

**Report To Board**

**FROM: Jim Costello, Director of Education**

**DATE: January 25, 2011**

**SUBJECT: Proposed Reconfiguration of Petrolia Elementary Schools**

---

**Background**

In August 2009, the Town of Petrolia Municipal Council requested the Board build a new school to consolidate the students of the two existing elementary schools into one new facility. The Board acknowledged the population growth in the area and commenced an ARC (Accommodation Review Committee) to explore options beginning in the fall of 2009.

On April 13, 2010 the ARC submitted a report which detailed the study of five options and concluded with a recommendation that the Board build additions on to both Hillcrest Public School and Queen Elizabeth II Public School. The estimated cost of these additions was approximately \$6.2M.

The Administration Response to the Accommodation Review Committee Report, April 27 2010, supported the recommendations of the two additions made by the Committee with the clarification that financing would have to be approved and supported by the Ministry of Education. A follow up conversation with the Town of Petrolia shed new light on these recommendations. In response to the question of potential sharing of costs to enhance one or two additions through community use of library, gymnasium or meeting rooms, a representative of the Town Council clarified that the municipality supports the ARC's Recommendations; however, had recently invested in a new community centre and library, thus precluding a financial investment in the local schools.

In May 2010, Director Stucke and Superintendent of Business had an opportunity to present the rationale for adding capacity to the schools in Petrolia in a meeting with staff from the Finance Department of the Ministry. Ministry of Education staff acknowledged that additional classrooms will be required to accommodate current and future students; however, there was no support for the proposal of building a new school or building additions on two schools in the same community. Financial restraint was the clear theme of the discussion and it was evident that throughout the province only the most efficient capital proposals would be considered. This realization caused staff to give further attention to other options.

Two options not recommended by the Accommodation Review Committee were then brought forward by Director Stucke and were approved at the June 22, 2010 Board Meeting by Trustees.

At the June 22 2010 Board Meeting the following recommendations were approved by Trustees.

**Recommendation #1**

*"That the Board develop a proposal for an addition on Queen Elizabeth II Public School; and that the Board move the gymnasium project for this school in the major capital priority plan from position #17 to position #1."*

**Recommendation #2:**

*"That the Board hold public consultation meetings with the Petrolia community during the fall of 2010 in conjunction with the French Immersion District Review to seek input on the remaining options:*

- i) a boundary change to convert Hillcrest Public School to a JK-8 regular program facility and Queen Elizabeth II Public School a dual track JK-8 regular program and French Immersion school*
- ii) a reorganization of program delivery to offer JK-8 French Immersion in a single track model at Hillcrest Public School with Queen Elizabeth II offering regular JK-8 program."*

Recommendation #3:

*"That the Board defer a final decision regarding the delivery model for French Immersion and regular programs to be offered at the two Petrolia elementary schools and determination of the number of classrooms required for an addition at Queen Elizabeth II Public School until February 2011."*

**Board Data**

**Enrolment History and Projections  
Hillcrest Public School  
From June 22, 2010 Administration Board Report**

ENROLMENT HISTORY AND PROJECTIONS - HILLCREST PUBLIC SCHOOL											
Capacity 213	HILLCREST/QUEEN E			HILLCREST PUBLIC SCHOOL							
	Oct. 2004	Oct. 2005	Oct. 2006	Oct. 2007	Oct. 2008	Oct. 2009	Proj. 2010	Proj. 2011	Proj. 2012	Proj. 2013	Proj. 2014
JK	47	46	46	56	64	62	63	71	67	69	75
SK	60	53	46	50	56	68	65	65	73	69	70
GR.1	63	59	60	49	48	65	68	65	65	73	69
GR.2	52	60	59	58	52	62	65	67	65	65	73
GR.3	44	51	61	42	58	50	52	65	67	65	65
GR.4	43	47	57								
GR.5	52	46	45								
GR.6	63	52	47								
GR.7	51	60	52								
GR.8	59	55	59								
Totals	534	529	532	255	278	297	313	333	337	341	352
F.T.E.	480.50	479.50	486.00	202.00	218.00	232.00	249.00	265.00	267.00	272.00	279.50
%Full	98.46%	98.26%	99.59%	94.84%	102.36%	108.92%	116.90%	124.41%	126.36%	127.70%	131.22%

