



**Woolwich & Wellesley Townships Elementary Schools
Pupil Accommodation Review
Minutes of Accommodation Review Committee Meeting #3
October 26, 2011, 6:30 – 8:00 PM
Linwood Public School Library**

The third meeting of the Woolwich & Wellesley Townships Elementary Schools Pupil Accommodation Review Committee (ARC) was held at Linwood Public School on Wednesday, October 26th, 2011.

Committee Members Present:

Paul Milne, Principal St. Jacobs PS, Geoff Suderman-Gladwell, Principal Linwood PS, Vlad Kovac, Principal Floradale PS, Sheila Bauman, Parent Representative St. Jacobs PS, and Elmer Horst, Parent Representative, Three Bridges PS, Susan Marchiori, Vice Principal Linwood PS, Sarah Peck, Planner, Township of Wellesley, Christine Shantz, Parent Representative Floradale PS, Krista Edwards, Parent Representative Linwood PS, John Krupicz, Parent Representative St. Jacobs PS, Steve Snyder, Parent Representative Three Bridges PS, Cindy Weber, Parent Representative Linwood PS, Andrea Kean, Recording Secretary, and Nathan Hercanuck, Senior Planner for the Waterloo Region District School Board.

Additional WRDSB staff present:

Nick Landry, Manager of Enrolment

Guests present:

Susan Martin

Regrets:

Diane DeCoene, Superintendent of Education, Ron Dallan, Facility Services, and John Scarfone, Manager of Planning, Township of Woolwich, Wayne Dunham, Principal Three Bridges PS., Lauren Manske, Senior Planner WRDSB.

1. Welcome/Introductions

- Mr. Hercanuck, Senior Planner for the Waterloo Region District School Board opened the meeting at 6:35 pm and welcomed members and noted that there are new members present. All members present introduced themselves.

- **New ARC Parent Representatives:**
 - Brenda Martin, Floradale PS
 - Cindy Weber, Linwood PS

2. ARC Meeting #2 – Draft Minutes Approval

Mr. Hercanuck asked the ARC if there were any corrections/concerns with the minutes from the September 22nd ARC meeting, noting that Wayne Dunham sent in changes via email, to the list of 5 Mennonite groups on page 4 of the minutes.

Susan Martin noted that all of her children have graduated from EDSS.

Moved by: Krista Edwards

Seconded by: Steve Snyder

Minutes from the October 11th meeting were approved with noted changes.

3. Public Meeting #1 – Minutes

Mr. Hercanuck noted that the First Public Meeting had a really good turn out with approximately 45 members of the community attending. The [minutes](#) and [presentation](#) are now available online and hard copies have been sent out for the school binders.

(a) Feedback

Mr. Hercanuck noted that there was some feedback from the Public Meeting commenting on the technical nature of the presentation and that made it hard to understand, especially for those whom English is not their first language. There was also a comment that there was some problem with hearing the presentation. These will be things to work on for our next Public Meeting.

Mr. Hercanuck also reminded the ARC that Planning's offer to come out and speak at a school council or similar group meeting, still stands and noted that he has been invited to attend Coffee Hour at Three Bridges PS and is open to these smaller venues to answer questions from the school communities.

4. School Tour Coordination:

The School Tour date has been set for:

Saturday, November 5, 2011 at 9:00 am

Order: St. Jacobs, Floradale, Linwood and Three Bridges

Mr. Hercanuck noted that he is open to time changes.

Depending on the number of people interested we can carpool and will provide his cell phone number so you can either join us wherever we are or if you have to leave early that's okay as well.

Q: What happens on the School Tour?

R: We look at the schools using the template. Look at the Building, Site, Library, Gym, accessibility, portapaks. Noting that the principals do not have to attend but can provide anything they would like us to highlight on the tour. It's important to get a look at each school as we may be making decisions on the future of each of these facilities.

