



**East Kitchener-Waterloo Elementary Schools Pupil
Accommodation Review
Minutes of Accommodation Review Committee Meeting # 11
April 13th, 2010 - 4:30 pm**

The eleventh meeting of the East Kitchener-Waterloo Accommodation Review Committee (ARC) was held at Margaret Avenue P.S., on April 13th, 2010.

Committee Members Present:

Mark Schinkel, Area Superintendent, Elke Whitmore, Principal of Bridgeport P.S., Frank Ewald, Principal of Lexington P.S., Leisa Kuntz, Principal of Prueter P.S., Brian Ward, Principal of Margaret Avenue P.S., Elizabeth Brown, Development & Technical Services Dept., City of Kitchener, Amy Stewart, parent – Margaret Avenue P.S., T. Gilhuly, parent – Lexington P.S., Peter Brown, parent – Lexington P.S., D.L. Brown, parent – Suddaby P.S., Carrie Dawson-Thomas, parent – Margaret Avenue P.S., Cindy Shirley, parent – Elizabeth Ziegler P.S., Kelly Miller, parent – Elizabeth Ziegler P.S., Michael Reinhardt, parent – Bridgeport P.S., Don Snider, parent – Prueter P.S., Tara Bridger, parent – Bridgeport P.S., 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:

Gregg Bereznick, Area Superintendent, Kelly Wilkinson, Principal of Elizabeth Ziegler P.S., Ian Gaudet, Controller, Facility Services, Janet Hale, Principal of King Edward P.S., Darlene Stubbs, Principal of Suddaby P.S., Carolyn Laurie, parent – King Edward P.S., Susie Fowler, parent – Suddaby P.S., D. Welsman, parent – King Edward P.S., Laura Dick, parent – Prueter 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 # 10 – Draft minutes approval

- Mr. Smith asked the group if there were any corrections/concerns with the minutes from the April 6th ARC meeting.
 - No concerns or corrections were raised.
 - Minutes from the April 6th meeting were approved.
 - Moved by: Peter Brown
 - Seconded by: Michael Reinhardt

Mr. Smith gave an update on the proposed change to the Capital Funding Model.

- The New Pupil Place (NPP) model for funding will no longer be used.
- It is anticipated that we will be moving towards a needs based model, where the Board will be required to make a business case to the Ministry of Education for what is needed.

- The Board makes their decisions but implementation will be based on money coming from the Ministry.
- The Board is 100% dependant on the Province for its Capital dollars.
- We will still do good planning, but may ultimately have less control over the timelines.
- Expectation is that this new Capital Funding Model may be a challenge when it comes to timing issues, etc. There may be more caveats around Board approval.
- Important to note that there are no firm details of the new funding model yet, however.

Q – If our recommendations are not adopted for awhile, can Bridgeport handle the increased enrolment until the new schools are built?

R – Yes, they should be okay with their recent addition. It may however be tight if we have to push things out an extra year or two beyond suggested timelines.

Q – Adjusting the Lexington boundary – which is something in our recommendations, is there a cost to implement that, or could that piece still go ahead regardless of the new funding model?

R – There would be no capital cost to implementing this boundary change (operating costs would be affected, i.e. transportation), however, this area is already transported to Bridgeport P.S.

Q – Should we prioritize or stage our recommendations? For example, can we have the re-build of Lexington stated first, and then the new school built on Falconridge Drive second, etc. It's important the Board knows we have listened to the community and this is what they want.

R – We will take a look at the recommendations in the Draft Report and how they have been written up to address that.

3. Draft Valuation Report and Recommendations

Ms. Manske confirmed that each member of the ARC received a copy of the Draft Report and noted the following:

- The Report is 23 pages in total not 24, this has been corrected.
- Check the spelling of ARC member names on Page 7 for accuracy.

A discussion ensued with regards to the table on Page 10 which illustrated the extent to which each of the final scenarios (1, 2 and 10) met the Review Objectives.

- The chart and text indicates Scenario 2 does the best job meeting the objectives, but we have chosen Scenario 1; sends a mixed message.
- The scenario we are recommending is a modified version, so the chart doesn't really match up with what we initially worked through.
- Regarding objective 4: *Support optimal use of facilities, capital and operating costs.* There is more than one consideration here – could meet capital costs but not operating, hard to mark that as a meets or doesn't meet.
- Could we put the chart in the appendix of the report? Transparency in our process is important.
- Perhaps we should take it out altogether, to avoid confusion. The chart was not meant as a comparator – we were to judge each scenario on its own; however that may not be the way the public sees it.
- It was agreed by the ARC to remove the chart from the Draft Report. All of the information and discussion around the scenarios and objectives has been reflected in past

meeting minutes, and is available for the public to access thereby maintaining transparency.