**Hillcrest Public School 10/31/2010**

	JK	SK	01	02	03	Total	Teacher FTE
JK(A)B	18	1				19	0.50
JK(B)M	18					18	0.50
JK/SK(F-A)L	6	17				23	0.50
SK(A)M		16				16	0.50
SK(B)B		15				15	0.50
SK(F-B)L		23				23	0.50
1(F)H			19			19	1.00
1/2(F)A			8	10		18	1.00
1D			20			20	1.00
1T			20			20	1.00
2(F)W				20		20	1.00
2?				20		20	1.00
2V			4	16		20	1.00
3(F)C					18	18	1.00
3H					18	18	1.00
3R				2	18	20	1.00
<b>Total</b>	42	72	71	68	54	307	13.00

**Enrolment History and Projections  
Queen Elizabeth II, Petrolia  
From June 22, 2010 Administration Board Report**

ENROLMENT HISTORY AND PROJECTIONS - QUEEN ELIZABETH II											
Capacity 283	HILLCREST/QUEEN E			QUEEN ELIZABETH II - PETROLIA							
	Oct. 2004	Oct. 2005	Oct. 2006	Oct. 2007	Oct. 2008	Oct. 2009	Proj. 2010	Proj. 2011	Proj. 2012	Proj. 2013	Proj. 2014
JK	47	46	46								
SK	60	53	46								
GR.1	63	59	60								
GR.2	52	60	59								
GR.3	44	51	61	13							
GR.4	43	47	57	63	55	67	51	49	65	63	68
GR.5	52	46	45	62	60	66	57	51	50	65	63
GR.6	63	52	47	47	60	60	56	57	51	50	60
GR.7	51	60	52	52	48	66	60	55	58	51	51
GR.8	59	55	59	52	51	63	55	60	54	58	51
<b>Totals</b>	<b>534</b>	<b>529</b>	<b>632</b>	<b>289</b>	<b>274</b>	<b>282</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>278</b>	<b>287</b>	<b>293</b>
<b>F.T.E.</b>	<b>480.60</b>	<b>479.60</b>	<b>486.00</b>	<b>289.00</b>	<b>274.00</b>	<b>282.00</b>	<b>279.00</b>	<b>272.00</b>	<b>278.00</b>	<b>287.00</b>	<b>293.00</b>
<b>%Full</b>	<b>98.46%</b>	<b>98.26%</b>	<b>99.69%</b>	<b>114.23%</b>	<b>108.30%</b>	<b>111.46%</b>	<b>110.28%</b>	<b>107.61%</b>	<b>109.88%</b>	<b>113.44%</b>	<b>116.81%</b>

**Queen Elizabeth II Public School  
10/31/2010**

	04	05	06	07	08	Total	Teacher FTE
4/5S	7	15				22	1.00
4FI	15					15	1.00
4T	24					24	1.00
5/6FI		16	9			25	1.00
5M		25				25	1.00
6D			24			24	1.00
6P			24			24	1.00
7/8FI				8	6	14	1.00
7J				25		25	1.00
7S				25		25	1.00
8H					25	25	1.00
8V					22	22	1.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>12.00</b>

## October 31, 2010 Enrolment

## Hillcrest Public School

213	Oct. 2010
JK	42
SK	72
GR.1	71
GR.2	68
GR.3	54
GR.4	
GR.5	
GR.6	
GR.7	
GR.8	
SPEC.	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>307</b>
<b>F.T.E.</b>	<b>250.00</b>

## Queen Elizabeth II Public School

253	Oct. 2010
JK	
SK	
GR.1	
GR.2	
GR.3	
GR.4	46
GR.5	56
GR.6	57
GR.7	58
GR.8	53
SPEC.	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>270</b>
<b>F.T.E.</b>	<b>270.00</b>

In accordance with this approved directions, Senior Administration conducted consultation sessions on November 25, 2010 at Hillcrest Public School and December 9, 2010 at Queen Elizabeth II Public School in Petrolia. Approximately 50 people attended each session. Administration also had many communications with members of the community by phone and email during this time. The Director also met with School Council representatives from both elementary schools to discuss possible future configuration of the schools. The Principals provided input and shared information received from staff and parents. .

