



Grand River South/Sunnyside Pupil Accommodation Review
Minutes of Public Meeting # 2
May 26, 2010
Sunnyside P.S. – 7:00 p.m.

The second Public Meeting of the Grand River South/Sunnyside Elementary Schools Pupil Accommodation Review was held at Sunnyside P.S. on May 26, 2010.

1. Welcome/Introductions

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

Trustee Ted Martin, Gregg Bereznick, Area Superintendent, Heather Preddie, Principal of Rockway P.S., Dayle Buller-Power, Principal of Lackner Woods P.S., Libby Martz, Vice Principal of Lackner Woods P.S., Darren Batt, Vice Principal of Franklin P.S., Nathan Hercanuck, Senior Planner, Lauren Manske, Planner and Mary Hingley, Recording Secretary.

Jane McVeigh, Principal of Sheppard P.S., Julie Lobsinger, Principal of Wilson Avenue P.S., Maria Lotimer, Principal of Howard Robertson P.S., Al Watt, Vice Principal of Wilson Avenue P.S. and Andrea Michelutti, Vice Principal of Howard Robertson P.S. have sent their regrets.

Thank you to Jeff Lovell, Principal of Sunnyside P.S., and Rebecca Jutzi, the Vice Principal and our hosts here this evening.

Approximately 28 members of the public were also in attendance.

Mr. Smith gave a brief overview of the Pupil Accommodation Review process and what it means for the seven schools in the Grand River South/Sunnyside review area:

- The Board initiated an Accommodation Review for this area last fall.
- Principals and school community representatives, along with municipal representation, a broader community participant and Board staff create a working group described formally as the Accommodation Review Committee (ARC).
- The task of the ARC is to look at the school issues in the area in detail and come up with suggestions/solutions to consider as the ARC moves towards a final recommendation (or series of recommendations) for the Board to consider and possibly implement. These suggestions are referred to as “scenarios”.
- Tonight is the second Public Meeting for the Grand River South/Sunnyside Accommodation Review, and the intent is to get some of your thoughts/feedback on initial scenarios the ARC has been looking at for the elementary schools in the review area.

- These are early days in the review process, so the idea for tonight is to look at a range of options/scenarios, discuss them, reject some and keep or modify the ones that have merit. There will be two scenarios put forth tonight for your consideration.
- What we would like to know is: do any of the scenarios or parts of them make enough sense that we should look at them in more detail, such as costing.
- You may see for the first time this evening a suggested change to your child's home school, or program. Please don't panic. It is important to note that at this point nothing has been decided, we are looking for your thoughts, what you like, what you think may have been missed. Does the overall picture make sense?
- Things like timing and how we would implement the suggested changes also have not been decided at this point.
- The Ministry of Education has announced that the New Pupil Place (NPP) model for funding will no longer be used. That is where we get money to build new schools, additions and major renovations.
- 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.
- Important to note that there are no firm details of the new funding model yet, we may not see that for a year or so.
- So, whatever recommendations the ARC does come up with, timing may be difficult to confirm.

Mr. Smith added that we can still do good planning, but implementation may be delayed a year or two. It may be easier to put up with temporary overcrowding when we know a plan/solution is in place.

Mr. Hercanuck then led the group through tonight's presentation to preview the scenarios:

- link for the Grand River South/Sunnyside Public Meeting # 2 presentation:

<http://www.wrdsb.ca/sites/www.wrdsb.ca/files/26May.10publicmtg.presentation.pdf>

2. Brief Review – Accommodation Review Process – Issues

- Each year Board Planning Staff reviews the enrolment and accommodation situation in the Board to see if there are any areas where there are enrolment and capacity issues within their facilities.
- 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.

