St. Agatha Catholic Elementary School Closure Review  
ARC Working Meeting #3  
December 7, 2016 6:00 pm  
Waterloo Catholic District School Board – St. Clement C.E.S. Minutes

**Committee members in attendance:**  
Caitlin Barton – Parent Rep. St. Clement CES  
Dan Ingoldsby – Principal St. Clement CES  
Jennifer Rothfischer - Parent Rep. St. Clement CES  
John Klein – Superintendent of School Effectiveness  
Mary Mayer – Principal St. Agatha CES  
Melanie Van Alphen – WCDSB Trustee  
Paul Gladding – Principal Holy Rosary CES  
Ron McCormick - Parent Rep. St. Agatha CES  
Shesh Maharaj - Superintendent of Corporate Services  
Tim Robins - Accommodation Review Committee (ARC) Chair  
Wendy Price – WCDSB Trustee  
Krista Fiolleau - Parent Rep. Holy Rosary CES  

**WCDSB staff resources:**  
Manpreet Sian – Planning Officer  
Stephanie Reidel – Exec. Assist. Recorder  
Virina Elgawly - Senior Planner

1. **Welcome and Opening Prayer**  
   - Dan Ingoldsby, Principal of St. Clement, led opening prayer.

2. **Chair Opening Comments**  
   - The committee is half-way through the five-month process and the work completed by the committee has been consistent with the mandate of the committee as defined under the committee’s Terms of Reference.  
   - The goal for Working Meeting #3 is to review the public feedback relating to the Initial Staff Report from both Public Meeting # 1, emails received to date and the online survey.  
   - The committee will be examining, in detail, the accommodation options presented in the Initial Staff Report and determine if there are any additional alternative options that the board should consider.  
   - The meeting norms from the first working meeting are printed on a display board and are available for reference.  
   - The committee will continue with the use of our “Parking Lot” questions display board for staff follow-up.  
   - All ARC working meetings are opening to the public for observation. Members of the public attending the committee meetings are expected to act with decorum and in a manner that respects the work of the committee.

3. **Approval of Minutes, Working Meeting # 2**  
   - A few minutes were given to review the minutes at the request of an ARC member.  
   - No changes or clarifications to the printed minutes were required.
• Clarification requested regarding the comment that St. Agatha is the only school considered for closure and whether this means it is closing or if it may not.
  o This is specified in the Terms of Reference section 2.3 where it states: “Being faithful to the WCDSB strategic plan, ensure that decisions are evidence based and responsive. Consolidate St. Agatha Catholic Elementary School into St. Clement and/or Holy Rosary Catholic Elementary School.”
• Minutes approved as written.
• There were no questions relating to the updated documents (SIP’s, Student Distribution Map, PM#1 and email Q&As).
• Committee quickly reviewed of the Terms of Reference. Specifically, section 1.0 mandate; section 2.3 Review Goals; section 3.0 Roles and Responsibilities including Alternative Accommodation Scenarios/Options and Meeting Conduct – bullet number three.
  o The role of the ARC is to suggest an option or alternatives which meet the criteria.
  o The ARC does not need to achieve consensus regarding the final report. All work will be part of the record and included in the information for the Trustees to review.

4. Discuss Public Meeting #1 – feedback, roundtable
• Thoughts and observations from the committee members:
  o St. Agatha was able to obtain a permanent Wi-Fi connection in the gym thanks to the review.
  o Parents in the community are very passionate, and if some parent are still lingering in the room, committee members are asked not to debrief until everyone has left.
  o Pleased at the number of parents who attended.
  o Some parents were unhappy with the options presented in the survey.
    ▪ The intent of the survey was to respond to the options in the Initial Staff Report (ISR).
    ▪ The public may not have all understood the new accommodation rules.
    ▪ Many parents chose to fill out paper surveys.
  o After reading the survey comments, it can be difficult to be objective as a St. Agatha parent on the committee.
  o After defusing some upset parents, they were more willing to listen to the information being presented.

5. Review On Line Survey results – Group work
• Review statistical data from survey results
• Answer the following questions:
  o What are the survey results showing?
  o Discuss public priorities, what are they? (Top 3)
• Hard Copy Survey Results: Statistical data had many differences between the numbers of responses for different questions. If there was no page submitted, that page was not included in the total number collected for that particular question.
• What are the survey results showing?
• Group 1
  o Many “no responses” on hard copies
  o Hard copy survey was basically a comment card
44% prefer to split between St. Clements and Holy Rosary (For St. Agatha parents)
- Majority of families prefer to move to Holy Rosary or split.
- Many parents were frustrated with no option to keep St. Agatha open.

**Group 2**
- St. Agatha Community did not all complete survey questions about option if St. Agatha closed (approx. 50%).
- Don’t really know who answered questions regarding options. What do people in Wellesley say? (Student clusters C vs. D vs. E on the Student Distribution Map).
- Decision is not 100%.
- Difficult – need to drill down further.

**Group 3**
- As a percentage of school population, St. Agatha had greatest response rate.
- A large percentage of St. Agatha respondents did not complete the survey.
- 64% of St. Agatha respondents prefer to move to Holy Rosary.
- Respondents prefer Option 3 although close second is Option 2.

