

Good evening board members, trustees and individuals of the WRDSB community. It is with great respect that I am able to speak with each of you tonight regarding the West Galt Accommodation review.

My goal this evening is to shed light on some the calculations and data collected for this review to grasp a better understanding of the facts as a whole. According to Table 1 of the ARC report dated November 12, 2012, the total capacity of all five schools in the review area is 1665 pupil places. The current enrollment at all five schools is 1649 pupil places. There currently remain sixteen places for future enrollment.

According to tables 1 from January 14, 2013, and tables 2 and 3 from November 12, 2012, the closure of Dickson Public School and the addition at Tait St. Public School will allow for an increase of 1 extra pupil place with no room for projected increases in enrollment. All schools in either scenario will be over capacity within four years (2017). This over capacity situation increases ten fold with the implication of Scenario 23B, Option 1. It does not make sense in terms of accommodation of finances, to disrupt five school communities and spend millions in capital only to find our selves in the same situation in four years. The only goal accomplished with Scenario 2-using the language found within the ARC's report- is the creation of "a better case for (government) funding."

It seems as though the motivation to "create" a better "case for funding" is highly suspect, if not completely unethical. My question for you tonight is, how likely are the Federal or Provincial governments to provide funding to the WRDSB when they are made aware that the case for funding was "created" by the Boards own decision making, knowing fully that those decisions would result in over-crowded accommodations caused by over-capacity schools in the West Galt area? If the board could provide the formula used for the data calculations it would be helpful for the community to understand where these facts are derived from. Thank you for your time and consideration.

**Report to Committee of the Whole November 12, 2012**

**TABLE 1: West Galt Enrollment and Program Offerings 2012-2013 (Unofficial October 31, 2012)**

School	Capacity (on the ground)	Total Enroll- ment	JK- 6	JK- 5	6-8	Spec. Ed.	FI	FDK
Blair Road P.S	294	222	*			*		*

Dickson P.S	161	113		*				*
Highland P.S.	461	562		*			*	*
St. Andrew's P.S	401	445			*		*	
Tait Street P.S.	348	302	*					
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1665</b>	<b>1649</b>						

**TABLE 2: West Galt Projected Status Quo Total Enrolment (2013-2021)\***

School	2013	2014	2015	2016	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Blair Road P.S	237	244	255	262	268	266	266	269	269	267
Dickson P.S	107	111	115	118	119	124	124	127	128	126
Highland P.S.	574	580	572	582	575	555	555	559	569	581
St. Andrew's P.S	426	395	395	407	428	467	467	465	449	431
Tait Street P.S.	286	285	277	291	287	290	290	296	305	316
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1630</b>	<b>1615</b>	<b>277</b>	<b>1660</b>	<b>1677</b>	<b>1702</b>	<b>1702</b>	<b>1716</b>	<b>1720</b>	<b>1721</b>

**TABLE 3: West Galt Projected Total Enrolment Scenario B, Option 1 (2013-2021)**

School	Capacity	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Blair Road P.S	294	259	282	297	324	337	343	349	355	358
Highland P.S	464	469	456	440	503	511	506	495	497	503
St. Andrew's P.S	401	430	377	370	308	314	346	364	351	332
Tait Street P.S	507	472	500	507	525	513	507	508	517	528
<b>Total</b>	<b>1666</b>	<b>1630</b>	<b>1615</b>	<b>1614</b>	<b>1660</b>	<b>1678</b>	<b>1702</b>	<b>1716</b>	<b>1720</b>	<b>1721</b>

**Report to Committee of the Whole January 14,2013**

**TABLE 1: West Galt Projected Total Enrolment Scenario B, Option 1 with Revised Timing**

School	Capacity	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Blair Road P.S	294	243	271	297	324	337	343	349	355	358
Dickson P.S	161	88	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Highland P.S	464	542	512	489	473	448	508	494	491	497
St. Andrew's P.S	401	426	415	372	382	400	346	364	351	332
Tait Street P.S	507	331	417	456	481	492	505	509	523	534
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1827</b>	<b>1630</b>	<b>1615</b>	<b>1614</b>	<b>1660</b>	<b>1677</b>	<b>1702</b>	<b>1716</b>	<b>1730</b>	<b>1721</b>

Good Evening Board members, Trustees, and attending guests,

There are many concerns, not only from the parents of Dickson Public School, but also those of Tait and Highland Public Schools. The Scenario variations that the board is suggesting are complicated, expensive to the taxpayer, uproot many different communities and still offer no long term solution. The main purpose of all of this was to relieve the over-capacity issue at Highland, but it has turned into a closing Dickson issue. That may be inevitable, but Highland needs immediate relief and there are less costly solutions if they are to be temporary!

