

Report to: Lambton Kent District School Board
From: Accommodation Review Committee Petrolia Area of Schools
Date: April 13, 2010
Subject: Recommendations from the Petrolia Area ARC

Trustees passed the following Motion at the October 13, 2009 Regular Board Meeting as part of the October Pupil Accommodation Report:

“That the Board approve the commencement of the Accommodation Review process and the establishment of an Accommodation Review Committee for the Petrolia Area of Schools, including Hillcrest Public School, Queen Elizabeth II Public School, Lambton Centennial Public School and Lambton Central Collegiate Vocational Institute.”

Committee Members:

The following members were appointed to serve on the Petrolia Area ARC by the Trustees of the Lambton Kent District School Board at the October 27, 2009 Regular Board Meeting.

Hillcrest Public School Representatives

Principal: Brenda Mann
Parent Representative: Dean Melton
Community Representative: Rosanne Orcutt

Queen Elizabeth II Public School Representatives

Principal: Todd Hayward, Principal
Parent Representative: Mary Braet
Community Representative: Ross O’Hara

Lambton Centennial Public School Representatives

Principal: Tony Mitchell, Principal
Parent Representative: Janet Vanderwerf
Community Representative: Marcia Charlton

Lambton Central Collegiate Vocational Institute (LCCVI) Representatives

Principal: Phil Warner, Principal
Parent Representative: Judy Krall
Community Representative: Linda Smith

Municipal Representatives:

Don Seymour, Town of Petrolia
Jim Burns, Township of Enniskillen

Facilitators:

Gayle Stucke, Director of Education
Bert Phills, Superintendent of Education

Resource Personnel:

Lorie Vandeschoot, Planning and Reporting Officer
Jane Kovar, Recorder

Public Meetings:

The Petrolia Area ARC held four public meetings: November 12, 2009 at Hillcrest Public School, January 7, 2010 at Queen Elizabeth II Public School, February 4, 2010 at Lambton Central Collegiate Vocational Institute and March 4, 2010 at Lambton Centennial Public School. Attendance of the public averaged approximately 20 individuals at the first three meetings while approximately 70 participated in the final meeting.

Communication:

An Accommodation Review Committee link was created on the Lambton Kent District School Board website (www.lkdsb.net). The October 2009 Pupil Accommodation Report and Appendices were posted there as well as the Agenda, Record of Action, School Profiles, handouts and power point presentations for each meeting. A section for Questions and Answers received from the public, committee members and via email was posted in this section as well. All questions received a response within a few days and were shared with the ARC members at subsequent meetings.

Meeting #1 November 12, 2009 held at Hillcrest Public School

- A folder of information was distributed and reviewed by the Director with the assistance of the Planning and Reporting Officer. The folder contained the following documents: Board Policy and Regulations on Pupil Accommodation/School Closure; Terms of Reference for the Accommodation Review Committee; and School Information Profiles.
- Committee members were encouraged to review the School Information Profiles in preparation for the next meeting.
- Demographic data including enrolment history and projections, birth rate trends, change in school aged population and school area catchment maps was provided and explained for each school.
- The importance of ongoing communication among the ARC and the broader school communities was stressed. Strategies discussed included: school newsletters; the LKDSB website link to ARC; School Council meetings; local media coverage; a standing agenda item providing an opportunity for questions and input from the public at every meeting; and letters or e-mail messages to committee members, Board staff or Trustees.

Meeting #2 - January 7, 2010 held at Queen Elizabeth II School in Petrolia

- Information was shared regarding French Immersion enrolment projections and boundaries for Hillcrest, Queen E II and LCCVI.
- School Profiles were reviewed for each school with input for changes or additions made by committee members. It was evident that there is pride and confidence in each of the schools within the study. The section "Value to the Local Economy" was left to be completed at the next meeting.
- The following issues were identified by the committee: lack of capacity at Hillcrest and Queen Elizabeth with anticipated enrolment increase and the implementation of full time kindergarten by 2015; aging infrastructure of the Petrolia elementary schools; new housing development; and uncertainty regarding French Immersion.

Meeting #3 - February 4, 2010 held at LCCVI

- Committee members discussed and completed the "Value to the Local Economy" section of each School Profile.
- Issues identified at the previous meeting were reviewed. Information provided by Don Seymour indicating projected population growth in Petrolia, Enniskillen Township and Dawn Euphemia Township as well as Building Permits issued by the Town of Petrolia, was shared and discussed.
- A brainstorming session resulted in the identification of seven possible scenarios to address the identified issues. Further discussion then reduced the list to five options that the committee agreed to investigate further.

Meeting #4 – March 4, 2010 held at Lambton Central Centennial School

- A week in advance of the meeting, ARC members received the Agenda and a summary of the options identified at the previous meeting. For each option, pertinent data was provided, including projected enrolment for the 2012-13 school year, capacity of the schools, maps where applicable, and estimated transportation costs.
- Superintendent Joy Badder reported on research regarding the delivery of French Immersion programs in schools separate from the regular English stream program.
- Superintendent Bert Phills led the committee through the process of analyzing the pros and cons of each of the options with a record of the discussion recorded on flip charts and projected on the large screen. All members were involved in presenting their views and listening to the opinions of others.
- Members of the public were invited to share their opinions on preferred options.
- Options were gradually eliminated until the members reached consensus on a recommendation.

Options Studied

A – Boundary adjustment to move students from the town of Petrolia to Lambton Centennial Public School

B – A stand alone French Immersion school JK-8 at Hillcrest Public School

C – Move the French Immersion program to Lambton Centennial Public School

D – Build additions to accommodate growth at both Hillcrest and Queen Elizabeth II Public Schools

E – Build a new school to consolidate Hillcrest and Queen Elizabeth II Public Schools on the current Queen Elizabeth site

Note: Pros and Cons discussed and considered for each Option were posted to the website as part of the Record of Action of the March 4 Meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

It was the unanimous decision of the voting members of the Petrolia and Area Schools Accommodation Review Committee to recommend to the Lambton Kent District School Board that additions be built at both Hillcrest and Queen Elizabeth II Public Schools.