



**Breslau/Stanley Park Elementary Schools Pupil Accommodation
Review
Minutes of Accommodation Review Committee Meeting # 2
February 24th, 2010 – 6:00 pm**

The second meeting of the Breslau/Stanley Park Accommodation Review Committee (ARC) was held at Stanley Park P.S. on February 24th, 2010.

Committee Members Present:

William Grobe, Principal of Breslau P.S., Carolyn Griffiths, Principal of Crestview P.S., Pauline Shiry, Principal of Mackenzie King P.S., Rob MacQueen, Principal of Stanley Park P.S., Libby Martz, Vice Principal of Lackner Woods, Doug Hudson, parent – Breslau P.S., Nancy Allan Catton, parent – Breslau P.S., Anessa Selcage, parent – Franklin P.S., Janice Scherer, parent – Franklin P.S., Laurie Tremble, parent – Lackner Woods P.S., T. Ritchie, parent – Lackner Woods P.S., Tracy Jasmins, parent – Mackenzie King P.S., Sean Mahoney, parent – Mackenzie King P.S., Mark Richardson, parent – Stanley Park P.S., Troy Starr, parent – Smithson P.S., Edie Paul, parent – Smithson P.S., Lesley Kraehling, parent – Crestview P.S., Tania Hunter, parent – Crestview 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:

Jane Pritchard, Principal of Franklin P.S., Trish Starodub, Principal of Smithson P.S., Gregg Bereznick, Area Superintendent, John Scarfone, Township of Woolwich Rep., Ron Dallan, Facility Services, Brian Bateman, City of Kitchener.

1. Welcome/Introductions

Mr. Smith, Manager of Planning opened the meeting at 6:00 pm and had the committee members introduce themselves.

- Ms. Hingley canvassed the ARC members as they arrived at the meeting as to how they would like their name to appear in the minutes which will be posted on the Board website for public access.
 - The ARC members provided their preference.

2. ARC Meeting # 1 – Draft Minutes Approval

- Mr. Smith asked the group if there were any corrections/concerns with the minutes from the February 11th ARC meeting.
 - Other than 2 small typos in the minutes which will be corrected before the minutes are posted to the website, no concerns or corrections were raised.
 - Minutes from the February 11th meeting were approved.
 - Mover: Mark Richardson
 - Seconded: Doug Hudson

- Mr. Smith asked the committee members who would be interested in taking a tour of the schools in the review area. There was a good response, and a date was put forth for consideration:
 - Saturday, March 27, 2010. *It was felt that holding the tour on a Saturday was the most appropriate in order to view all of the schools at once and in the daylight. It was also suggested that the ARC use one of the future meeting dates to view the Stanley Park facility.*
 - Mr. Smith reiterated that school administrators were not required to attend or to be at their schools for this tour.
 - By a show of hands, Saturday March 27, 2010 at 9:00 am was selected for the tour, starting location to be determined.
 - For those ARC members that expressed a conflict with the March 27th date, Planning will work on setting an alternate tour date.

3. Setting Review Objectives

- Mr. Hercanuck put forth some sample Issues and Opportunities to begin the discussion on the setting of review objectives:
- **Sample Issues:**
 - too many portables at Breslau P.S.
 - inconsistent feeds to the senior 7/8 program (Lackner Woods and Franklin feed to both Sunnyside and Stanley Park)
 - inconsistent elementary program models (JK-8, JK-6 feeding a senior 7/8 program)
 - smaller school organizations within the review area
- **Sample Opportunities:**
 - more permanent space to accommodate current and future students
 - JK-8 option (Breslau P.S. is the only JK-8 in this review area)
 - consistent feeds for the senior 7/8 program

Mr. Hercanuck asked the ARC for any issues/opportunities they would like to discuss.

C – With the current overcrowding at Lackner Woods, it brings up issues like gym time, bathrooms, playground size, which was cut down to accommodate the portables, room at the bus bay, etc. There will also be an impact with the implementation of all day learning for kindergarten (Early Learning Program).