5. ARC Membership

- Community Representatives still needed
- Names forwarded by the ARC have been contacted
 - Current and former members of Mennonite Central Committee
 - Employees of Woolwich Community Health Centre (*Need to remain neutral and as such, could not participate in the process*)

Mr. Hercanuck noted that of the people/groups he has contacted, no one has expressed an interest.

Mr. Hercanuck noted that it is not mandatory to have Community Representation on the ARC.

C: Susan Martin who has expressed her interest in being a community representative is continuing as a guest while we decide.

Q: How long do we leave the positions open for?

R: Vlad Kovac stated that in all fairness to Susan Martin, we should let her know if she is a community representative at some point.

Action Item:

The ARC decided to set aside issue for now and Mr. Hercanuck will have an email discussion with the ARC on the Community Representation issue, noting that Susan Martin has no children in the system and has some community connections.

6. Draft Issues/Objectives:

Mr. Hercanuck noted that so far the ARC has identified the following issues.

Issues Raised by the ARC:

- Current school boundaries divide communities
- Bus ride length
- Student transitions where changes proposed

Q: Are these the objectives?

R: Mr. Hercanuck responded that the ARC will use the issues to craft the objectives.

The ARC discussed the [handout](#) which shows the boundaries for each school in the review area.

Mr. Landry commented that the purple area outside the boundary line is bussed to Floradale PS due to historical agreements with adjacent Boards. The Board provides transportation for those who meet the specifications and the students in that section of the map, qualify.

Q: What are the criteria to qualify for transportation for those attending from another Board's jurisdiction?

R: Mr. Landry responded that if the residents live closer to a school in another Board's jurisdiction they qualify to attend that school. He also noted that the criterion for secondary schools differs from that for elementary schools.

Action Item:

Mr. Landry to provide criteria to the ARC at the next meeting.

Q: Three Bridges PS is not shown on the handout but has the same colour boundary as St. Jacobs PS. Why is Three Bridges PS treated differently?

R: Mr. Hercanuck responded that Three Bridges PS does not have an attendance boundary, but instead has a transportation boundary and shares the St. Jacobs boundary.

Referring to Slide 6 of the presentation (available online at:

<http://www.wrdsb.ca/planning/accommodation-reviews/woolwich-and-wellesley-townships-elementary-schools>) regarding the school boundary around St. Clements, Mr. Hercanuck noted that this boundary has not changed. Planning had received some calls this summer regarding some households that felt they were part of St. Clements but had to go to a different school than the rest of the town. This may be because as the housing progressed at the outskirts of town the boundary was not adjusted. The ARC can use the opportunity to tweak the boundary to include all of St. Clements as it has expanded.

Q: How is it possible we have children attending a school and are bused, who according to GeoQuery, should be attending a different school?

R: Mr. Hercanuck responded that sometimes the GeoQuery maps have the location of the residence located incorrectly on the mapping software.

Mr. Hercanuck noted that the Board does not typically draw boundaries around municipal borders and we do have some school boundaries that cross Woolwich & Wellesley borders.

Mr. Hercanuck advised that the ARC can include that an objective to not split communities.

Mr. Hercanuck noted that in the past Area A went to Linwood PS until a boundary change sent them to Floradale PS to deal with an imbalance in enrolment. If we see that the imbalance has shifted we can use this process to change the boundary again or revisit other historical boundary changes as we look to develop our objectives.

Issues Raised by the Board:

- Small organizations
 - Less program opportunities for students and less professional working partnerships for staff
- Facility condition
 - Cost of facility maintenance (current and future costs report being done by consultant)
- Provincial Mandates
 - Full Day Kindergarten (FDK)
Will be fully implemented by 2014 and doubling space required for Kindergarten
 - [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005](#) (AODA)
All public buildings must be accessible by January 1, 2025

Q: Why isn't Conestogo Public School included in this review?

R: Conestogo PS is doing well with enrolment and has 8 portables but is not facing the same issues as this area. Conestogo PS is also closer to Waterloo and Breslau and is experiencing some ‘bleed over’ elementary pupil growth.

Q: Would a boundary change help with the portable issue at Conestogo PS?

