



**West Galt Elementary Schools
Pupil Accommodation Review
Minutes of Accommodation Review Committee Meeting #12
May 22, 2012, 7:00-8:30 PM
St. Andrew's Public School Library**

The twelfth meeting of the West Galt Elementary Schools Pupil Accommodation Review Committee (ARC) was held at St. Andrew's Public School on Tuesday, May 22, 2012.

Committee Members Present:

Karen Tomlin, Principal, St. Andrew's P.S., Michelle Schmid, Vice Principal, St. Andrew's P.S., Marcia Lubert, Principal, Tait Street P.S., Wendy Bowker, Principal Highland P.S., Bev Fox, Parent Rep., St. Andrew's P.S., Maura Fuller, Parent Rep., Tait Street P.S., Roy Roethel, Parent Rep., St. Andrew's P.S., Paula Ouellet, Parent Rep., Highland P.S., Hayley Orman, Parent Rep., Highland P.S., Karen Destun, Parent Rep., Tait Street P.S., Lynn Robb, Parent Rep., Blair Road P.S., Dianne Ray, Parent Rep., Dickson P.S., Dennis Cuomo, Manager of Planning, Andrea Kean, Recording Secretary, and Lauren Manske Senior Planner for the Waterloo Region District School Board.

Other WRDSB Staff Present:

None

Regrets:

Barry Frame, Principal, Dickson P.S., Jodie Meyer, Principal, Blair Road P.S., Nick Chiarelli, Vice Principal, Highland P.S., Kelly Deml, Parent Rep., Blair Road P.S., Al Potma, Parent Rep., Dickson P.S., Trevor McWilliams, City of Cambridge Representative, Nathan Hercanuck, Senior Planner, Ron Dallan, Manager Capital Projects and Lila Read, Superintendent of Education for the Waterloo Region District School Board.

1. Welcome/Introductions

Ms. Manske, Senior Planner opened the meeting at 7:00 pm and welcomed the ARC members.

2. ARC Meeting #11 – Draft Minutes Approval

Ms. Manske asked the ARC if there were any corrections/concerns with the minutes from the May 2nd ARC meeting. Karen Destun noted grammatical errors on pages 6 and 7. No other corrections or concerns were noted.

Minutes from ARC Meeting #11 - approved with changes noted above.

Moved by: Paula Ouellet

Seconded by: Maura Fuller

Ms. Manske noted that hardcopies of the minutes will be sent out to the schools for the school binder and the minutes will also be posted on the Board website at:

<http://www.wrdsb.ca/planning/accommodation-reviews/west-galt-elementary-schools>

Ms. Manske led the ARC through the presentation, available on-line at:

<http://www.wrdsb.ca/planning/accommodation-reviews/west-galt-elementary-schools>

3. Draft Report and Recommendations

Ms. Manske advised the ARC that:

- The capacities for each school have been updated to reflect the room types/usages in the 2012/13 Ministry of Education School Facilities Inventory System (SFIS). See Slide 4 of the online presentation.
- The enrolment projections do not include any enrolment changes for the grandparenting options (there isn't a way to determine how many students will choose to stay) Ms. Manske noted that if the ARC wanted, she could apply a percentage to the projections for grandparenting. The ARC did not request this modification to the projections.

C: Mr. Cuomo advised that once the Full Day Kindergarten program is fully implemented the loading of Kindergarten classrooms will be changed to 26 but for now the Ministry of Education is loading Kindergarten classrooms at 20 students.

Ms. Manske noted that the [Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline and Board Policy 4000](#) (sections 2.9 & 2.10) states that the ARC:

- “Will produce an Accommodation Report that will make accommodation recommendation(s) consistent with the objectives and Reference Criteria outlined in the Terms of Reference.
- Will deliver its Accommodation Report to the board's Director of Education, who will have the Accommodation Report posted on the board's website. The ARC will present its Accommodation report to the Board of Trustees. Board administration will examine the ARC Accommodation Report and present the administration analysis and recommendations to the Board of Trustees.
- The Board of Trustees will make the final decision regarding the future of the school(s). If the Board of Trustees votes to close a school, the board must outline clear timelines around when the school(s) will close.”