- It was also agreed by the ARC to change the text on Page 11 to reflect that decision, by stating “having considered the review objectives.....”.

Q – Can we state that we are linking the recommendations, and that they are not individual to be picked and chosen from separately?

R – Yes, we can present them as a package; however the Board will probably look at each recommendation individually. We can also specify that the ARC feels the two boundary changes do need to go forward.

- Ms. Manske led the group through each of the recommendations for discussion and input on wording, etc.

Recommendation # 1:

The WRDSB remove and replace the port-pack classroom structure and upgrade the demountable gymnasium at Lexington P.S. to create permanent spaces within the next 5 years; and that

The boundary for Lexington P.S. be adjusted to include a portion of students from the east side of University Avenue (including portions of Woolwich Street, Maverick Street, Lexington Crescent and Colt Street), as shown in Figure 2 below, effective September 2012.

Ms. Manske advised the ARC of the wording change (underlined) to clarify that the Lexington gym would not be replaced completely, but upgraded. The boundary change represents an increase of about 58 students to Lexington’s enrolment.

Q – The students will now have to cross University Avenue and that is a safety concern, can we note in our recommendation that the crossing will need to be done safely? Whether that means bussing them or having a crossing guard.

R – Some of the JK/SK students will be bussed under the new transportation distance policy, so we can include that concern in the text for all of the other students.

Recommendation # 2:

A new JK-6 school, of approximately 325 pupil place capacity, be constructed on the vacant WRDSB site located at 410 Falconridge Drive, Kitchener to open September 2014; and that

The boundary for the new school be severed from the Bridgeport P.S. boundary, to include the area north of Sunbridge Crescent and Woolwich Street, identified in Figure 3 below; and that

The school located at 410 Falconridge Drive, Kitchener be designed in a manner that would allow for future expansion to accommodate additional students as well as the facilities for grades 7 and 8.

- Ms. Manske noted the reduction in size of the new school to 325 from the original number (400) in Scenario 1.

Q – The addition of the 7/8's, when will that happen?

R – There is no date for that yet, it will depend on a possible 7/8 accommodation review.

C – Concern that there is no 7/8 option in the North, and we have not really solved that, the public wants it so maybe we should build Falconridge as a JK-8 from the start.

R – The biggest concern for the Lexington community was a neighbourhood school, and we are addressing that. There was also very strong support for Margaret Avenue throughout the public meetings. By building the school as JK-6 with the option to add the 7/8 program, it leaves more options open. If we build a JK-8 from the start, we would be removing approximately 50% of Margaret Avenue's student population, effectively closing it down as the remaining enrolment cannot sustain a viable 7/8 program.

C – The review area covers both the North and South, and our job is to do the best thing for all students. We can't radically affect students in the South for the benefit of students in the North. Leaving our options open as discussed, seems to make the most sense.

C – If a 7/8 accommodation review is done next year, we should be able to solve the issue before Falconridge is built as proposed in 2014.

R – If we specify that now in our Report, we have to say we will close Margaret Avenue, and there has not been consensus from the ARC that we want that to happen.

- Mr. Smith added that the 7/8 issue does need to be addressed by the Board, and until that happens it will be difficult to find a solution for the South.

Q – Can we guarantee that the 7/8 program will be added to Falconridge in the future?

R – With direction from the Board and a policy in place (which is currently being worked on), it lets us position ourselves for JK-8 in the North. We are not ready for that at this point, however.

Q – Will they look at other facilities that have space currently, like Bridgeport P.S.?

R – Yes, but geography will come into it. We can design the Falconridge site initially for JK-8 which may be a cost savings in the long-term.

Q – Can we add a timeline to our recommendation to complete further study before the new school build begins?

R – Yes.

C – Full development for the Falconridge area is still a few years away, and we don't know exactly what will happen with the numbers. Keeping our options open at this time makes sense. Our goal is to minimize the number of changes and transitions that will happen over time.