R: The Board is considering other options to deal with Conestogo’s growth which brings its own issues and challenges.

Q: Why is that area growing?

R: Mr. Hercanuck responded that Breslau has new residential development as it has received water and sewer from Kitchener. Conestogo doesn’t have same issues and is experiencing growth.

Q: Does the Board have a record of how many students it lost when the Christian School opened up?

R: Mr. Hercanuck responded that the Board does not keep a record of where students go when they leave the public school system. It’s possible that some students have been lost to alternate education systems and that may be a reason for the declining enrolment.

R: Sarah Peck, Junior Planner for the Township of Wellesley commented that water and sewer for Linwood area is not on the table right now. Wellesley Township did a study and that resulted in a change in calculation and technology and they have freed up 900 units of waste water for Wellesley Settlement area but no talks of bringing into other areas of Wellesley Township.

Action Item:

Mr. Hercanuck noted that he can provide information on Conestogo PS boundaries/enrolment for a future meeting.

6. Draft Issues/Objectives:

Mr. Hercanuck advised the ARC that he has crafted some draft review objectives from the draft issues raised by the ARC so far and invited the ARC to revise them before they are finalized.

<u>ARC Draft Issues</u>	<u>ARC Draft Objectives</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Current school boundaries divide communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Where possible organize school attendance area boundaries to include complete communities, and to minimize distance to school (time on bus).
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bus Ride Length	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student transitions where changes proposed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Address student transitions where changes proposed

Mr. Hercanuck noted that one of the challenges of writing the objectives is to make sure we state the objectives in a manner where we can say ‘yes’ this accommodation option meets this objective or ‘no’, it does not meet the objective.

Q: What's the longest bus ride allowed?

R: The Board's policy is that no student will have a bus ride longer than 1 hour (barring weather complications). We can look at minimizing times with meeting other objectives.

Q: Do you know how long the longest bus ride in the area is?

R: No. But will research it.

Action Item:

N. Hercanuck to find longest bus ride in review area.

Q: Are there multiple buses going to each school or just one bus and will we have to look at the routes?

R: The bus routes change every year, due to new students coming in and other students leaving.

C: Some Three Bridges students get transported to St. Jacobs where they transfer to a bus that takes them to Three Bridges PS.

R: Mr. Hercanuck not aware of situation and will look into it.

Action Item:

N. Hercanuck to look into bus transfer situation.

<u>Board Draft Issues</u>	<u>Board Draft Objectives</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small school organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have regard for Board Policy 3002; Elementary School Size and Configuration.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facility condition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the optimal use of capital (<i>new construction</i>) and operating (<i>maintenance costs</i>) resources through the consideration of facility condition and amenities (<i>library, gym etc</i>)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provincial mandates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FDK • AODA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify facility requirements for provincially mandated initiatives (FDK, AODA)

Board [Policy 3002](#) - Elementary School Size and Configuration:

The Board would like to see at least 2 classes per grade. Mr. Hercanuck noted that it might not be attainable in the rural area without a very large boundary – but we should keep the spirit of the policy in mind and look at optimizing enrolment balance and equity of program opportunities for students at all schools in the review.

Mr. Hercanuck noted that in order to meet one objective it might mean we will not meet another objective. The objectives are really a wish list – and he has not seen a scenario that met all objectives but we do our best to meet the most objectives.

Mr. Hercanuck noted that we don't have the full picture on facility condition as we are waiting on a consultant's report which will outline any issues with boilers, roofing, electrical system, etc. and provide short-term and long-term considerations in that regard.

Q: How important is it that all schools have an equal population?

R: Mr. Hercanuck, we don't like to say that students equal dollars but the funding you get is based on enrolment and school resources are allocated for the most part by enrolment as well; it would be nice if enrolment was the same for each then learning opportunities would also be equal. Have to balance with existing capacity and surplus space.

Q: Does the Board have specific size requirements for library and gym spaces?

R: The older schools do not have to meet but we do use benchmarks for new schools and additions to existing schools.