Back in 1971, there were additional classrooms built on to Tait St. School and now we are talking about spending in excess of 4 million dollars to do this again, when Tait and two of the other elementary schools are under capacity. Dickson is under capacity by 46 students, Blair is under capacity by 71 students (enough to accomodate 3 classrooms at Blair with no repercussions or extras needed.) and Tait by about 40. The addition, with necessary secondary builds, will cost almost that of a new school. Dickson's current MPAC assessment is \$562, 000, so even "stretching" the selling price, will not get near the amount the board is going to spend at Tait. It has been advertised that Tait will house FI in September. The obvious choice would be to put it in Blair, which could accommodate more than one grade without adding an addition or portapaks. The board has given some of the financials associated with their proposal, but not all of them. They have not discussed the long term implications of any secondary builds that will be necessary at Tait. With an addition at Tait, it will require a second gym to accommodate the large number of students being added. Where is the info on this second build? According to the board's numbers, Tait, Highland and Blair, will all be over capacity again in 3-5 years. By doing this, it is using the children to gain extra funding, by making sure that the schools will be overcrowded in the next few years. If that should happen, a new ARC would be needed in 3-5 years and we (ARC) were told it would be a minimum of 3 years to get a new school. So back at square one....more portables, no gym time and less learning. Does this make any sense? Not even financially! Close to 6 million dollars to be spent on an addition, gym etc., then in 3-5 years when all schools are bursting at the seams, it MIGHT be easier to get Provincial funding for a new school and spend another 6.5 million dollars building it. Voila, we have now spent over 12 million dollars of taxpayers money for this issue. I'm not sure where the savings are?.

And a quote from another community member regarding Tait..."We were walking into the school yard and two parents and children were walking out. One of them told us that at a recent parent council meeting they were informed there was not enough money for more library books, repairs to the gym floor and the tarmac in the playground. Also, one of our neighbourhood group is a recently retired teacher and recalls being told by the Board that money was very tight and not available for program needs." So no money for repairs, but enough for unnecessary additions?

Up until 3 years ago, Dickson housed a grade 6 enrichment class. (for a minimum of 5 years). When FDK was introduced, it was moved to another school for classroom space. Due to technology

changes in the school system, with ipads being introduced, there is no longer a need for a full computer room. This would allow Dickson to keep their grade sixes. Also, Dickson could accommodate almost equivalent to another full class of FDK, as they are not full! There are 26 grade 5's this year, so keeping them for grade 6 would also help to raise the numbers in 2013! Changing boundaries would allow the few "extras" gained to have the school working to capacity. (some history.....in 1972, there were 225 students that attended Dickson. The on ground built capacity has changed over the year with "caps" on classroom sizes and there were plans to build a new gym/community centre on the same property, with expropriation of two properties beside the school) Should we not be maximizing the use of existing facilities? (Admin. procedure 4860, s 3.4 paragraph 3.4.2) Why does the board seem so opposed to simple boundary changes? Is there a community so opposed to this, the board does not want to deal with it?

As the board has provided a checklist of similarities between Scenario 23 decided upon by the ARC and their presentation, many of those options can be done without the millions of taxpayers money being spent to do it! All school boundaries are affected. The recent history shows an overall declining enrollment for West Galt. With 3 schools under capacity, changing boundaries would definitely help Highland's over capacity, quite quickly and with minimal cost. None of us like change, but as some ARC members had commented, children adjust easily.....and this would eliminate several boundary changes that might affect the same children multiple times over a few year span, which was a concern. Dickson and Highland could keep their grade sixes to help with St. Andrew's enrollment and also with the children's adjustment to a new school, so all grade 6's are integrated at the same time going into grade 7 at St. Andrew's PS ! All of this was discussed at the ARC meetings, but the idea of a new school took precedence. These ideas will not cost us (the taxpayers) millions of unnecessary dollars and will offer a quicker solution. Why are we closing a school that is perfectly functional, to spend more on additions to another school and only be a temporary solution.....doesn't make sense.

Throughout this whole process, it has been shown that it comes down to dollars and cents. If this is what is important, then lets get the cost down, as additions are unnecessary.....closing a perfectly operating school to build an addition to house the same number of students doesn't make sense. There is also a letter from the Heritage Foundation addressing the fact that they can help with up to a 50% grant of heritage-related projects . Has the board applied for any of this for Dickson, or St Andrews?

In a recent conversation with the City Planning Dept, it has been noted that the possible 440 unit build, has not been applied for yet and the possible 700-900 unit build is still in the study stages. With this in mind, it will most likely be more than 2 years before anything happens, just with the 440 unit build. It is advisable (from history of developments) that the board is cautious in making any rushed decisions, as it could have a less than desirable impact!