- Both are public processes involving extensive community consultation, however there are differences, the largest being that under an Accommodation Review there exists the possibility of school closure/consolidation.
- The Grand River South/Sunnyside Accommodation Review area is composed of the boundary for Sunnyside P.S. which operates the senior 7/8 program, and the schools that feed to them. They include Lackner Woods, Sheppard, Franklin, Howard Robertson, Wilson Avenue and Rockway public schools.
- Localized residential development has been placing pressure on the Lackner Woods P.S. facility to the point where it is currently operating with 8 portables (and more development is on the way).
- Enrolment at Lackner Woods P.S. from new development had reached a point where the Board had to implement an administrative boundary change to shift some of the ongoing and future development to Sheppard P.S., which would act as a holding school until a long-term accommodation solution could be developed. Which is the reason we are engaging in this process.
- The current and future development is concentrated in the Fairway Road and Old Zeller Drive area. As a contrast to the newer areas, the older more established neighbourhoods around Wilson Avenue, Franklin and Howard Robertson schools don't see a high density of students on a per housing unit basis, but the enrolments are more stable from year to year.
- The Accommodation Review Committee is comprised of:
 - two parents from each school community in the review area
 - the principal from each school in the review area
 - the school area instructional superintendent
 - WRDSB Planning staff who will act as a resource to the ARC
 - Municipal staff, in this case the City of Kitchener who will bring a perspective on local development and other municipal issues
 - up to two representatives from local community organizations
 - one other Board representative, in this case the Manager of Capital Projects, who brings a perspective on the condition of our facilities

3. Draft Review Objectives

- One of the first tasks of the ARC is to develop Review Objectives.
- The objectives are the stated goals of the Accommodation Review, or what the eventual solution/option hopes to achieve. These objectives will be used as the decision screen by which the scenarios are evaluated.
- The Draft Objectives – listed below have been brought forward to tonight's meeting for broader public comment:
 - *Provide current and future students in the review area with equitable program opportunities to ensure their success by:*
 - *Having regard for the Good Schools Standing Committee guiding principles on school size*
 - *Reviewing elementary school organizations (i.e. JK-6, 7-8, JK-8)*
 - *Recognizing the distribution of Special Education, French Immersion and English as a Second Language programs*

- *Support the optimal use of facilities, capital and operating resources through the consideration of:*
 - *School location*
 - *Recognize the relationship/identity of community to local elementary school*
 - *Minimize transportation costs in the long-term by maximizing the number of students within walking distance of a school*
 - *Facility amenities and condition*
 - *Priorities for physical accessibility of facilities by the Accessibility Committee*
 - *Site*
 - *Safety and security*
- *Develop a solution that is long-term (approximately 10 years) by taking into consideration:*
 - *Consistency of feeds to senior elementary and secondary school programs*
 - *Future development plans and demographic shifts*
- *Consider student transitions*

4. Scenarios

Mr. Hercanuck outlined the scenarios for discussion this evening:

Status Quo: (current situation)

- New residential development in the area around Lackner Woods P.S. continues to put pressure on the facility. Enrolment is projected to exceed school size guidelines of the Good Schools Standing Committee.
- Sheppard P.S. also experiences enrolment pressure as it is a holding school for new residential development in the Fairway Road/Old Zeller Drive area. Enrolment is projected to exceed school size guidelines for a JK-6 facility.
- Sunnyside P.S. also experiences some enrolment pressure as the congregated 7/8 school for the entire review area. Enrolment exceeds school size guidelines of the Good Schools Standing Committee.
- Lackner Woods P.S. and Franklin P.S. continue to feed both Stanley Park and Sunnyside schools for the 7/8 program.

Comments:

- With the existing boundaries, Franklin and Wilson Avenue public schools remain relatively stable and well matched to the capacity of their buildings.
- Sheppard P.S. is acting as the holding school for the area of new development and is projected to exceed its built capacity by 2015.
- Howard Robertson P.S. remains a healthy number although slightly underutilized.
- Sunnyside P.S. as the senior facility for the area is projected to be quite over capacity as younger students from the newer development move into higher grades over time.
- As mentioned earlier, Franklin and Lackner Woods public schools have split feeds to 2 senior elementary schools, smaller portions of their JK-6 boundary feed Stanley Park P.S. while the rest of their boundary is designated to Sunnyside P.S.

- Rockway and Sheppard public schools also have portions of their boundary split between Sunnyside and Courtland's senior 7/8 program.
- As development proceeds in the Lackner Woods P.S. catchment, enrolment is projected to get up to around 700 students (almost twice the built capacity).

Mr. Hercanuck explained the maps and charts in the presentation.

