



NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING #4
Woolwich & Wellesley Townships Elementary Schools
Pupil Accommodation Review (School Closure Review)
Thursday, January 24, 2013; 7:30 pm to 9:00 pm
Elmira District Secondary School, Cafeteria
4 University Avenue, Elmira, ON

The Woolwich & Wellesley Townships Elementary Schools Pupil Accommodation Review involves the following schools:
Floradale P.S., Linwood P.S., St. Jacobs P.S., Three Bridges P.S.

PURPOSE OF THE PUBLIC MEETING

The WRDSB is holding a public meeting to gather feedback and answer questions from parents and members of the community about the Accommodation Review Committee (ARC) draft recommendations for boundary changes and/or school closures. It is important to note that no decisions have been made by the Board and no changes are proposed to occur before the 2014-2015 school year.

MEETING FORMAT

The WRDSB will hold an Open House on January 24th to allow the public to review the draft recommendations made by the ARC. Copies of the ARC's Draft Accommodation Report will also be available. Board staff can answer questions and discuss concerns to ensure that the public is informed about the process and the recommendations.

DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

The ARC is presenting two options and associated recommendations for trustees to consider:

- **Status Quo** (continuation of the existing situation)
 1. To rebuild St. Jacobs P.S.
 2. To construct a bus lay-by at Three Bridges P.S.
 3. To consider a future boundary study between Floradale P.S. and Conestogo P.S.
- **Scenario 10a**
 1. To close Three Bridges P.S.
 2. To modify the boundary between St. Jacobs P.S. and Floradale P.S.
 3. To modify the boundary between Floradale P.S. and Linwood P.S.
 4. To rebuild St. Jacobs P.S.
 5. To consider a future boundary study between Floradale P.S. and Conestogo P.S.

For more information, please contact the Board's Planning Department at 519-570-0003 ext. 4419 or visit our website at www.wrdsb.ca and search woolwich/wellesley

A copy of the ARC's Draft Accommodation Report will be available on the Board's website after Friday, January 18, 2013.



About Accommodation Reviews

Does the community decide what happens to the schools during the Accommodation Review process?

While community input is gathered during the Accommodation Review process, the Accommodation Review Committee (ARC) makes recommendations to the Board. These recommendations are presented to the Board in an ARC report. Board administration then responds to the ARC's recommendations and presents its recommendations to the Board in another report. These recommendations may or may not fully support the ARC recommendations. The elected Board of Trustees makes the final decision.

If a recommendation is to close a school, who decides?

The responsibility is completely within the school board's authority to make decisions on pupil accommodations, including school closures; however, we encourage our community members to be engaged in the process and communicate their ideas and concerns to the Board; this helps ensure that all concerns and ideas are heard and considered before any decisions are made.

Can the Ministry of Education overturn a school closure or boundary change decision?

No, the Ministry has no legislative mandate to overturn a decision by elected trustees to close a school or to change boundaries. If an individual feels that the accommodation review process was not compliant with the Board's accommodation review policy, then an Administrative Review of a school board's accommodation review process may be requested. Any participant in the Accommodation Review process can sign an Administrative Review petition. A participant means ARC members, or a person who attended a public meeting and who signed the attendance sheet. Administrative Review approval decisions are based on the requirements outlined in the Administrative Review document (available on the Board and Ministry websites), including the Board's verification that the people who signed the petition participated in the process or are parents of students at the school.

Why do boards focus on schools with low enrolments?

Much of a school board's funding relies on the number of students enrolled at its schools. Since 1997, all publicly-funded school boards administer the funding they receive from the province for their schools. The goal of the provincial funding formula is to make education funding more equitable across the province. Funding for classroom teachers, education assistants, textbooks and learning materials, classroom supplies, classroom computers, library and guidance services, preparation time (which funds specialist and student success teachers) and professional and para-professional supports are all allocated on a per pupil basis. Funding to heat, light, maintain and repair schools are also dependent, for the most part, on student enrolment numbers.

Are class sizes larger in bigger schools?

No, in 2004, the provincial government introduced a maximum of 20 students per class for primary grades (Kindergarten to Grade 3), with the exception of Full-Day Kindergarten. The average class size must be 25 students or less in the elementary grades (grades 4 to 8). Because these are Board-wide averages, individual classes may have more (or fewer) students.

What happens to school properties and buildings if the Board no longer needs them?

If a property or building is no longer needed, it is declared as surplus and the Board may choose to sell or lease it. It must first be offered for purchase or lease to public organizations, such as local school boards, provincial and federal agencies, local and regional municipalities, local colleges, and universities at fair market value. If there is no public agency interest, the Board can use the open market to proceed with the sale/lease of the property. All future uses must be consistent with municipal by-laws.