Q: How important are all these changes if the school community is happy with the school the way it is and the community is asking why don't they leave us alone?

R: Mr. Hercanuck responded that most schools would like to have improvements; and this would be a new situation for us if the community does not want anything done. The Board would like to see an equal opportunity for all students and it's important to the Board but it might not be important for the community.

Mr. Hercanuck noted that Full Day Kindergarten and accessibility legislation will have an impact on the schools in the area. Under the accessibility legislation all public buildings have to be made accessible but there is no money to go with that request. The Board has already begun making the necessary changes starting with making sure one secondary school in each area is accessible then moving on to the elementary schools. We can use this process to highlight the needs of the area schools and include accessibility needs into any additions and get a better price from the contractors and move up the list for accessibility.

C: If the Board does not keep its schools up to standards, the media could come in and say the Board is not looking after the best interest of its students in that area and are not looking out for the needs of future students who might require special programs. While status quo might be good enough for you today it may not be good enough for future.

Mr. Hercanuck commented that while there is only so much funding the ARC can still look at and identify issues which can be taken care of in the future when the funding may be available.

Q: Is there information available on nature of population of the areas and what it might be in 5 years?

R: We do enrolment projections for 10 years into the future; based on past and what we know about the future. There is not a lot going on in the township in regard to new development, there are no new housing units and we are not seeing a lot of future enrolment growth.

C: The area also has transient populations with large families who come and go (Old Colony Mennonite population)

C: We can look to make sure the boundaries are stable for the future.

Q: Are any of the schools multi-storey and what have you done to make them accessible?

R: We have used stair lifts, elevators (which can be expensive). It depends on the layout. St. Jacobs is multi-storied and Three Bridges uses some basement space.

Mr. Hercanuck asked the ARC if they had thought on any issues they might light to see addressed since the last meeting. None were raised.

Referring to Side 12 of the [presentation](#) Mr. Hercanuck reminded the ARC that Accommodation Review Reference Criteria must also be incorporated into the objectives and outlined some of the relevant elements of the reference criteria that apply to this review.

Reference Criteria:

- Maximize number of students housed in permanent accommodation.
- Consider the equity of facilities, site, size and program standards.
- Maximize use of existing capacity.
- Ensure all facilities provide a safe and secure learning environment for all students and staff (refer to [Board Policy 6000](#)).

Mr. Hercanuck provided copies of Board Policy 6000 – Safe Schools to the ARC and noted that the policy provides information on safe schools, including bullying and harassment and providing the office with a clear view of the front of the building.

Referring to Slides 13 and 14 of the online presentation Mr. Hercanuck outlined the reference criteria the Board likes to see considered when developing the objectives and accommodation options noting that the transportation criteria is generally not applicable to this review as the catchments are primarily rural and therefore the majority of students will need to be bussed.

It was noted that [Board Policy 3002](#) – Elementary School Size and Configuration is missing from the ARC binders. Mr. Suderman-Gladwell copied the policy and handed out to the ARC.

Q: A number of the issues are very broad; will we narrow them down to specific issues?

R: The objectives are broad so that they can be applied to each school in the review. We will be identifying specific school issues as well.

Q: Referring to FDK, need to accommodate by certain date; rolled into other issues. Will we drill down to the level of detail or add has an issue?

R: ARC can add to objectives. We start with facility issues and develop equity.

Q: Referring to benchmarks for library and gym spaces; do you have break down into a number of specific points?

R: We don't have that information. School information profiles will help identify these things and we will roll-up to larger objective to apply across the area.

Q: The objectives we want to get, we can identify and consider options so we can meet the requirements and not just identify them?

R: We won't be able to get to everything. We won't be able to come up with solutions for everything at each school. Need to identify so we can get to them later down the road.

C: The objectives should be able to be answered by either yes/no or meets or does not meet.

Mr. Hercanuck noted that he will come up with Draft Objectives for discussion and the ARC will work on them.

C: Mr. Hercanuck noted that the ARC Report will explain the rationale used to come up with the objectives and scenarios.