**Group 4**
- Holy Rosary and St. Agatha had strong participation
- St. Agatha has many hard copy surveys which included many “no responses”
- St. Agatha had a strong presence at the Open House (50 people vs. 5 not from St. Agatha)
- **Online Survey**
  - Holy Rosary 40%, St. Agatha 32%
  - From St. Agatha, 66% prefer Holy Rosary
  - Overall prefer Option 3 (44%) then Option 2 (42%)
- **Hard copy survey**
  - Prefer rural, longer bus ride, and St. Clement.
  - Do not want to go to Holy Rosary.

**The Committee would like to see the responses filtered by school to see the individual school preferences.**
- Additional survey reports were reviewed showing the results by school.

**The Committee would like to see the St. Agatha responses filtered by municipality to see the individual municipality preferences.**
- This will be provided to the committee before Working Meeting #4.

**The Committee would like to see which questions are Required**
- Only questions 1, 5 and 6 are required. Respondents can choose to skip any other questions.

**Respondents skipping questions can make the survey difficult to analyze as not everyone completed the survey.**

**Discuss public priorities, what are they? (Top 3)**

**Group 1**
- Length of bus ride
- Increase / improve communication

**Group 2**
- St. Agatha community see the school as remaining open as an option
The decision on boundaries made after the decision from the Board of Trustees regarding the future of St. Agatha.

Data that is shown – shows option 3 as the preferred option, however this is coming mostly from Holy Rosary and St. Clement.

Tearing apart school and church.

**Group 3**
- If rural; stay rural.
- School / church connection important.
- St. Clements means loss of the parish connection and secondary school change.

**Group 4**
- Keep Holy Rosary intact.
- Make a decision.
- Minimize impact on students – rural / township to stay rural.

6. **Pro’s and Con’s – ISR Accommodation Options – Group work**
   - Please answer the following question within your designated groups:
     - What are the pros/cons of option 1?
     - What are the pros/cons of option 2?
     - What are the pros/cons of option 3? What are other alternative boundaries?
   - Alternative boundaries will be discussed in item 7.
   - **What are the pros/cons of option 1?**
   - **Group 1**
     - Pros
       - Rural kids stay in rural school.
       - All kids stay together.
     - Cons
       - Secondary school boundary change.
       - Significant bus rides for Waterloo students.
       - Is there enough space?
       - Concern about renovations and possible review.
       - Not accessible.
   - **Group 2** - no response at this time.
   - **Group 3** - no response at this time.
   - **Group 4**
     - Pros
       - Still rural.
       - Community within Wellesley.
       - Kids stay together.
       - Parent’s peace of mind.
     - Cons
       - School over capacity.
       - Longer bus rides for Waterloo kids.
       - No wheelchair accessibility.
• What are the pros/cons of option 2?
  • Group 1
    o Pros
      ▪ All kids stay together.
      ▪ Lots of space.
      ▪ Renovations / school condition not an issue.
    o Cons
      ▪ Long Bus Ride for Wellesley kids.
      ▪ Rural students moving to city school.
  • Group 2 – no response at this time.
  • Group 3 – no response at this time.
  • Group 4
    o Pros
      ▪ Newer school / resources.
      ▪ Large school due to closeness of community.
      ▪ Kids together.
    o Cons – no response at this time.
• What are the pros/cons of option 3?
  • Group 1
    o Pros
      ▪ Meets needs and wishes of the majority.
      ▪ Most preferred.
      ▪ Boosts numbers at both schools.
    o Cons
      ▪ Splits up kids.
      ▪ Some rural kids will go to city school.
  • Group 2 – no response at this time.
  • Group 3 – no response at this time.
  • Group 4 – no response at this time.
  • Groups will continue to work on pros and cons in Working Meeting #4.

7. Additional Options from ARC – Group Work
  • The ARC may provide other accommodation options than those in the ISR; however, it must include supporting rationale for any such option.
    o Does the ISR option(s) match those priorities? If not, how could the option(s) be modified?
  • Consider – other options and rationale (Use TOR for Parameters and Review Goals)
  • Staff will bring statistical data to Working Meeting #4 from any alternatives suggested.
  • Additional Options:
    o Group 2
      ▪ Play with the lines in Option 3 (Where do the students north of St. Agatha live?)
      ▪ Option to ask families where to draw the boundary once decision is made.
    o Move the boundary in Option 3 either north or south based on families in the area north of St. Agatha (Between Student Distribution Map clusters C and D).
      ▪ There are 4 students in that area.
Unable to provide the location on a map due to privacy.

- ISR (Pg. 17) Conclusion mentions grandfathering current secondary students to their current secondary school. This may need to be considered and clarified.
- Students with siblings in secondary would like to be allowed to attend the same secondary as their siblings. This is something the Committee could suggest to the Trustees.
- Any additional boundary suggestion maps have been handed in to board staff and will be discussed at Working Meeting #4.

8. Rank ISR Accommodation Options – Individual work – Deferred to Working Meeting #4

9. Next Steps
   - ARC Working Meeting #4 – Tuesday January 10, 2017 at Holy Rosary Catholic School 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
   - Committee members may go home feeling overwhelmed. Lots of data was shared today. After having time to digest the information, the next meeting will seem less overwhelming.

10. Closing prayer and adjournment
    - A St. Clement parent representative led the closing prayer.
    - Adjournment at 8:07 p.m.