

West Kitchener Accommodation Review Committee Meeting

A meeting of the Accommodation Review Committee was held on October 22, 2008 at 6:00 p.m. at the Waterloo Region Catholic Education Centre.

Present:

Committee Members:

Lois Peterson (Principal - Monsignor Gleason), Susan Hunt (Principal - St. Dominic Savio), Pam Garbutt (Principal - St. John), Kendra Duench (Principal - St. Mark), Brian Goodyear (Principal - St Paul), Marion Thomson Howell (Trustee), Manuel da Silva (Trustee), Dave Bennett (Senior Manager of Capital Planning), John Shewchuk (Senior Manager of Public Affairs), Gerry Clifford (Superintendent – Chair), Paul Laurie (Parent - Monsignor Gleason), George Mastrapa (Parent - Monsignor Gleason), Marie Bishop (Parent - St. Dominic), Eniko Nemeth (Parent - St. Dominic), Cynthia Ehrlich (Parent - St. John), Teresa Rafferty-Parker (Parent – St. John), Michelle Bedic (Parent – St. Mark), Katherine Flitton (Parent – St. Mark), Sarah Brenner (Parent – St. Paul), Katie Anderl (Municipal Rep).

Staff Support:

Lindsay Reinhardt (Planner)
Shuyu Zhou (Planner & recording secretary)

Regrets:

NOTE: An invitation requesting a Business Leader and an additional parent representative from St. Paul has been sent out. At the time of this meeting there had been no response.

Next Meeting:

November 5, 2008 – working group, November 12, 2008 – school tours
November 19, 2008 – ARC meeting

1. Welcome, Introductions and Opening Prayer:

The meeting opened at 6:10 p.m. with a prayer led by Gerry Clifford. Committee members introduced themselves.

Binders have been provided to all committee members – parent reps from the same school will share a binder. There will be folders containing all information/handouts for committee members to pick up at future meetings.

Two parent representatives from each school were requested. Only one is required to attend the committee meetings, however both are always welcome. If the ARC ever decides to do a vote then they would only get one vote between the two of them. Principals are required to attend each meeting.

Gerry stressed that there has been no decision made regarding the West Kitchener schools. It is the responsibility for this group to assess a range of options for this area and provide recommendations to the Board. Parents and other members of the public can access the WCDSB website at anytime or attend the public meetings for updated information during the review. They can also contact Shuyu or Lindsay at any time during the review process.

2. Presentation – Lindsay Reinhardt

Lindsay Reinhardt began the presentation by covering general demographic trends, board-wide enrolment trends, and highlighting specific issues in West Kitchener including enrolment vs. capacity, student distribution and transportation issues. A brief explanation of funding was also given.

The purpose of West Kitchener Accommodation Review is to explore options to eliminate surplus capacity, including the potential consolidation of St. John and/or Monsignor Gleason; address accessibility issues at St. John and

Monsignor Gleason; examine the long-term sustainability of operating small schools; and examine the ability to rationalize the boundary between St. Mark and St. Paul.

The West Kitchener accommodation review will follow the new Ministry of Education Pupil Accommodation Review Guidelines and the consolidation process outlined in the Board's policy since there is a possibility of a school closure. There will be at least 5 public meetings to present existing conditions, options, preferred options and a board decision between January to June in 2009. The board is required to adhere to the timelines set out in the Ministry guidelines.

The guidelines also introduced a tool called a valuation framework. Each school will be evaluated using the valuation framework, which is a data collection tool used to compare the schools involved in the review using the same set of criteria. Weightings for the four major categories (value to the student, value to the board, value to the community and value to the economy) were assigned by an ARC in 2007 and will be used in every elementary accommodation review board-wide. The valuation framework may be customized by the West Kitchener ARC. The ARC will be responsible for assigning sub-category weightings, which will be used for all of the schools in the West Kitchener review. The ARC will then score each school. This score will be used for comparison purposes only and not as an absolute determinant of which direction the review should take. The information and the results of the valuation framework will be summarized in a report and presented to the public at the end of January.

3. Customize the Valuation Framework

The West Kitchener ARC has the ability to customize the valuation framework. The ARC may to add items to the framework but may not remove any. Items that are added should be specific to the schools in this review and must be examined for all schools in the review. An email was sent out prior to this meeting asking the ARC to bring forward any suggestions for customizing at this meeting. No suggestions were made during the meeting; however, suggestions for customizing can still be submitted for discussion at the next ARC meeting.

ACTION: Send any suggestions for customizing the valuation framework to Lindsay Reinhardt for discussion at the next ARC meeting.

4. Establish Goals

There was a brief discussion around the goals that have been established by Board staff. Some of the goals for this review are the result of recommendations from the 2001/02 accommodation review held in West Kitchener. The ARC will review the goals and possibly add other goals once the valuation framework is completed and there is a better understanding of each of the schools in West Kitchener.

ACTION: Lindsay Reinhardt will post the 2001/02 West Kitchener accommodation review report on the committee's website.

5. Secure website for the committee

A secure website with user name and password has been set up for use by the ARC. This will be used to distribute information to ARC members rather than sending large files via email. The files that will be posted on this site will be working versions and most of the information will be made available to the public once the ARC has had the chance to look over the information and revise.

6. Set dates/times/locations for future meetings & school tours

ARC members decided on the schedule of future meetings listed below. ARC meetings that are to be held in the new year will be decided upon at a later date. The meetings will rotate from school to school.

- Working Group meeting to determine weighting will be November 5th at 6:00pm
- School tour will be November 12nd at 3:30pm.
- ARC meeting to develop scoring will be November 19th at 6:00pm
- ARC meeting to determine scoring will be November 27th at 6:00pm
- ARC meeting to develop preliminary options will be December 3rd at 6:00pm
- First Public Meeting will be January 27th, 2009

ACTION: Lindsay will email the ARC to let them know the school tour's schedule and process.

ACTION: Lindsay will send out email with the confirmed locations and times of the each meeting.

7. Develop a working group

Since there's a lot of work to do in terms of weighting and scoring the framework, it was suggested that there be a working group formed. It was suggested that this group be responsible for working through details related to weighting and scoring and provide a recommendation to the ARC. The ARC would then be able to question and debate the working group's decisions. To ensure that each school is represented fairly, it was suggested that there be either a principal or parent representative from each school on the working group. The ARC agreed that the weightings will be established by a working group; however, they thought that it was important for everyone to have the opportunity to offer suggestions and hear discussions related to scoring. Therefore, scoring will be completed by the entire ARC.

DECISION: Form a working group with the following composition to weight the sub-categories of the valuation framework: 1 rep from each school - parent or principal, 1 Superintendent, 1 Manager of Planning, 1 Trustee).

ACTION: School council reps and principals will determine working group members and will let Lindsay know as soon as possible.

8. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.