Let's also take into account, the situation on West River Road. Tait has less than 348 students, which is already an issue with bussing and has been for a long time! FDK is one thing that will happen

regardless, but an addition does not have to take place. With boundary changes, wouldn't there be less bussing and more withing walking distance? Also, Dickson has always been in the same predicament...it's a dead end. Much of the safety of the children was addressed when there was no parking on the street leading up to the school and parents are not permitted in the staff parking lot. Tait is obviously a longer street, but has this option been looked at? It could be imposed on a portion of the street and only allowing the busses....this might help the drop off/pickup congestion and safety concerns as a more immediate solution until construction takes place? Perhaps there needs to be TIME to make sure everything will work before trying to implement fragments of a situation only to find out some aspects won't work.

In conclusion, if it should be decided to close Dickson in Aug 2014, we would like to request that the grandfathering clause be carried out for all sudents, including FDK. We would like to be a fully functional school with all grades, allowing equal opportunity to everyone in the Dickson boundary area!

thank you for your time!

D. Ray

Hello everyone, I'd like to thank the Chair and the Committee of the Whole for allowing me the time to speak tonight.

I am here on behalf of **the Dickson School Community** to voice our opinion of the ARC's recommendations and on the fate of West Galt education. Although it has been recommended that Dickson Public School stay open for one more year, officially closing Aug 31, 2014, **it is our opinion that the decision** to close Dickson at this time is still rushed and **does not provide the optimal outcome** for the students and communities in the West Galt area.

The main focus has been based around **two main points**, that have been driven home time and time again, **are that the West Galt student population is not distributed evenly** throughout the area leaving some schools under capacity **and** some schools over capacity. It is **also about saving money. The accommodation and capacity issues facing the West Galt review area can be solved with simple boundary changes**, allowing each school to operate at their intended capacity. **This does not cost millions of dollars and affects the least amount of families.** This is also something that can be placed into action in a timely manner. The recommendation includes an addition to be built on Tait St. School, but without resolving the accessibility issue surrounding the West River Road bus access lane, this is a huge undertaking with no current assurance of approval. Until such a time that approvals have been granted, how can Tait St. P.S. accommodate more students and more busses? Before we make decisions to close schools that are still needed, **we need to have concrete approval for scenarios to actually work.**

The second **point is about saving money.** It was stated at a past meeting that a significant savings of approximately \$186K would be had for the reduction of an administrative staff member and a custodian. We feel these numbers may be a bit inflated, as last I checked with the Ontario Ministry of Labour medium salary report, the annual salary for school administrative staff is approximately \$43,000 per year and a custodian is approximately \$38,000 depending on experience. Regardless, **these costs would not be saved, only shifted** from one school to another. As student population increases so does the need for more staff, including administration and custodial staff. Not once has there been mention of **the cost of a full time Vice Principal.** As student numbers increase, this **could be another** cost associated with the closure of Dickson P.S. at approximately **\$108,000 per year**-none of the salary costs mentioned include benefits or pension. If you look at the operating costs of the schools given in previous reports, **the cost of operating Dickson P.S. is relatively small** compared to all the other schools. Contrary to the financial data implied within Scenario 23B, option 1, Appendix D of the ARC's report, **these costs, such as heating, cooling, etc. still would not be fully offset** with Dickson's closure. When you build **additions**, the increased Gross Floor Area will **require** an increase in Gross Energy Consumption, resulting in a **Net Increase in energy consumption.** School additions also require heating and electricity.

It is not our proposal to keep Dickson School open forever. Although that would be the ideal outcome for the Dickson School community, we as a whole understand that that it is not practical, but why are we still in a hurry to close this school. According to

Table 1 of the West Galt projected total enrolment Scenario B, Option 1 with revised timing, all schools are over capacity by 2017, and this scenario never gives Highland a break leaving it consistently over capacity. How is this a long-term solution? This is just a band-aid solution to create even more over-crowding. Why not keep Dickson School open for a minimum of five years? This would allow families that are currently there finish there, and allow new students the knowledge and choice to either register at Dickson or at the appropriate school that they would eventually be sent to. The spirit of the ARC can still be maintained and there are many things in this scenario that can still be implemented, such as appropriate changes to boundaries. This five years would allow for things such as building permits (pertaining to the West River Road bus access lane) and government funding to be approved while allowing time for the West Galt area schools to move further up the list of funding for a new facility.

January 14, 2013

Good Evening Chairman Martin, School Board Trustees, Staff & Guests.

I have the pleasure to speak on behalf the following that attended the West-Galt Accommodation Review Committee in Cambridge from fall 2011 to present. We were not just Committee Members, but concerned parents highly involved in our schools & community:

1. Kelly Deml & Lynn Robb from Blair Road Public School
2. Maura Fuller & Karen Destun from Tait Public School
3. Myself from St. Andrew's Middle School.
4. Hayley Orman from Highland Public School

I come before you this evening to express our continued support of the West Galt ARC Scenario 23B, Option 1 and the recent amendments being presented tonight that include:

1. Tait Public School Expansion
2. French Immersion at Tait Public School
3. West-Galt Public School Zone changes (to include grandfathering as stated)
4. Grade changes at St. Andrew's & Highland over time
5. Dickson School closure

We are very pleased that the Board was able to obtain the Tait property for the further option of a school expansion & French Immersion program expansion. This helps to help alleviate the immediate overcrowding at all of the schools at present, especially Highland.

