



**West Galt Elementary Schools
Pupil Accommodation Review
Minutes of Accommodation Review Committee Meeting #5
January 11, 2012, 5:30-7:00 PM
St. Andrew's Public School Library**

The fifth meeting of the West Galt Elementary Schools Pupil Accommodation Review Committee (ARC) was held at St. Andrew's Public School on Wednesday, January 11, 2012.

Committee Members Present:

Nick Chiarelli, Vice Principal, Highland P.S., Marcia Lubert, Principal Tait Street P.S., Karen Tomlin, Principal, St. Andrew's P.S., Trevor McWilliams, City of Cambridge Representative, Barry Frame, Principal Dickson P.S., Kelly Deml, Parent Rep. Blair Road P.S., Karen Destun, Parent Rep., Tait Street P.S., Paula Ouellet, Parent Rep., Highland P.S., Roy Roethel, Parent Rep., St. Andrew's P.S., Lynn Robb, Parent Rep, Blair Road P.S., Dennis Cuomo, Manager of Planning, Andrea Kean, Recording Secretary, Nathan Hercanuck, Senior Planner and Lauren Manske Senior Planner, for the Waterloo Region District School Board.

Other WRDSB Staff Present:

None

Regrets:

Wendy Bowker, Principal Highland P.S., Jodie Hancox-Meyer, Principal, Blair Road, Michelle Schmid, Vice Principal, St. Andrew's P.S., Vanessa Meal, Parent Rep., Dickson P.S., Rebecca Raineault, Parent Rep., Dickson P.S., Maura Fuller, Parent Rep., Tait Street P.S., Bev Fox, Parent Rep., St. Andrew's P.S., Hayley Orman, Parent Rep., Highland P.S., Lila Read, Superintendent of Education, Ron Dallan, Manager Capital Projects for the Waterloo Region District School Board.

1. Welcome

Ms. Manske, Senior Planner opened the meeting at 5:30 pm and welcomed members of the ARC.

Ms. Manske noted that the Minutes from ARC Meeting #4 held on November 29th, 2011, were approved electronically: Moved by: Jodie Hancox-Meyer and Seconded by: Lynn Robb and hardcopies of the minutes were sent out to the schools for the school binder and the minutes were also posted on the Board website at: <http://www.wrdsb.ca/planning/accommodation-reviews/west-galt-elementary-schools>

Ms. Manske led the ARC through tonight's presentation, available on-line at: <http://www.wrdsb.ca/planning/accommodation-reviews/west-galt-elementary-schools>

2. Scenario Discussion

Ms. Manske noted that at the last meeting the ARC had broken out into small groups and came up with five scenarios involving boundary changes, program changes and school closures and new school construction. Ms. Manske noted that she has compiled these scenarios by mapping them out and developing enrolment projections from 2013 through to 2021 based on the assumption that there will not be any changes implemented before 2013 at the earliest (keeping in mind that an implementation date may be even further out). Ms. Manske noted that she also included a Status Quo scenario which can be used as a comparison for all scenarios.

Ms. Manske noted that the ARC could include portions of a scenario that meet the objectives and use them in the development of other scenarios.

Status Quo: (Slide 3 of the [online presentation](#))

School	Grades	OTG Capacity	Special Programs	Boundary Projection Areas (see map, Slide 3)
Blair Road P.S.	JK-6	279	Spec Ed	A, B, C, D
Dickson P.S.	JK-5	161		K, L, M, N
Highland P.S.	JK-5	348	French Immersion	E, F, G, H, I, J
St. Andrew's P.S.	6-8	424	French Immersion	E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, M, N (6-8) A, B, C, C, O, P, Q, R, S (7-8)
Tait Street P.S.	JK-6	348		O, P, Q, R, S

Ms. Manske noted that under the Status Quo Scenario everything remains the same (school organizations/grades, boundaries, etc.)

