistributed to Courtland and MacGregor for 7/8**

#### Questions/Comments

C – 7 school scenario that closes Margaret Avenue and involves 2 schools outside of the review area (Courtland and MacGregor)

Q – Moving the congregated and Life Skills classes from Margaret Avenue to Courtland, would it affect the enrolment numbers with these extra students?

R – It would mean approximately 100 more students for Courtland and those classes have been included in the numbers. Courtland also has the space in specialized facilities; might need 1 or 2 portables.

Q – Should we be looking at affecting schools that are not in the review area – is it fair when they are not involved in the process?

R – We do need to clarify if we can bring them into the process if this scenario goes forward. It would only be a boundary change for these two schools, we would not be looking at closure, so it is not the same process, we would still have to include those communities in consultation.

C – MacGregor and Courtland do have space for the additional students; it would give them healthier numbers which have been declining.

### Scenario 7

- **New JK-8 facility (Falconridge), Lexington closes**

#### Questions/Comments

C – 6 school scenario that closes Lexington; those students are moved to Bridgeport for JK-6 and to Falconridge for 7/8.

C – Margaret Avenue stays a 7/8 school, the numbers are low however. Concern whether the program can be run with 158 students in 2013.

C – Bridgeport numbers are high, and Prueter is underutilized.

Q – Could we send some of Bridgeport to Margaret Avenue to boost the 7/8 numbers? This would bring the numbers down at Falconridge too.

R – Yes, we can make this modification.

### Status Quo

- **Rebuilding Lexington as JK-6 and all boundaries stay intact**

#### Questions/Comments

C – 7 school scenario that keeps the 7/8 program centralized.

C – Bridgeport numbers are too big.

C – We could move some boundaries around to get a better number balance in this scenario.

### Scenario 1

- **Two new JK-6 facilities (Lexington and Falconridge), 7/8 program remains at Margaret Avenue**

### Questions/Comments

- C – 8 school scenario, no school closures.
- C – Would have neighbourhood JK-6 schools.
- C – Bridgeport is under capacity; so is Prueter.

### **Scenario 2**

- **Two JK-8 facilities (Falconridge and Prueter), Margaret Avenue closes**

### Questions/Comments

- C – 7 school scenario with no central 7/8 program.
- Q – So this scenario involves 3 new builds?
- R – Yes, we would rebuild Lexington, build a new JK-8 on Falconridge Drive and build an addition at Prueter and convert it to a JK-8 facility.
- C – Prueter has the space for an addition of this size.
- C – Eliminates 7/8 transition for Prueter and Falconridge Drive students.
- Q – If we get rid of the 7/8 school, could it turn into what's happening at W.T. Townshend, where they built the school as a JK-8, phased in the 7/8's over time, then had to take the 7/8's back out due to over enrolment?
- R – We don't have the same strong enrolment numbers in this review area as the Williamsburg area has. We know the development happening in this area and have given generous enrolment projections. The situation at W.T. Townshend was a last resort to remove the 7/8's, and we hope to get them back there or at least add a third area JK-8 school once enrolment settles.

### **Scenario 3**

- **New JK-8 facility (Falconridge), 7/8 addition to Elizabeth Ziegler, Lexington and Margaret Avenue closes**

### Questions/Comments

- C – 6 school scenario, with Falconridge numbers too high.
- C – Suddaby could feed to Courtland for 7/8.
- Q – Could this result in another Lester B. Pearson P.S. situation, with over enrolment there? What is the margin of error with the enrolment projections?
- R – It was always anticipated that we would need 2 facilities in the Lester B. Pearson P.S. area, but there was a delay in the development plans and in the meantime enrolment soared. We probably should have built a few years ago to relieve the pressure. In this review however, we know the development plans and the anticipated numbers have been factored into any projections we are showing today.
- Q – How big is the Falconridge site?
- R – It is 5 acres with 6.73 acres of adjacent parkland.
- C – Falconridge in this scenario has very high numbers, and would likely require portables at the outset. Enrolment at 800 is outside the Board's comfort level for school size (suggested school size for JK-8 is around 500-650). Staffing becomes an issue, traffic becomes an issue. Depending on the grade your child is in, they could spend much of their school career in a portable which may not be fair.
- Q – Why not build the school bigger right from the start when you look at projections?

R – We don't get funding for students that don't exist. The Ministry guideline is at least 80% occupancy at project approval. We add portables through the enrolment peaks, then we can remove them when enrolment stabilizes. (800 permanent enrolment is greater than Good Schools Standing Committee guidelines).

#### **Scenario 4**

- **New JK-6 facility (Lexington)**

#### Questions/Comments

C – 7 school scenario, and is basically status quo with boundary changes.

Q – Regarding the farmland up near RIM Park, when that area gets developed, where will the students go to school?

R – They have already been assigned to Lincoln Heights (JK-8); this was a result of the North East Waterloo Boundary Study that wrapped up last year.