**Summary of Input at Consultation Sessions****Option #1 Dual Track French Immersion School at Queen Elizabeth II Public School and Regular Program JK to Grade 8 at Hillcrest Public School****Pros**

- Only requires addition at one school
- Greater probability of Ministry providing funding for additional classrooms at one location
- Full Day Kindergarten may provide for renovations/additions at Queen Elizabeth II site

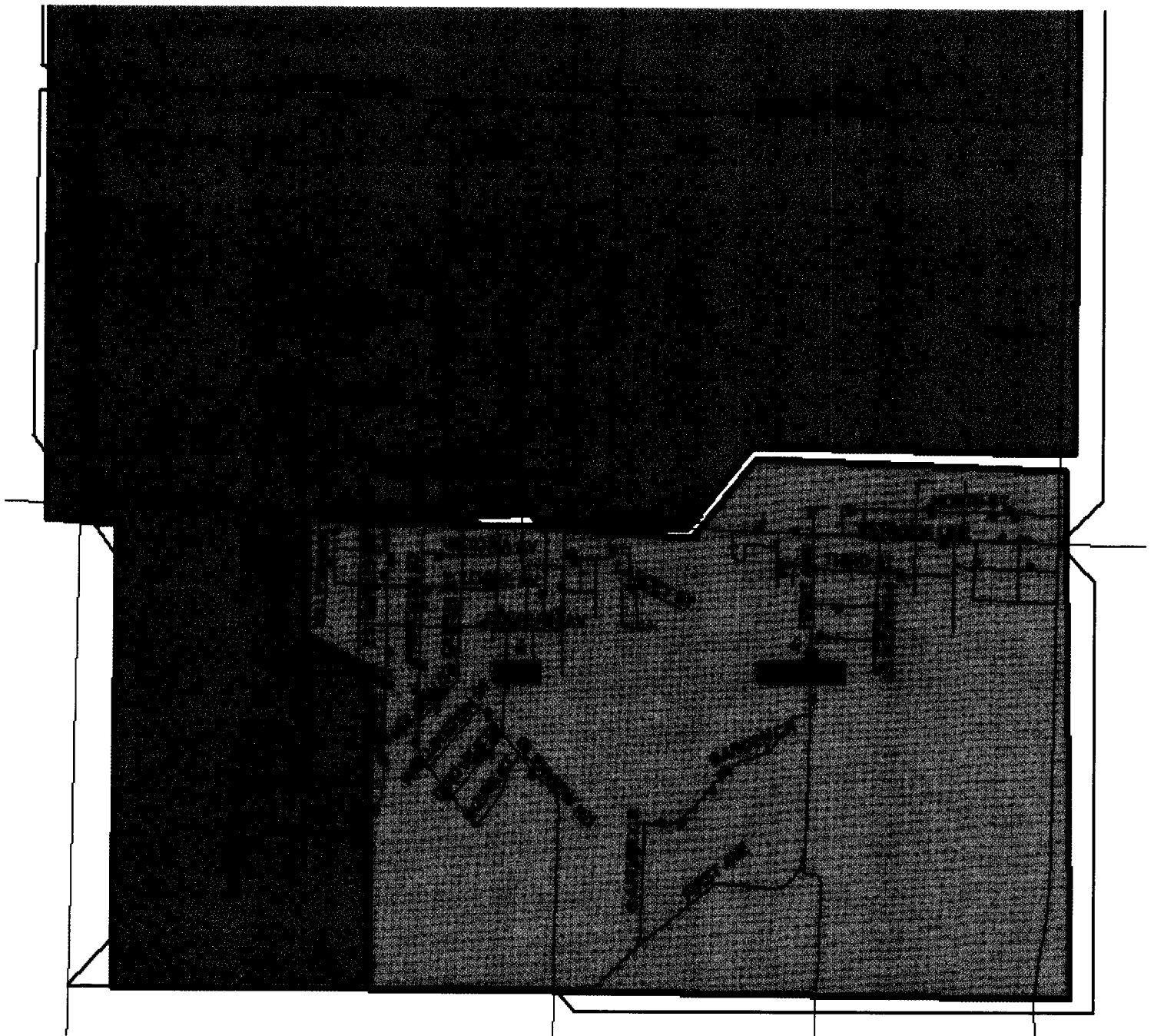
**Cons**

Based on the proposed boundary outlined below (based on October 31, 2010 FTE)

- 121 French Immersion Hillcrest students would be transferred to Queen Elizabeth II School
- 97 JK to 3 Regular program current Hillcrest students would be transferred to Queen Elizabeth II School (as JK to grade 3 has only been offered at Hillcrest Public School)
- 91 Grade 4 to 8 Regular program students currently attending Queen Elizabeth II School would be transferred to Hillcrest Public School (due to proposed boundary change).