Pros:

- No changes

Cons:

- Small school organizations
- Facility conditions
- Enrolment changes/shifts
- New development
- New direction in curriculum/school organization (grade configurations)
- Implications of Full Day Kindergarten (FDK)

Outcome:

The ARC decided it would like to see a dedicated 7-8 program for St. Andrew's P.S. and get away from the 6-8 model and allow other facilities to be JK-6 or JK-8 thus ruling out Status Quo as an option.

Action Item:

Ms. Manske to provide colour Status Quo maps for the next meeting for reference purposes.

Scenario 1: (Slide 5 of the online presentation)

School	Grades	OTG Capacity	Special Programs	Boundary Projection Areas (see map, Slide 5)
Blair Road P.S.	JK-8	279	Spec Ed	A, B, C, D1
Dickson P.S.				Closed
Highland P.S.	JK-8	348	French Immersion	F1, G, H, L
St. Andrew's P.S.	JK-8	424	French Immersion	M, N, P
Tait Street P.S.	JK-8	348		D2, Q, R, S
New School	JK-8	550		E, F2, I, J, O

Under Scenario 1 a new JK-8 school would be built on the Beechwood site (currently Southwood Secondary School's practice field), Dickson P.S. would close and all other schools would become JK-8 facilities. Projection Area D is split into 2 (D1 and D2) which moves Tait Street P.S.'s boundary closer to the school in the north.

Ms. Manske noted that another new school site in the Blair Road area would still be required to service that new development area which may have 700-900 units which will be separate from this process.

Q: Are the Full Day Kindergarten (FDK) numbers included in the 2013-2021 Projected Enrolments?

R: Yes, however the on-the-ground (OTG) capacities have not yet been modified. For example; Kindergarten rooms are loaded at 20 pupil places whereas FDK rooms are loaded at 26 pupil places. Highland P.S. is showing the current built capacity that does not include the new addition to be built to house the FDK program.

Action Item:

Ms. Manske to determine the OTG capacity with FDK for: Highland P.S. (with 4 classroom addition) and Blair Road P.S. (with internal conversions).

Ms. Manske noted that under Scenario 1 the French Immersion Program (FI) would be split between Highland P.S. and St. Andrew's P.S., to relieve Highland P.S. of the strain of out-of-boundary FI students, noting that St. Andrew's P.S. would have resources available as it currently houses the FI Program.

C: Mr. Hercanuck noted that for schools to be a community school it is important that all schools are as centrally located as possible within their boundaries and that ideally students are attending the school closest to where they live.

Pros:

- All schools are centrally located within their boundaries providing students the opportunity to attend a community school.

Cons:

- Enrolment numbers for the schools are small for JK-8 facilities except for the new school.

- Would require additions and retrofits to make all schools JK-8 facilities including an appropriate sized gymnasium and library to accommodate the increased student population and senior elementary classrooms – Science and Technology, Art, etc.
- Would be expensive to implement.
- Does not meet many of the objectives.
- The Beechwood site for a new school is not situated in an appropriate area.

Outcome:

The ARC agreed to remove Scenario 1 from further consideration.

Scenario 2: (Slide 7 of the online presentation)

School	Grades	OTG Capacity	Special Programs	Boundary Projection Areas (see map, Slide 7)
Blair Road P.S.	JK-6	279	Spec Ed	A, B, C, D, G, K, L
Dickson P.S.				Closed
Highland P.S.	JK-6	348	French Immersion	E, F, H, I, J
St. Andrew's P.S.	7-8	424	French Immersion	A-S (7-8)
Tait Street P.S.	JK-6	348		M, N, O, P, R, S

Under Scenario 2 there would be no more JK-5 facilities as Highland P.S. would become a JK-6 facility and St. Andrew's P.S. would become 7-8. Dickson P.S. would close, and Blair P.S. would take on a majority of Dickson P.S.'s boundary with Tait P.S. taking on some as well.