- To simplify looking at the enrolment projections we have chosen three points in time: 2010, 2015 and 2019. We have done projections for each year but to avoid having a very large chart we've chosen these 3 years.
 - There will be no changes actually made in September 2010, so depending on the option chosen we are looking at implementation somewhere between 2011 and 2014.
- For the 2010 time period we have 2 enrolments: Total and FTE (full time equivalent).
- FTE counts the kindergartens as half a student – as they are only at school half time. The Provincial government has begun phasing in all day learning for 4 and 5 year olds (The Early Learning Kindergarten Program – ELKP). By 2015 every school board in the province is mandated to have the program instituted at all of its facilities, so that's why the 2015 and 2019 columns only look at Total students.
- The percentage column is a calculation describing how full a facility is (the FTE or Total enrolment divided by the Ministry of Education rated capacity of the facility). Some of the scenarios you will see tonight will show a percentage capacity significantly over 100%, indicating the relative need for additional accommodation/facility. The SR column indicates the enrolment of the senior elementary (7/8) program if applicable.

Scenario 4:

- Additional JK-8 accommodation constructed in the Lackner Blvd/Fairway Road area. The new school receives Areas Y and Z2 from Sheppard P.S. and Areas Q2, X2, and X4 from Lackner Woods P.S.
- Lackner Woods P.S. receives Areas Z3 and Z4 from Sheppard P.S.
- Howard Robertson P.S. receives Area X3 from Lackner Woods P.S.
- The new JK-8 facility provides the senior 7/8 program for its own catchment as well as Lackner Woods P.S.
- Sunnyside P.S. remains open but gives up Areas T, Q1, Q2, X2, X4, Y, Z2, Z3 and Z4 to the new school for the 7/8 program.

Comments:

- Sunnyside P.S. would remain the senior elementary school for Howard Robertson, Wilson Avenue, Franklin and portions of Rockway and Sheppard.
- Under this scenario, Sunnyside P.S. also receives Areas P and T from Stanley Park P.S. eliminating the split feeds from Franklin and Lackner Woods schools. However, Rockway and Sheppard are still split between Sunnyside and Courtland for 7/8.
- The numbers for Lackner Woods P.S. are better matched to its capacity in the long-term experiencing a peak in the mid-term.
- Sheppard P.S. enrolment declines significantly with the removal of the bussed area from Lackner Woods P.S. catchment.

- Howard Robertson P.S. sees stronger numbers as it receives a portion of the Lackner Woods P.S. boundary.
- The new school would be a good size for a JK-8 facility/program.

Scenario 5:

- Additional JK-8 accommodation constructed in the Morrison Road area. The new school receives Area Y and Area Z2 from Sheppard P.S. and Area AB from Franklin P.S.
- Lackner Woods P.S. receives Area Z1 from Sheppard P.S.
- Howard Robertson P.S. receives Area X1 from Lackner Woods P.S.
- The new JK-8 provides the senior 7/8 program for its own catchment as well as Howard Robertson P.S.
- Sunnyside P.S. continues to provide the senior 7/8 program for Wilson Avenue, Franklin, Lackner Woods and portions of Rockway and Sheppard public schools. Also receives Areas P and T from Stanley Park P.S. eliminating the split feeds from Franklin and Lackner Woods schools.

Comments:

- Under this scenario the enrolment at Lackner Woods P.S. gets a bit high for a JK-6 facility and would require a significant addition.
- Franklin P.S. would see a reduction in enrolment from the previous scenario with the loss of the Chicopee area to the new school.
- Sheppard P.S. no longer acting as the holding school, drops well below capacity.
- Howard Robertson would see an increase in enrolment larger than the previous scenario as it receives a larger boundary piece from Lackner Woods P.S.
- Sunnyside P.S. would remain with solid numbers for a senior 7/8 program.

Mr. Hercanuck noted that based on the Good Schools Standing Committee's report on guiding principles for Elementary school size, we use the following guideline for ideal school size (enrolment only, not school capacity).

- JK-6 school: 350 – 500 students
- JK-8 school: 500 – 600 students
- 7/8 school: 350 – 450 students

Scenarios 4 and 5 have been brought forward for public feedback this evening. It was noted that three other Scenarios; 1, 2, and 3 did not in the opinion of the ARC sufficiently address the Review Objectives, and have been put aside for now.

C – I am here tonight representing the Victoria Street/Bancroft Street, Waterloo, area (Area X1/X3 in the scenarios) and I want to formally present a petition with 66 signatures to the Board on behalf of other parents/residents in the neighbourhood. We oppose having our area being moved to Howard Robertson P.S. from the Lackner Woods P.S. boundary.