This would allow for Hillcrest Public School to open in September 2011 with 180 FTE students (capacity =213) and Queen Elizabeth II Public School would open in September 2011 with 397 FTE students (capacity =253). This is the model that existed prior to the blending of the schools following the 1999 Petrolia Community Consolidation study. Possible boundary divisions seem impractical as many students would require transportation to Hillcrest for their entire elementary school career in order to meet its capacity. It would create a situation not unlike that which was faced ten years ago.

OPTION 1 – POSSIBLE BOUNDARY CHANGE REQUIRED TO CONVERT HILLCREST PUBLIC SCHOOL TO A JK-8 REGULAR PROGRAM SCHOOL (TO ACCOMMODATE HILLCREST'S MINISTRY RATED CAPACITY)



Dots in shaded areas represent students registered in Regular Program as of October 2010. Please note that actual boundaries may need to be adjusted slightly in order to accommodate current enrolment.

Option #2 Single Track French Immersion School JK to Grade 8 at Hillcrest Public School and Regular Program JK to Grade 8 at Queen Elizabeth II Public School

Pros

- There are approximately 189 FTE French Immersion Students fitting into a school with Ministry approved capacity of 213 FTE
- Anticipated reduced attrition in the junior and intermediate grades.
- An addition at Hillcrest Public School would not be required for the immediate future.
- Avoids the risk of odour issues if construction is not required on Hillcrest Public School site.
- Possibility of removing existing portable classrooms at Hillcrest Public School in the future.
- Meets Ministry efficient use of capital dollars criteria only having to build an addition at one site (Queen Elizabeth II Public School).

Cons

- Uncertainty regarding the number of students who will register at Hillcrest Public School in the single track program.
- Students leaving program would affect neighbouring schools.
- Possible division within community.
- Loss of socialization and integration among existing students.

The School Councils conducted a survey in December with five options listed. Options One and Two were the Board approved options. The school councils decided to add three other options which were originally part of the ARC discussions from 2009/2010. The additional three options were removed from the summary prior to being sent to Administration. While the summary data is inconclusive, there was clear direction from the Community that status quo would not be satisfactory and that something needed to be done regarding program configuration and accommodation.

Results from Parent Survey done @ Hillcrest & Queen Elizabeth II Schools that was conducted by the School Councils.

	Option #1 (Boundary Change)	Option #2 (Stand-Alone F.I.)
Hillcrest F.I. Parents	19	21
Hillcrest Regular Program Parents	29	21
Hillcrest 'Did Not Indicate' Parents	14	21
Q.E. F.I. Parents	23	10
Q.E. Regular Program Parents	39	51
Q.E. 'Did Not Indicate' Parents	24	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>139</b>

**Note:**

Several surveys were unable to be used for various reasons. i.e. both options rated the same, only other options picked, etc. Hillcrest – 7, Queen Elizabeth - 22  
 Please note the original survey had 5 options. The School Council Representatives have compiled these numbers based on ranking only between these two options and they may not have been specifically a choice of the parent.

**French Immersion Delivery Models of Surrounding Districts**

School Board	SINGLE-TRACK Elementary	DUAL-TRACK Elementary
St. Clair Catholic	1	2
London Catholic	3	0
Thames Valley	7	3
Windsor Essex Catholic	2	0
Greater Essex County	2	5
Avon Maitland	0	1
Huron Perth Catholic	2	0

*The following is a summary of Research Compiled by Helen Griffin, Learning Coordinator Program Services, Thames Valley District School Board*