Ms. Manske advised the ARC that staff have recommended a restriction on Grade 1 out-of-boundary French Immersion students admitted to Highland P.S. for the 2012-13 school year which may help Highland P.S. from going any further over capacity.

C: If there is more interest shown in the French Immersion program in West Galt, perhaps it would be worth looking into starting the program at another area school.

Ms. Manske noted that the 2013-2021 Projected Enrolment numbers for Highland P.S. have been adjusted to reflect lower FI numbers from out-of-boundary students.

Q: If a new site is chosen for French Immersion will the program only be offered in Grade 1 and building up from there as that class progresses?

R: Yes. Or in some instances where we can come up with a 50/50 split at a higher grade level within a boundary we may be able to add more grades.

Mr. Hercanuck commented that we may be overbuilding north of Cedar Street and it may be important to look at the boundaries keeping in mind what makes sense to better serve the community.

C: Like the dedicated 7-8 program for St. Andrew's P.S.

C: Highland may not be able to handle this size of JK-6 program on their restricted site.

Q: Would Tait be able to pick up area I?

R: Tait's site is large but not situated well which has led to its bussing (pick up/drop off) issues. Scenario 2 adds areas M and N to Tait Street and this would probably require bussing at least for the JK-SK program and would not be recommended adding transported areas to the school considering the current bussing issues at Tait Street.

Q: Would a 400 pupil JK-8 school be viable?

R: No, not in an urban area.

Pros:

- Dedicated 7-8 program at St. Andrew's P.S.
- All schools move to JK-6 (removes JK-5 organization)

Cons:

- Highland, Blair Road and Tait Street enrolments above built capacity and would require additions.
- Highland P.S. and Tait Street P.S. sites have issues with topography.
- Tait Street P.S. has transportation issues.
- Total OTG capacity versus total enrolment is about 200 pupil places short.

Outcome:

The ARC agreed to remove Scenario 2 from further consideration.

Scenario 3: (Slide 9 of the online presentation)

School	Grades	OTG Capacity	Special Programs	Boundary Projection Areas (see map, Slide 9)
Blair Road P.S.	JK-8	279	Spec Ed	A, B, C, D
Dickson P.S.				Closed
Highland P.S.	JK-8	348	French Immersion	E, F, H
St. Andrew's P.S.	JK-8	424	French Immersion	I, J, K, L, M, N
Tait Street P.S.	JK-8	348		O, P, Q, R, S

Ms. Manske noted that Scenario 3 closes Dickson P.S., with all other schools becoming JK-8 facilities. St. Andrew's P.S. (now JK-8) would take on Dickson's population and some of Highland P.S.'s boundary as well.

C: Board will not accept as all JK-8 for 4 schools based on these numbers.

C: We could do one JK-6 at Highland feeding into St. Andrew's P.S. and manipulate boundaries to make the numbers work.

C: Make Highland's boundary smaller and shift areas K and L to Highland as a JK-8 and take some areas from St. Andrew's to Highland.

C: Would still require a retrofit for gym, science and tech rooms.

Q: What is the viability of Highland ever becoming a JK-8?

R: Not sure that we would be able to make it work on that site. Will have to ask Facilities staff what is possible for sites.

Action Item:

Ms. Manske to invite Ron Dallan, Manager of Capital Projects to attend the February 1st, 2012, ARC meeting to look at options and discuss what is possible for expanding/converting facilities based on site and building constraints.

C: Tait Street currently has a single gym which is not ideal for a JK-8 facility.

Pros:

- JK-8 organizations.

Cons:

- Total OTG capacity versus total enrolment is about 200 pupil places short.
- Enrolment numbers are low for JK-8 – fewer than 2 classes per grade.
- All schools would require retrofits – St. Andrew's to become JK-8 and retrofits or additions for 7-8 program for the remainder of schools.

Outcome:

The ARC agreed to remove Scenario 3 from further consideration.