When grade 6 starts at Highland in 2016/17, and 2 large home developments continue in the next few years we ask that the Board considers the option of building another school in the future as needed.

We are very aware that all of the changes stated above will affect many families & friends, but the results are very positive. These changes have been required for many years in order to balance the needs of all. We all need to accept responsibility for our neighbours in need.

We ask the Board of Trustees to make a decision tonight to avoid delaying anymore time & prolonging overcrowding in our West-Galt Schools to provide a confident solution for September 2013.

Thank you for your time & consideration.

Mrs. Beverley Fox, BA, RN, BScN, CCNC(C)  
St. Andrew's Parent Rep, ARC West-Galt



January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2013

Good Evening Chairman Martin, School Board Trustees, Staff & Guest

I am here as a parent of Highland and a member of the ARC. I do agree with Scenario 23B Option 1, for the same reasons that Mrs. Fox stated.

We do have growth in West Galt with building happening off Kent Street & Salisbury Ave. With 440 homes being built by East Forest and Fuere Homes that currently fall in the Highland catchment area (175 single/120 townhouses). And a possible 700-900 additional home being proposed in the Greenfield area which would fall in the Blair catchment area. For this reason I do not believe taking a new school with French Immersion, completely off the table.

Highland Public School a population of 565, we currently have 7 portables that house 157 students ranging from grade 3 – 5. I can honestly say we do not want anymore portable.

I know Dickson is always saying that they are a community...All schools are a community. Even with the number of students we have we are all aware of our children's special needs and problems. This Wednesday we are having a Loonie and Twoonie day to help out a Highland family that lost there house at the beginning of January.

If the trustees do not feel comfortable in making a decision tonight by all means have a tour of the schools in question. That may help you in coming to a timely approval.

I do implore you to please come to a timely decision for all parties involved.

Thank you  
Paula Ouellet  
Highland Public School Parent Rep. ARC West Galt

## Nicole Papke

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**From:** Nicole Papke

**Sent:** Monday, January 14, 2013 3:31 PM

**To:**

**Cc:**

**Subject:** West Galt Review

Members of the Board of Trustees,

I am writing in response to the latest recommendations for the West Galt Review that were released on Friday January 11<sup>th</sup> 2013. These recommendations were posted on the Board's website on the afternoon of the 11<sup>th</sup>.

The first issue that I would like to address is my frustration regarding the rules of becoming a delegate at a Board meeting. I attempted to register as a delegate upon reading the recommendations. I was advised that the rules state that one has to register by noon the Thursday before the meeting. Is the expectation that individuals will register as delegates with the belief that they may have issues with a proposal by the Board? Even if the proposals have not been made public? I find this practice highly confusing and unfair.

To speak to the latest recommendations:

- I am pleased that all of the current Partial French Immersion students will be grandfathered. My children will be able to remain at their current home school of Highland PS. However this still divides our neighbourhood as all students in the English program will have to move to Tait, regardless of their Grade and years spend at their home school of Highland PS.
- Should I choose to divide my family and allow my younger daughter to stay with her neighbourhood classmates whom aren't grandfathered to remain at Highland, her current program of Full day Kindergarten is not available.
- The report states that Transportation would cease after the 2014/15 school year.  
Based on what I read in the report, I am uncertain how Partial French Immersion will proceed at Tait. The first report indicated that Tait would include Grades 1, 2, and 3. The current report indicates that Tait will start with Grade 1 Partial French Immersion in the 2013/14 school year. With this uncertainty I can only assume that the grades will proceed as the Grade 1 students enter the following grade. My eldest daughter would not be able to attend Tait as her new home school unless she left the Partial French Immersion program. This is the case for all of the current students in PFI in area J. Therefore I feel that we should continue to have Transportation provided. We are more than 1.8km from either school and do not have any other options.

I plan to attend at tonight's meeting with the hope being added to the delegation.

Thank you for your time,

Regards,

Nicole Papke

**Nicole M. Papke**

1/14/2013

I Do not want go to any other school  
but Dickson. I LOVE Dickson and I  
will not leave Dickson! EVER! I know  
Dickson is small it is my favorite school  
If you went to Dickson you will not  
want to go to any other school. I  
LOVE Dickson and you will too!  
I know all the kid's and all the  
teacher's in Dickson. People help each  
other and the teacher's let kid's help  
them.

by Isabel Groetz  
Grade 2  
7 year's old

on