Recommendation # 3:

For the short-term, the congregated senior elementary (grades 7/8) program remains at Margaret Avenue Public School; and that

The WRDSB prioritizes the undertaking of an accommodation review of the senior elementary school facilities in the vicinity of the East K-W Review Area in order to address the declining enrolment, program delivery and the inconsistent senior elementary school feeds at King Edward and Suddaby Public Schools; and that

The boundary for Margaret Avenue P.S. be adjusted to exclude Elizabeth Ziegler P.S. as a feeder school, as identified in Figure 4 below, and that

The boundary change be phased over a two year period, effective September 2011, grade 7 students in the affected area would attend MacGregor P.S. and grade 8 students in the affected area would attend Margaret Avenue P.S. for 2011/2012 school year; effective September 2012, all grade 7 and 8 students from the affected area would attend MacGregor P.S.

C – Can we add that there has been interest expressed for JK-8 in both areas? (North and South). Also that there is a community desire for the Board to make a decision regarding the 7/8 issue.

C – In a potential 7/8 accommodation review, would you not need representation from the North on behalf of the future 7/8's at Falconridge?

R – That is a good question, the feeder schools would not normally be included in a 7/8 review, because an accommodation review implies that schools involved could be closed. Also the potential size of the ARC would be an issue.

C – As an ARC we are not recommending a JK-8 model over a 7/8 model, however some of the verbiage in the Draft Report implies that. Can we have some adjustments made in that regard?

R – Yes, we will address that.

Mr. Smith reiterated that an administrative review needs to take place over the 7/8 issue, by both senior administration and the Board.

- An accommodation review for 7/8 may not happen in 2010, but perhaps we can ask for priority and for it to happen before 2014.

Q – If a 7/8 review goes forward and the feeder schools are not involved, can the ARC make decisions that would affect a feeder school, i.e. adding a 7/8 program to a JK-6 facility?

R – Yes, as long as it's not a closure, those types of decisions can be made. We would ensure all the feeder schools receive the necessary communication regarding public consultation, even if they aren't on the ARC.

Recommendation # 4:

The WRDSB make every effort to smooth the transition for students, families and staff at the schools that are seeing significant change, be it new students, fewer students, new programs or facility changes.

- The ARC agreed with the wording and intent of recommendation # 4.

4. Public Meeting # 4

- Public Meeting # 4 will take place on Thursday, April 15, 2010 from 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. at Elizabeth Zielger P.S.; it will be an Open House format.
- The ARC's Draft Valuation Report and Recommendations will be on display for review and comment by the general public.

5. Roundtable

Q – Referring to Appendix A, and the Capital Construction Costs it states: Porta-pack demolition and replacement (10 regular classrooms and 3 JK/SK rooms). Will 3 rooms for JK/SK be enough?

R – With the implementation of the Early Learning Program (ELP) the JK classes will be loaded differently. Currently the cap is 20 students, with ELP that will change to 26. So instead of loading 4 classrooms with 20 students, we will load 3 classrooms with 26 students. We don't know at this point if that 26 will be a hard cap or a Board wide average. We are still waiting for that confirmation.

- Ms. Manske also noted that future enrolment at Lexington P.S. will decrease due to the Sandowne P.S. boundary change.

Q – How does the Board decide an Accommodation Review needs to be undertaken?

R – The Planning Department brings accommodation issues to the Board each year. The Board approves the need for boundary studies and reviews, and then instructs Planning to carry them out.

Q – What happens next with the process?

R – The Draft Valuation Report and Recommendations will be posted to the Board's website (once the ARC has reviewed the changes discussed tonight) Wednesday, April 14, 2010.

- Feedback will be garnered from the Public Meeting on Thursday, April 15, 2010 at Elizabeth Ziegler P.S.
 - The Report is submitted to Senior Administration (Director Fabi) and made available to Trustees and the public.
 - Senior Administration then write their own Report (which hopefully mirrors the ARC's Report, if this process has been thorough).
 - The Board has 60 days of deliberation time before a final decision.
- Mr. Smith noted that the Board could ask the ARC to revisit some items; they could pull out some recommendations, or make changes of their own.

6. Future Meeting Dates

- The next ARC meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 20, 2010 at Margaret Avenue P.S. from 4:30 – 6:00 p.m.
- Mr. Smith thanked all for coming, and for their hard work and dedication throughout the review process.
- The meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Future Meeting Dates:

Public Meeting # 4 – Thursday April 15, 2010 @ Elizabeth Ziegler P.S. – 7:00 – 9:00 pm
Tuesday April 20, 2010 @ Margaret Avenue P.S. – 4:30 – 6:00 pm