Scenario 4: (Slide 11 of the online presentation)

School	Grades	OTG Capacity	Special Programs	Boundary Projection Areas (see map, Slide 11)
Blair Road P.S.	JK-8	279	Spec Ed	A, B, C
Dickson P.S.				Closed
Highland P.S.	JK-8	348	French Immersion	E, F, G, H, K, L
St. Andrew's P.S.	JK-8	424	French Immersion	I, J, M, N, P
Tait Street P.S.	JK-8	348		D, O, Q, R, S

Ms. Manske noted that Scenario 4 also closes Dickson P.S., with all other schools becoming JK-8 facilities with a slightly different boundary configuration with a left skewed boundary for St. Andrew's P.S.

Q: The Board has requested a new school site in the proposed development in Area C; would the population increase in that area have any effect on Blair Road P.S.?

R: The Cambridge West MESP development area may have enough units (approximately 700-900 units) to warrant its own school. But the Board will have to find a school to take on that population until a new school is built.

C: Blair Road P.S.'s site could best accommodate portables as permanent accommodation is being built.

C: Can we build a new gym and turn the old gym into a library or classrooms?

R: That has been done before – Highland P.S. is a good example.

C: Scenarios 3 & 4 the numbers are not working we may be able to tweak with some boundary changes.

Pros:

- St. Andrew's P.S. would be a healthy size for a JK-8 facility.

Cons:

- Total OTG capacity versus total enrolment is about 200 pupil places short.
- Enrolment numbers are low for most schools – fewer than 2 classes per grade.
- Sites may be too small to accommodate additions where needed
- Blair Road P.S. and Tait Street P.S. with enrolment of fewer than 300 is not ideal for a JK-8 school.
- Boundaries are a little awkward.

Outcome:

The ARC agreed to remove Scenario 4 from further consideration.

Scenario 5: (Slide 13 of the online presentation)

School	Grades	OTG Capacity	Special Programs	Boundary Projection Areas (see map, Slide 13)
Blair Road P.S.	JK-6	279	Spec Ed French Immersion	A, B, C, D
Dickson P.S.	JK-6	161		K, L, M, N
Highland P.S.	JK-6	348	French Immersion	E, F, G, H, I
St. Andrew's P.S.	7-8	424	French Immersion	A to S (7-8)
Tait Street P.S.	JK-6	348		J, O, P, Q, R, S

Ms. Manske noted that Scenario 5 keeps all schools open, with St. Andrew's a dedicated 7-8 facility and the remainder operating as JK-6 facilities. Scenario 5 also adds a French Immersion program at Blair Road P.S., and moves projection area J to Tait Street P.S.

Q: Why was Blair Road P.S. chosen for the FI program?

R: It makes sense to have the program spread out. It is not necessarily the only location it can be... this is just an illustration or example.

C: Area J if going to Tait Street would need bussing and would be best not to add more kids due to bussing issues.

Pros:

- Keeps 7/8 organization at St. Andrew's P.S.
- Keeps all schools open.

Cons:

- Small school organizations (Blair Road P.S., Dickson P.S.)

Outcome:

The ARC agreed to retain Scenario 5 for further consideration.

Additional Scenarios Discussion:

Ms. Manske noted she had received a scenario from Dickson P.S. parent representative, Rebecca German, today and did not have time to provide the scenario mapping and projected enrolment but offered it for discussion.

New Scenario – (Scenario 6)

School	Grades	OTG Capacity	Special Programs	Boundary Projection Areas
Blair Road P.S.	JK-8	279	Spec Ed	undetermined
Dickson P.S.	JK-6	161		undetermined
Highland P.S.	JK-6	348	French Immersion	undetermined
St. Andrew's P.S.	7-8	424	French Immersion	undetermined
Tait Street P.S.	JK-6	348		undetermined

Ms. Manske noted that under Scenario 6 all schools would remain open; Blair Road P.S. would get an expansion to accommodate the JK-8 program. Highland, Tait and Dickson would run a JK-6 program and St. Andrew's would become a dedicated 7-8 facility and contain any congregated classes. This scenario would also include some boundary changes to try to eliminate bussing while maintaining the school communities.