- Two thirds of the school (about 400 of the almost 600 total) is currently bussed and with the change to the transportation eligibility policy being approved by the Board of Trustees on February 22, 2010, this number will increase.
- Perhaps an opportunity is to make Lackner Woods a JK-8 facility.

Mr. Smith noted that the built capacity for Lackner Woods is around 375, so the additional students are accommodated in portables currently. He also noted that Lackner Woods P.S. is involved in the Grand River South/Sunnyside ARC as well which is underway, and it is most

likely that accommodation solutions to address Lackner Woods P.S. will come out of that ARC's recommendations.

Mr. Smith asked the ARC if there is a JK-8 issue, is there a preference with the JK-8 model versus the JK-6 feeding a senior 7/8 program?

Q – It could be an issue for Breslau P.S., concerns with the younger students perhaps having to make a move – where will they go?

R – That would be part of the transition piece, which we will get to down the road.

C – Personally like the senior 7/8 program, good preparation for high school.

C – In a JK-8 school, nice to have the older siblings walking the younger ones.

Q – How is a JK-8 school run?

R – Mr. Grobe commented on his JK-8 school. He noted that Breslau P.S. has a smaller population of 7/8's, that they are on a rotary schedule and have lockers like the senior schools. He advised that the 7/8's are role models/helpers for the younger students.

- He feels that there are pros and cons; the 7/8's from a composite school are generally more naïve than their counter parts in a senior 7/8 school.

R – Mr. MacQueen commented on his 7/8 school - Stanley Park. He agrees that in a JK-8 school staff have years to get to know the students. In a 7/8 school, you take half a year to transition the students in and half a year to transition them out to high school. However, with the large boundary draw for the senior model there are more activities, sports teams are stronger and specialized classes are offered. He did contend that for students with special needs, the JK-8 model is a big plus. Also, with 400 students all hitting puberty at the same time, tends to make them less innocent/naïve.

Mr. Smith noted that both program models do a good job; it's just a different focus. Planning has asked senior administration for a policy going forward with regards to program model, especially since we haven't built a 7/8 school since 1977 and JK-8 is seen as a continuum of the curriculum.

- He noted that transitions are often discussed. A JK-6 student moving into a JK-8 is still making a transition – but into established turf. JK-6's moving to a senior 7/8 school are all transitioning at the same time, with a strong feeling that it is their school.
- High school transitions are much smoother and friendlier now under both models. That was one of the original reasons for “middle” schools.

Q – Have studies been done on which model is better for our kids?

R – There have been some background studies done, but more so in the United States and their middle schools could have as many 2,000 students and the curriculum is different.

- We will check with our Learning Assessment staff to see if they have done any reports on grade 9 student outcomes to check for advantages/disadvantages, based on the grade 8 program the students have come from.

C – On a personal note, I would prefer not to send my children to a JK-8 school for their 7/8 years.

R – It is a personal issue. The Waterloo Catholic DSB operates JK-8 schools exclusively, but this can be a challenge for the smaller school organizations with lower enrolments. The Good Schools Standing Committee Report recommends a minimum number of classes per grade for optimal program delivery. This report is in your ARC binders, and is also available on our Board website at: www.wrdsb.ca.

Q – Regarding enrolment projections, do you look at 5 years down the road and potential impacts?

R – Yes, and we will show you how we do the projections at a future meeting when we begin scenario development. All projections going forward will include the Early Learning Program (ELP) or all day learning for kindergarten, because this may reduce capacity at the schools.

Mr. Hercanuck reiterated that the review objectives are a working document, and will be draft for some time. Mr. Smith advised that our goal would be to have perhaps 4 or 5 key objectives.

- Enrolment pressure over time needs to be addressed, as well as the schools experiencing lower enrolments.

C – If the boundary was shifted at Breslau P.S. and the grade 7/8 Kitchener students were removed from the school – the 7/8 program would be smaller.