- Mr. Smith asked the group for any general discussion regarding the scenario development stage.

Q – Can we get the Special Education numbers for each of the schools in the review area, this will be helpful when scenarios are detailed: home school model to fully congregated.

R – These numbers are included in a slide at the end of today's presentation.

C – Closing a school affects people, it could be necessary in some cases, but if we can avoid that with other scenarios, we should really look at it. I strongly support the 7/8 program, and when we talk about transitions, JK-8 schools experience transitions as well (from JK-6 feeder schools for example).

- Mr. Smith noted that it's important to keep both models on the table. We will be bringing scenarios that both keep and close Margaret Avenue to the Public Meeting on January 26, 2010. We could go status quo as well – we can certainly look at that as a recommendation too.

Q – Can we focus on the north end to balance the areas better, maybe split Area F?

R – Ms. Manske can re-work the areas as we fine tune.

Q – What is the cost to maintain a portable?

R – They are pretty expensive, relative to permanent space; they cost more to heat per square foot than permanent construction; the custodial maintenance issues are costly as well, and less convenient .

Q – What is the cost to build a new school?

R – Recently, the approximate cost to build a JK-6 of approximately 300 pupil places is 7.8M and for 475 pupil places is 9.5M. For a JK-8 around 11M, this is not including the cost of the property; which in this situation we already own.

Q – Is there a map that will show walking distances for the 7/8's for all the schools?

R – We can work one up for individual schools – it would be too congested to have them all overlap each other on one map.

- The ARC was then asked to go through the scenarios and decide which ones we will take forward and present at the Public Meeting on January 26, 2010.

**Scenario 1** gives neighbourhood JK-6's and does not close any schools. **(Take)**

**Status Quo** rebuilds Lexington with no boundary changes. **(Take)**

**Scenario 4** could either rebuild Lexington or build new on Falconridge Drive. **(Take with both build and minor boundary variations)**

**Scenario 2** builds JK-8 on Falconridge and converts Prueter to JK-8, Margaret Avenue closes, could also swap and build JK-8 at Lexington. **(Take)**

**Scenario 5** has Margaret Avenue convert to JK-8, build a JK-8 at Lexington and Prueter closes. The ARC decided to take Scenario 5 off the table at this point. **(Do not take)**

- Mr. Smith advised the ARC that scenarios can always be re-visited if needed, if public feedback results in a desire to see a scenario like this one, we can always bring it back.

**Scenario 6** builds 2 JK-6 facilities at Lexington and Falconridge, converts Bridgeport to JK-8, closes Margaret Avenue and redistributes students to Courtland and MacGregor. The ARC decided to take Scenario 6 off the table at this point. **(Do not take)**

**Scenario 7** builds new JK-8 facility on Falconridge Drive and closes Lexington. The ARC will take this scenario forward with modifications: re-jig the boundaries to move more students to Margaret Avenue from Falconridge (Kitchener students to Margaret Avenue and Waterloo students to Falconridge). **(Take)**

**Scenario 3** builds a new JK-8 on Falconridge Drive, converts Elizabeth Ziegler to JK-8, and closes both Lexington and Margaret Avenue. **(Take with modifications to the 7/8 boundary...do not involve Courtland P.S.)**

## **5. Public Meeting # 2, Purpose and Format**

- The scenarios will be posted to the website one week before the Public Meeting (January 19, 2009).
- Planning staff will give an overview of the Pupil Accommodation Review process first and a quick review of the scenarios.
- We will then host break out sessions for smaller group discussion of the scenarios.
- We will ask the school Principals to act as facilitators in the break out sessions and collect likes and dislikes of each as expressed.
- We will provide comment sheets for public feedback.

## **6. Roundtable**

Q – Can we get public feedback regarding school closures?

Q – How many scenarios do we get down to before we can have some costing done?

R – That depends on which scenarios are finalists, because there will be common costs throughout.

Q – Do we have a deadline for this process?

R – To get a decision by June of this year, we would like to try to take recommendations to the Board by mid April, then we have the 60 day waiting period before the final Trustee vote; however, the ARC can take the time it feels it needs.

- Mr. Smith noted that the Trustees are looking to the ARC to find a recommended solution or solutions for this review.
- The scenarios will be posted to the website one week before the Public Meeting (January 19, 2009).

## **7. Future Meeting Dates**

- The next ARC meeting is Tuesday, February 9, 2010 at 4:30 pm at Margaret Avenue P.S. in the library.
- Mr. Smith thanked all for coming, and the meeting adjourned at 6:30 pm.

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### **Future Meeting Dates:**

**Public Meeting #2 – Tuesday January 26, 2010, location TBD**

**Tuesday, February 9<sup>th</sup> 2010 @ Margaret Ave P.S. – 4:30 – 6:00 pm**

**Tuesday, February 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2010 @ Margaret Ave P.S. – 4:30 – 6:00 pm**