Ms. Manske noted that she did not have the opportunity to go into detail but the numbers for this scenario would likely be similar to Scenario 3 for Blair Road P.S. and noted that the ARC would have to look at the boundaries to make this scenario work.

Q: Did anyone consider how these scenarios would affect feeder schools in regard to secondary school boundaries?

R: Most of the West Galt Area continues on from St. Andrew's to Southwood Secondary School. The secondary boundary cuts through Salisbury to Main Street with those North going to Galt Collegiate Institute (GCI) and those South going on to Southwood; those enrolled in French Immersion will go to GCI. It was noted that all schools feed to St. Andrew's P.S.

Mr. Hercanuck enquired as to whether the ARC might be interested in exploring a little further to perhaps maximize the 7-8 program in a JK-8 organization which might be achieved by combining 2 schools.

Ms. Manske asked the ARC if there are any other scenarios that have been missed and noted that so far the scenarios only considered closing Dickson P.S. and asked whether anyone had considered closing more than one school and opening a new school. For example, closing both Dickson and St. Andrew's and building a new school on the Beechwood site.

Q: It seems most of the scenarios were for all JK-8 facilities or for no JK-6 facilities. Why did the ARC feel JK-8 was the way to go?

R: The groups knew that the Board is partial to that grade structure when looking at building new schools.

Q: Mr. Hercanuck asked the ARC how they would feel about a scenario that considers closing 3 schools.

R: Wouldn't that go against the community school – closing that many schools would require a larger boundary therefore reducing the opportunity for a school to serve a smaller community.

C: Mr. Hercanuck commented that looking at the ideal enrolment numbers for a JK-8 model ([Board Policy 3002](#)), three schools with 530 spaces each would accommodate the projected 1600 students. Combining St. Andrew's and Tait Street, Highland and Blair Road and building a new school on Beachwood Avenue.

Q: Has the Board ever closed 3 schools at the same time?

R: Not that we are aware of.

C: People are emotionally tied to their school. This would be difficult.

R: And closing the schools may not meet the other objectives.

Q: Which schools would be closed?

R: The ARC would have to look at the sites, layout of the street network to be able to achieve a better walking population to minimize transportation costs.

Q: Does the Board still support creating a 7-8 school?

R: The Board has not built any 7-8 schools since 1977 (Westheights P.S.) and Board policy states that we maintain but not build any more.

Q: Ms. Manske asked if any of last meeting's groups looked at closing St. Andrew's P.S.?

R: Yes. That would have been our next scenario if we had not run out of time.

Q: Would it be worth looking at as a scenario and move St. Andrew's population out to some of the other schools where we have room?

New Scenario - (Scenario 7)

School	Grades	OTG Capacity	Special Programs	Boundary Projection Areas
Blair Road P.S.	JK-8	279	Spec Ed	undetermined
Dickson P.S.	JK-8	161		undetermined
Highland P.S.	JK-8	348	French Immersion	undetermined
St. Andrew's P.S.				Closed
Tait Street P.S.	JK-6	348		undetermined

Scenario 7 would close St. Andrew's and Dickson and make remaining schools JK-8 with no new school.

Ms. Manske reminded the ARC that any elements of the scenarios discussed that the ARC favours can be considered in other scenarios going forward.

C: If we were to close St. Andrew's and send its population out to each of the other schools that would mean closing a viable site.

C: This would require serious construction which may be difficult to achieve on both the Highland P.S. and Tait Street P.S. sites and keeping in mind the transportation issues at Tait Street P.S.

C: Another alternative might include: Highland -JK-6, Tait P.S. - JK-8 and Blair Road P.S. JK-8

C: Blair Road P.S. site could handle a large addition.

Q: Would Dickson area families have a connection to the Blair Road community?