R – The current growth in the Breslau area and surrounding subdivisions is in the younger grades, especially JK/SK.

C – On a personal note, would hate to see the older kid's peers not at Breslau P.S. in the future.

Q – Will we have access to the demographic growth in Breslau, i.e. Catholic Board and Public Board?

R – Yes, but keep in mind, there are other schools in this review; it's not just a Breslau P.S. issue.

- As a bit of history, Breslau P.S. was experiencing low enrolment. Then in 1991, new development in the Misty Court area opened up and the population grew rapidly, so the Board adjusted the boundary to bus students from Kitchener to Breslau.
- It is a concern/issue that 70% of Breslau P.S. and 65% of Lackner Woods's students are bussed in.

Q – For the Lackner Woods students going on to either Sunnyside or Stanley Park for 7/8 – how were the boundaries decided?

R – It was historical, depended on where you lived and where we had the space. The 7/8 French Immersion program is only at Stanley Park, however.

Q – Are most of the Lackner Woods students bussed to the senior schools?

R – A lot of them are not – they fall under the 3.5 km walk distance for 7/8. However, with the revised transportation eligibility policy, which reduces 7/8 walk distances to 1.6 km for September 2010 - this will change.

Q – Could a possible scenario be seeing a portion of Breslau P.S. students leave, have a JK-6 feed the JK-8 at Breslau P.S. – have 2 JK-8's in the area?

R – We can look at that during scenario development including the demographic pieces. Then we can see what resonates with the public at our next Public Meeting.

Q – What about a JK-8 at Lackner Woods instead of bussing them out to Sunnyside and Stanley Park?

R – We can look at that. There is a piece of the Lackner Woods neighbourhood that is currently bussed to Sheppard (JK-6).

C – Bussed students aside, not many walk to Lackner Woods P.S.; they are driven to avoid crossing Lackner Blvd., and to avoid the construction areas.

R – The Municipality does provide crossing guards if there are the numbers to support one. Once they install lights however, the guards are generally removed, as was the case here.

C – There is societal pressure to drive our kids besides the crossing issues – we feel safer driving them, especially when both parents work and are gone during the day.

R – True, that is the perception; however, our streets are safer today than in the past. In new neighbourhoods until you get to know the community, you might feel safer driving them. The more students and parents that are on the streets though, the safer it is for our children. That is why we are promoting initiatives like the walking school bus.

Q – Is it in the scope of the ARC to propose solutions around walking routes?

R – Yes, we can look at some criteria to address that.

Mr. Hercanuck brought forth some sample objectives that Planning staff had put together for the ARC to review and discuss:

- Establish mid to long-term boundaries and viability of all schools involved in the study area.
 - we define long-term as 1 generation through JK-8 (10 years)
- Maintain/develop equitable facilities – school, site and condition that are financially feasible.
 - make sure there is appropriate space at each facility.
- Support optimal use of facilities, capital and operating resources.
 - be fiscally responsible
 - make the best use of Ministry/Board dollars
- Support equitable program opportunities.
 - between schools and between areas, i.e. French Immersion
- Address facility issues at existing schools.
 - for example: accessibility, washrooms, gyms
- Address community schools – transportation that is within reasonable travel time, distance and cost (no late activity busing)
 - large boundaries for the 7/8 schools, are transported in, challenge for extra curricular activities
- That facilities support programs by providing safe and secure environments for students and staff.
- Review current elementary schools organization.
 - JK-6 feeding a senior 7/8 program or JK-8 model with JK-6 feeders
- To have regard for the Good Schools Standing Committee guidelines on school size and ensure well-balanced student populations.
 - report in ARC binders and on Board website
- To take into consideration distribution and accessibility of Special Education and English as a Second Language (ESL) programs.
- Address student transitions where changes are proposed.
 - for example: grandparenting out or phasing in

4. School Information Profiles

Mr. Hercanuck noted that the ARC may customize the Board's generic School Information Profiles. For example, another ARC had agreed to remove a section of the profiles pertaining to the school EQAO results.