Q: Vlad Kovac asked if an ARC has ever used a Rubric to come up with objectives.

R: No. We are open to that but have had some cautionary tales from other Board that it can bog the process down when determining weighing for each element.

The ARC decided not to pursue Rubric as can be problematic.

Mr. Hercanuck noted the time and asked the ARC if they would like to continue the meeting beyond scheduled time to go over the School Information Profiles. The ARC decided to extend the meeting.

7. School Information Profiles:

Mr. Hercanuck reminded the ARC that they can modify the profiles to customize with information relevant to the area.

The profiles will be completed by the Principals, the ARC and some information to be added by the facility services consultant's report discussed earlier.

The School Information Profiles must include four considerations:

- Section 1: Value to the Student
- Section 2: Value to the Board
- Section 3: Value to the Community
- Section 4: Value to the Local Economy

Mr. Hercanuck asked the ARC to familiarize themselves with the profiles and decided if there are any elements to remove or add.

Q: Geoff Suderman-Gladwell inquired to the use of the [EQAQ](#) (Elementary Assessments for testing done in Grade 3 and 6) results in the school profiles and asked if they can be removed? Does not see relevance to review as it takes 45 pages of information and reduces it to 5 numbers and does not provide a true picture.

C: John Krupicz suggested as a parent, that those results would have relevance by possibly indicating how well the staff is doing compared to the staff at another school. And if there is a disparity the results would be relevant if there isn't a disparity then there would be no relevance.

C: Mr. Suderman-Gladwell commented that you cannot compare a school that is 75 percent ESL (English-as-a-Second Language) to a school that does not have a high population of ESL students. Also noting that the information is readily available online, if anyone wants to see it.

Mr. Hercanuck asked the ARC if they would like to vote on removing the EQAO information from the School Information Profiles. No one responded.

The ARC after a lengthy discussion decided to include the EQAO information but to include the Board's memo explaining the EQAO results in the comments section.

Action Item:

Add comments on EQAO to School Information Profiles.

Referring to page 8 of the School Information Profiles the ARC decided it would like to see Maximum Bus Ride and Minimum Bus Ride added to the Profiles as only the Average Bus ride statistic would be misleading.

Action Item:

Add to Transportation portion of the School Information Profiles:
Minimum/Maximum/Average/Modal Bus Ride Length.

Q: Can we also get what percentage of bussed students is between the Minimum and Maximum distances?

R: That information can vary from year to year. But will look to provide more meaningful numbers.

C: Maintenance Recap Reports use measure and factor in condition of school and figure out how much money needed to build a new school.

Mr. Hercanuck noted that the Value to the Economy section of the profiles to be completed by the Townships and have not been able to determine in past reviews.

Action Items:

- Mr. Hercanuck to make changes to school information profiles.
- Email to everyone to have a look at them.
- ARC homework on draft objectives and issues and send to Mr. Hercanuck via email before the next meeting.
- Work on goals and objectives for next meeting.
- Any more information you would like to see added to the profiles.

8. Tentative Future Meeting Dates:

It was decided that the ARC would work on the objectives and talk about issues at the next meeting. Mr. Hercanuck reminded the ARC that the objectives are really important.

Q: Do you get to revisit the objectives?

R: There is no limit but we can't go back and change the question if we don't like an answer. We won't go back and change the objectives but we can add to them.

• **Working Group Meetings:**

Working Group Meeting #4

Thursday, November 10, 2011
6:30-8:00 p.m. at Floradale PS Library

Working Group Meeting #5

Wednesday, November 23, 2011 at
6:30-8:00 p.m. at St. Jacobs PS Library

Mr. Hercanuck thanked the ARC for coming out and adjourned the meeting at 8:40 p.m.

Future Meeting Dates:

ARC MEETINGS:

Thursday, November 10, 2011 from 6:30-8:00 p.m. @ Floradale PS, Library
Wednesday, November 23, 2011 from 6:30-8:00 p.m. @ St. Jacobs PS, Library