[Board Policy 4000](#) (section 3.2.3) states that:

- “The [accommodation] option(s) will address where students would be accommodated; what changes to existing facilities may be required; what programs would be available to students; and transportation.”

Ms. Manske advised the ARC that once the Draft Report is finalized by the ARC it will be presented to the Board of Trustees at a Board or Committee of the Whole meeting. She noted that any member of the ARC can present the report to the Trustees at the Board meeting otherwise Planning staff will be happy to present the Report on behalf of the ARC. No one from the ARC expressed interest in making the presentation. Planning Staff to make the presentation on behalf of the ARC.

Ms. Manske also advised that the Board's administration will also submit a Report with recommendations to the Board of Trustees upon reviewing the ARC report. The administration report will be available on the Board's website the Friday before the Board meeting that both reports (ARC and Administration Reports) will be presented to the Board of Trustees who will vote on the recommendations.

The ARC had been given access to the Draft ARC Report via email prior to the meeting. Ms. Manske asked the ARC for their comments/concerns/revisions. Not all members had reviewed the

Draft Report. Ms. Manske went through the draft report page-by-page with the ARC and gathered their comments and revisions which will be included in the Draft ARC Report that will be presented to the West Galt Community at Public Meeting #4 and posted on the Board's website prior to Public Meeting #4. The Report will not be finalized until after comments from Public Meeting #4 have been reviewed by the ARC.

Ms. Manske asked the ARC members to ensure that their names are spelled correctly on page 5 of the Draft Report.

Action Item:

ARC to confirm spelling of their names on Page 5 of the Draft Report; or let Ms. Manske know if they do not want their name included in the Report.

[The Draft ARC Report](#) makes the following six recommendations to the Board of Trustees:

Recommendation #1: Close Dickson Public School

Recommendation #2: Construct a new Junior Kindergarten to Grade Six Facility

Recommendation #3: New boundary for Blair Road Public School

Recommendation #4: Grade 6 and new boundary for Highland Public School

Recommendation #5: New boundary for Tait Street Public School

Recommendation #6: Grade 7 and 8 only at St. Andrew's Public School

Q: Karen Destun asked how an Accommodation Review gets initiated by the Board.

R: Ms. Manske responded that Planning Staff had requested the Accommodation Review of West Galt as part of its work plan. The request was presented to the Board in a Report on February 14, 2011, titled [Report on Elementary Boundary Studies and Accommodation Reviews](#).

C: Wendy Bowker commented that Highland P.S. enrolment is currently 560 with new registrations for September, plus they have had new registrations from the new development area (Grand Ridge Estates).

R: Ms. Manske advised that she will contact the Review area principals to get their latest numbers and will revise the enrolment projections.

R: Mr. Cuomo responded that the ARC can request that the Board carve off the new development area (Grand Ridge Estates) to be directed to another school (outside the West Galt review area) that has space.

Q: Hayley Orman noted that Highland P.S. will still require portables even after the new school is open.

R: Ms. Manske responded that yes, it is possible that Highland P.S. will need up to 3 portables.

Q: Dianne Ray noted that in [Scenario 23](#) enrolment projections the new school is under capacity from 2015 through to 2021; and asked "with the declining enrolment in West Galt, what purpose does the new school serve?"

R: Mr. Cuomo responded that the projected enrolment numbers are based on the boundary which can be modified before the new school opens if necessary. These projections are based on a

2015 opening date for the new school. If the funding is received later we may suggest making modifications to the boundary if there is need to relieve enrolment pressure from another school.

Q: Dianne Ray asked Mr. Cuomo if he is saying that the funding for the new school is guaranteed.

R: Mr. Cuomo responded that the funding is never guaranteed; any recommendation from an ARC is helpful so that Board staff can prepare a solid business case to the Ministry of Education. The Ministry will not fund any project that is currently before an ARC. The ARC process must be complete before it can be funded. We have placed this project on the Board's Capital Priorities List. Once the ARC process is completed and if approved by the Board of Trustees, the new school can move up the Capital Priorities List to be submitted to the Ministry for funding.