Mr. Smith indicated that the petition will be entered as meeting feedback and reiterated that no decisions have been made yet regarding the scenarios. He asked the group at large to look at the

bigger picture around any changes and determine if the long-term solutions proposed make sense. We are looking for your thoughts and input at this point in the process.

C – The petition is our input.

Q – If the goal is to look towards the future, and you have asked us to do that, what about our concerns that the level of success at one school is not the same as another. Are the schools ranked provincially? Will students get the same program?

R – Mr. Bereznick, Area Superintendent of Instruction responded to the question.

- The Ministry of Education curriculum by grade is the same for all schools, and the instructional methods are unified. Each school is given the resources to succeed and if a school requires additional assistance that is identified and implemented by the Board.
- In supporting 34 schools, my goal is for each school to achieve to its best ability and for the success of each child as a learner.
- Schools are not ranked. The EQAO test results for grades 3, 6 and 10 are made public and can be accessed on the EQAO website.
- The concept of low performing is unacceptable, that is why resources are put in place to help those schools succeed. To compare only one piece of data like EQAO results is not really fair to the teachers or students. Some schools experience a high turnover of students; some need more resources than others.

C – Howard Robertson P.S. doesn't perform; it's either the students or teachers.

R – That school has been identified by the Ministry to receive additional support and is getting that.

Q – How many years has the EQAO testing been done?

R – About 10 years.

Q – How are Howard Robertson P.S. results trending year over year?

R – Trustee Ted Martin asked to respond to the question.

- Looking at the results on a year to year basis can be dangerous. The school may show at the top of the list for grade 6, but your child may have achieved better results in grade 3. You have to look at improvement over time, from JK right through to grade 6. For instance, Howard Robertson P.S. may appear to be under performing at grade 3 but may have a better success rate by grade 6, because of extra support. That's actually better than staying the same because there was no marked improvement. Be careful how you view EQAO results.

Q – We want to see where our school is at for grade 6 relative to other schools. That is the only method for us to look at as parents.

R – Mr. Martin reiterated that you really need to gauge results long-term, from kindergarten onward.

- Mr. Bereznick added that the data is on the website for parents to gauge for themselves. Our goal is to have each student perform to the best of their ability, and we have dedicated staff working to help equalize the playing field for all students.

C – On a personal note, my children attend Lackner Woods P.S. and join students from Howard Robertson P.S. at our church group. They are great kids, and I don't think that it's fair to judge them because their boundary includes some subsidized housing.

Mr. Smith thanked the group for their thoughts/comments in this regard and reiterated that no decision has been made yet. We are gathering public feedback at this stage, so we will move on to the break out sessions.

5. Break Out Sessions

Mr. Smith advised the group that we would break into smaller groups for some discussion on the scenarios presented.

- On the bottom right-hand corner of the comment sheet you picked up when you came in tonight, you will notice a number. That number will be the group you have been assigned to. We like to split you up in this way with the hope that we will get some different perspectives in each discussion group.
- A few of the Review area Principals and Vice Principals have offered to help facilitate our break out sessions. Planning staff will be circulating to answer any questions groups may have.
- We will reconvene in the gym in about an hour, and do a brief wrap up.
- If you would like to submit your comment sheet tonight, there is a box provided at the door, otherwise you can email us your comments at: boundaryfeedback@wrdsb.on.ca
- Group #1 will be facilitated by Jeff Lovell and Rebecca Jutzi.
- Group #2 will be facilitated by Heather Preddie and Darren Batt.

The break out sessions began at 7:50 p.m. and the group reconvened at 8:45 p.m.

6. General Question & Answer Session

Mr. Smith thanked the facilitators and recorders for their assistance, as well as everyone else for coming out to the Public Meeting, and opened the floor to any questions/comments.

- No questions/comments were raised.

7. Next Steps

Mr. Hercanuck outlined the next steps in the process and proposed timing.

- There will be one more meeting of the ARC prior to summer break at which the ARC will review the feedback received from tonight's meeting. The feedback will be used to refine the scenarios, develop new ones and look at the objectives.
- The ARC will reconvene in September to continue their work.

Mr. Smith thanked all for coming, and asked for any comment sheets to be placed in the box provided if desired.

- The meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Contact Info:

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