R: No, these areas are not connected and would be considered a different community. It would be a better fit for the Dickson population to move to Highland P.S. but it is doubtful that Highland could handle the increase.

Q: Are Highland's 4 new classrooms (FDK addition) included in the OTG?

R: No. We can add 104 more to that so would allow for 452 pupil places.

C: There is no more room to add on to Highland, it has a single gym and when you go above 400 students you should be looking at adding a second gym.

New Scenario – (Scenario 8)

School	Grades	OTG Capacity	Special Programs	Boundary Projection Areas
Blair Road P.S.	JK-8	279	Spec Ed	undetermined
Dickson P.S.				Closed
Highland P.S.	JK-6	348	French Immersion	undetermined
St. Andrew's P.S.	7-8	424	French Immersion	undetermined
Tait Street P.S.				Closed
New Tait School (Beechwood Site)	JK-6	550		undetermined

Scenario 8 would close Tait Street P.S. and opening a new Tait on Beechwood site with other boundary modifications. Highland as JK-6 and St. Andrew's as 7-8. Closing Dickson P.S.

C: 4 Schools would result in more transportation.

C: There would be good access and transportation would be easier to do on the Beechwood site.

Q: Could we consider building the new school as a JK-6 school?

Q: Why can't the busses at Tait Street P.S. pick-up and drop-off on Culham Drive?

R: Not sure if it was due to an issue where kids crossing the road and where mixed up with walking kids. Now we have tags for bussers which would eliminate the mix-up issue. Will confirm with City and Student Transportation staff what the problem is.

Action Item:

Ms. Manske noted that she would be meeting with Karen Accursi from the city and will speak with her regarding the bussing issue and stop and flow of traffic at Tait Street P.S.

New Scenario – (Scenarios 9)

School	Grades	OTG Capacity	Special Programs	Boundary Projection Areas
Blair Road P.S.	JK-8	279	Spec Ed	undetermined
Dickson P.S.				Closed
Highland P.S.	JK-6	348	French Immersion	undetermined
St. Andrew's P.S.	7-8	424	French Immersion	undetermined
Tait Street P.S.	JK-6	348		undetermined
New School (Beechwood Site)	JK-6	550	French Immersion	undetermined

Scenario 9 would see a new school and new boundaries, close Dickson P.S. and put in JK-6 at Highland P.S. and Tait Street P.S. Make Blair Road JK-8 and St. Andrew's a dedicated 7-8. The new school would have a FI program to offset French Immersion pressure on Highland P.S.

C: Moving French Immersion is very challenging. Moving out of home school and a lot will lose their transportation.

3. Future Meeting Dates:

It was agreed that ARC Meetings 6, 7 and 8 would be held in the Library at St. Andrew's P.S.

Action Item:

Andrea to book St. Andrew's P.S. Library for the next three meetings.

ARC Meetings:

ARC Meeting #6: Wednesday, February 1, 2012, 5:30-7:00 p.m. @ **St. Andrew's P.S. Library**

ARC Meeting #7: Wednesday, February 15, 2012, 5:30-7:00 p.m. @ **St. Andrew's P.S. Library**

ARC Meeting #8: Wednesday, March 7, 2012, 5:30-7:00 p.m. @ **St. Andrew's P.S. Library**

Ms. Manske note that the Public Meeting date is still tentative and the ARC will have to decide at the February 1st meeting if it is prepared to confirm the date of Public Meeting #2.

Public Meetings:

Tentative – Thursday, March 1, 2012, 7:00-8:30 p.m. @ Blair Road P.S. Gym

4. Roundtable/Wrap Up

Q: Have you ever had an ARC that did not make any changes?

R: We have had some who did not make any drastic changes and we have had one recently (Breslau-Stanley Park ARC) where the results of Public Meeting #4 resulted in changing the ARC recommendation to the Board of Trustees.

Ms. Manske thanked everyone for coming out and the meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.