Q: Dianne Ray asked at what point Dickson P.S. would close.

R: Mr. Cuomo responded that the earliest Dickson P.S. could close, would be the end of June of the year the new school opens. (i.e., if the new school is to open in September 2015 then Dickson would close in June 2015)

R: Ms. Manske referred the ARC to Appendix B of the Draft ARC Report which outlines the timeline for all the changes the ARC is recommending.

Q: Dickson P.S. would not close before the new school is built?

R: Mr. Cuomo responded that without the new school, Dickson P.S. would still operate as usual.

Q: Hayley Orman asked how often the Board's Capital Priorities List is submitted to the Ministry.

R: Mr. Cuomo responded that for the past 2 years, the Board has submitted its Capital Priorities List to the Ministry of Education on an annual basis.

Q: Dianne Ray noted that the ARC does not have a short-term solution and asked what happens if funding is not given for the new school?

R: Mr. Cuomo responded that if the funding is not received at the first attempt it will be requested again in the next round. The best case scenario is that we are in the ground by the spring of 2014 to have the school open in September of 2015.

C: Dianne Ray commented that the funding is not guaranteed.

R: Ms. Manske responded that the Draft ARC Report states in the conclusion; *"if the Board does not receive the necessary capital from the Ministry of Education to complete the recommended construction projects, the Board will have to determine interim measures to address the overcrowding at Highland P.S. which could include a boundary study at a future date"*.

Q: Bev Fox asked if a Boundary Study is a public process.

R: Ms. Manske responded that it is also a public process, but a much shorter process, which can be completed in a much shorter time-frame.

The ARC decided to move ahead as they have already determined that there is no short-term solution to fix Highland P.S. enrolment issues. It is hoped that the new Moffat Creek P.S. will offer the French Immersion program and help to alleviate the growing number of out-of-boundary FI students requesting to attend Highland P.S. The new school on Beechwood Road would result in a 7 portable reduction for Highland P.S.

C: Ms. Manske advised that the ARC will recommend carving off the new development area (Grand Ridge Estates) which can be done by Board staff; in the meantime if Highland P.S. requires assistance with scheduling of the gym the Board can work with the Principal to make alternative arrangements.

C: Dianne Ray commented that the grandfathering option should be extended to siblings so families are not split.

R: Ms. Manske responded that siblings are always given the option to stay together and can do so by choosing to attend the assigned home boundary school.

R: Bev Fox commented that families are often split with children attending different schools depending on what grade or special program they attend.

Q: Karen Tomlin asked if it would be possible to extend the grandfathering option to siblings.

R: Ms. Manske responded that it is difficult to offer – we would not be sure which school they would chose and depending on the school it may overwhelm the numbers there.

Ms. Manske advised that the Report includes a suggestion that the Board, in partnership with the City of Cambridge and community members could commence an adaptive reuse study process to identify suitable options for adapting old structures to new purposes to alleviate concerns about future uses and potential impact on property values resulting from the closure of Dickson P.S.

Q: Maura Fuller asked if the Board receives funding for a new school on Beechwood Road would we also get the funding for other upgrades required at Blair Road, Highland, St. Andrew's and Tait Street Public Schools.

R: Ms. Manske responded that any other program related projects required by those schools would have to be addressed by the Board's Elementary Accommodation Committee (EAC) if they are under \$200,000. If they are over that amount they would have to be considered through the Board's Capital Priorities for Ministry of Education funding request. The accessibility requirements will have to be addressed through the Board's Accessibility Committee which has developed a strategy to achieve school accessibility using a portion of the yearly funding allocation for school renewal (approximately \$8 million) and combining with other projects where possible. She noted that the Draft Report recommends that the Board take advantage of any construction/conversion needed at Tait Street P.S. for the 2014 Full Day Kindergarten implementation as an opportunity to address the physical accessibility issues at the school in order to achieve economies of scale with any needed construction.