The School Information Profile must include the four considerations:

1. Value to the Student
2. Value to the Board
3. Value to the Community
4. Value to the Local Economy

Q – Will the profiles be posted on the Board's website?

R – Yes, once we have received and input all of the information. The generic (blank) profile is there now, there is also a copy of the generic profile in your binders.

Q – When are the completed profiles due?

R – We hope to have all of the information input before the next Public Meeting. Facility Services needs to have a consultant do an audit on each of the schools and this does take time.

5. Roundtable

Q – Will we be getting a new floor plan for Franklin P.S. showing the new addition for our binders?

R – Yes, we will provide one as soon as Facility Services updates their files.

Q – Will you be trimming up the objectives we discussed tonight?

R – Yes, we can probably merge some. The issues discussed tonight were well thought out and we will bring a revised list back to you for the next meeting.

Q – Our role may be to look at changing boundaries – would it not be easy for Planning staff to just draw the lines the best way they see fit with all the knowledge/background they have, and then just let us add some curves?

R – This is a transparent public consultation process – we are not to come up with the recommended solution, that is the role of the ARC. Staff are required to bring forward one scenario, which can be used as a jumping off point.

- Scenario development is bound to bring up emotional issues.
- We need to establish the objectives first before any scenario development to see where we want to go. The objectives are brought to the public for their input as well. We will use the objectives to measure the success of the scenarios.

Q – Is something achievable our goal, for example, say we want to get rid of all portables because they are unsightly?

R – Solutions may seem easy to develop, but are usually not so easy to implement. For example, it may look easy to take the Kitchener students out of Breslau P.S. to ease the enrolment pressure. If we did that though, we would collapse their intermediate program. The solution needs to make sense to the community long-term.

- Planning staff cannot drive those solutions – the ARC will work on these, hopefully by consensus.

C – We need to be careful with our decisions – we will be impacting families. We are all proud of our schools, our children are happy and they feel special. People are moving into the neighbourhood just to attend the school. It's scary to think that it could change.

R – We measure success as - a school with good administration, good teachers and supportive parents. It will be scary if we don't do anything. That is why the objectives need to be in place first, to see where we have to go. We have the numbers – what are the variables?

C – We want what's best for our children, no portables, walk in community option.

R – The ARC needs to come up with ideas, we cannot direct the process. The public will appreciate the work you put into it.

Q – Can we email Planning some objective ideas?

R – Yes, please email either Mr. Hercanuck or Ms. Hingley with your ideas.

Q – Notre Dame Catholic School is closing – will there be an impact on Smithson's enrolment?

R – We don't anticipate much impact, perhaps some localized registration. We don't typically see any flux in enrolment in a case like this. Parents who have chosen a Catholic education for their children don't normally change away from that.

- That being said, we can check the JK registration numbers at Smithson.

Q – What is the date for Public Meeting # 2?

R – No firm date has been set (the tentative schedule had April 22nd as a possibility), but this will depend on where we are at regarding scenario development. We would like to take some preliminary scenarios to the public at that meeting.

Q – Would like to see the School Information Profiles before the next Public Meeting, even if they have not been completely finished.

R – We can work on that for you.

6. Future Meeting Dates

- The next meeting will take place on Wednesday, March 10, 2010 from 6:00 – 7:30 pm at Stanley Park P.S. in the library.
- The school tour will take place on Saturday, March 27 at 9:00 am. The starting location is to be determined. *An alternate date will be made to accommodate those unable to attend the March 27th date.*

Future Meeting Dates:

Wednesday, March 10th, from 6:00 – 7:30 pm @ Stanley Park P.S.

Wednesday, March 24th, from 6:00 – 7:30 pm @ Stanley Park P.S.

School Tour – Saturday, March 27th at 9:00 am

Wednesday, April 7th, from 6:00 – 7:30 pm @ Stanley Park P.S.