- R: Mr. Cuomo responded that the Ministry does not give out specific funding for accessibility but it is expected that at some point they will either have to change the Act or may have to reconsider funding for the more costly projects that cannot be achieved by the boards. Otherwise boards may be forced to close off sections of schools that cannot be made accessible without the use of large amounts of capital.
- R: Karen Tomlin responded that the accessibility issue is beyond the scope of this ARC and is an issue better dealt with by Board staff.
- Q: Why, the year prior to Dickson P.S. closure, would the Dickson P.S. JK students be offered the option to attend JK at another school.
- R: Ms. Manske responded that this option would only be offered to the JK students (or SK if they were not registered for JK) to allow them to attend the re-assigned boundary home school a year early to reduce the number of transitions for these students. Otherwise they would attend Dickson P.S. for only one year prior to moving.
- Q: Bev Fox noted that the new boundary for Tait Street P.S. would include bussing for the Shep's subdivision and asked how much involvement the City of Cambridge will have in examining the transportation issues at Tait Street P.S.
- R: Ms. Manske responded that we can recommend that the Board work with the Student Transportation Services of Waterloo Region (STSWR) and the City of Cambridge to address the transportation issues for the Tait Street P.S. site. The Board can also monitor the properties for sale that may be able to make adjustments to the site.
- C: Karen Tomlin advised that she has requested 2 additional portables for St. Andrew's P.S. for September of 2012 and will have 4 grade 6 classes starting.
- R: Ms. Manske responded that she will revise the projections for St. Andrew's to include this new information.
- Q: Karen Tomlin asked when the community will know if the Board approves the recommendations and the new school.
- R: Ms. Manske responded that the Board will vote on the recommendations during a Board meeting. Funding for the school however does not get decided until it gets submitted with a business case to the Ministry (can have Board approval, but still needs Ministry approval for funding). Ms. Manske advised that the ARC can add a drop dead date to the recommendations, and asked the ARC their thoughts on doing so. The ARC did not request the addition of a drop dead date.
- Q: Wendy Bowker asked what the next steps are.
- R: Ms. Manske responded that the next step is to hold Public Meeting #4 and present the [Draft ARC Report](#) to the community for comments.

Action Items:

- Ms. Manske to include the February 14, 2011 Report to the Board and Link in the ARC Draft Report.
- Ms. Manske to contact principals to get most current enrolment projections for Sept 2012.
- Ms. Manske to add recommendation for redirecting new development area to a school with space. (School to be determined at a later date via boundary study)
- Ms. Manske to revise projections for St. Andrew's P.S. to include 4 classes of Grade 6 and 2 additional portables.
- Ms. Manske to revise the Draft Report to include the revisions requested by the ARC.

4. Future Meeting Dates:

- **Public Meeting #4:**

Ms. Manske noted that Public Meeting #4 would be held in the Open House format with display boards outlining the recommendations and maps showing changes. The community will be free to drop in any time and speak with the Planners and members of the ARC (if they wish) to have their questions answered one-on-one. There will not be a formal presentation. Copies of the Draft Report will be available and it will be posted on the Board's website prior to the meeting. Comment sheets to gather feedback from the community.

Q: Paula Ouellet asked if a display board explaining why the ARC chose [Scenario 23](#) could be included for the Public Meeting.

Q: Wendy Bowker asked if we can outline what has changed since [Public Meeting #3](#).

Q: Hayley Orman asked if the recommendations could be outlined on the [Public Notice flyer](#).

R: Ms. Manske responded that these requests could be incorporated and advised the ARC that the Public Notice flyer would be sent out to the ARC via email for their feedback.

Public Meeting #4: Tuesday, June 5, 2012 from 5:30-7:00 p.m. @ St. Andrew's P.S.

- **Working Group Meeting #13:**

The ARC agreed that another meeting (ARC meeting #13) may only be warranted if feedback received at the Public Meeting suggests that significant changes to the report and recommendations need to be analyzed. After reviewing the comments from Public Meeting #4 the ARC will decide if/when to hold ARC meeting #13.

Action Items:

- Ms. Manske to send draft Public Notice Flyer to ARC for review
- Ms. Manske to provide display boards for Public Meeting #4 with changes since last meeting and reasons ARC chose [Scenario 23](#).

5. Roundtable/Wrap Up

Ms. Manske thanked the ARC for coming out and the meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.