Delivery Model	Strengths	Challenges
<u>Dual Track French Immersion</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides the opportunity to communicate Canadian values</li> <li>• Provides the opportunity to put into practice the dynamics found in an officially bilingual and culturally diverse country</li> <li>• Allows students from smaller communities the option of French Immersion</li> <li>• Opportunity to address common needs but also appreciate the specific needs of both the English and French Immersion program</li> <li>• Prompts acceptance and respect of differences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May be misunderstandings/ misconceptions between the English and French Immersion students and staff</li> <li>• Delivery of specific curriculum (i.e. music) may only be available in English</li> <li>• School resources mostly in English</li> <li>• LST, teacher librarian may not speak French</li> <li>• Comparisons between the two programs</li> </ul>
<u>Single Track French Immersion Delivery Model</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More opportunity to use French outside of the classroom, in the hallway, on the yard</li> <li>• LST, teacher librarian, music teacher may be bilingual</li> <li>• Resources mostly in French including the Library collection</li> <li>• More exposure to French within the school environment (i.e., bulletin boards, announcements, assemblies, cultural/musical performances, etc.)</li> <li>• Almost all staff can communicate in French so it can become a more natural setting for really communicating in French</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• English language supports may be limited</li> <li>• Perception of the French Immersion program from English schools</li> <li>• 1 or 2 French Immersion schools within a Family of Schools</li> <li>• Limited perspective of the education system</li> </ul>

### **Conclusion**

Senior Administration recommends that effective September 2011, Option Two be implemented and Hillcrest Public School be converted to a JK to Grade 8 single track French Immersion School. Queen Elizabeth II Public School will retain a JK to Grade 8 regular program delivery model.

With the increase in single track delivery models across southwestern Ontario school boards, it is time for the Lambton Kent District School Board to implement a similar model of delivery. It is hoped that a single track delivery model will allow Hillcrest Public School to offer a more comprehensive immersion experience for our students in the Petrolia area. Also, it is hoped that attrition rates in the Junior and Intermediate grades will be reduced as this has been a significant problem across all of our French Immersion schools. Attrition rate data collected from this new configuration will allow us to make more informed decisions regarding future delivery of French Immersion programs in other areas of the Board.

The Board will commence another French Immersion Program Review once the Ministry of Education completes the review of *The Ontario Curriculum: French As a Second Language, 2001: Extended French, Grades 4-8; French Immersion, Grades 1-8* which will include information on program entry points. The report is not expected until 2011/2012 school year.

It is hoped that the Petrolia community will embrace this new configuration as an opportunity to be the first within our Board to offer a single track delivery model. Consultation sessions indicated the boundary changes associated with Option One would have created significant upheaval and further discontent among students and parents. Single track delivery allows students and parents to make a decision based on French Immersion program and not solely on school location. It is hoped that this will reduce attrition within the program. Students who live out of the catchment area will have an opportunity to transfer as long as they conform to our out of area policy and regulations.

### **Next Steps (pending approval):**

- Communicate with School Communities
- Determine how many students will register at Hillcrest and Queen Elizabeth II Public Schools under the new configurations. Establish a date for early spring registration at both schools.
- Discuss with unions allocations of teaching and support staff.
- Establish staff complements.
- Consult with Transportation Department Staff regarding bus rides for eligible riders.
- Discuss co-curricular configurations with School Administrators.
- Determine size of addition required at Queen Elizabeth II Public School and follow up with the Ministry of Education.

**Project Funding Possibilities**

The preliminary budget estimate for the addition to Queen Elizabeth II Public School only has been projected at \$5M dollars. This budget estimate would be updated when schematic plans outlining the scope of the proposed additions are developed. It is anticipated that a combination of the various funding options may be needed to put together a financially acceptable plan.

The following table outlines the various funding options and combinations the Board may pursue:

<u>Possible Funding Sources</u>	Plan A	Plan B	Plan C
1. Ministry provides specific Capital Funding Approval for this project.	■		
2. LKDSB Capital Priority Allocation (See Note 1.)		■	
3. LKDSB Reserves (Requires Ministry Approval)		■	■
4. LKDSB School Renewal Grant (See Note 2.)		■	■
5. Future Implementation of the Ministry's Full Day Early Learning Kindergarten Program – Possible Capital Funding JK/SK Classrooms	■	■	■

Note 1: A new gym addition at Queen Elizabeth II in Petrolia has been on the Board's Capital project priority submission made to the Ministry. The Board's revised major capital priority plan was submitted to the Ministry indicating that the Queen Elizabeth II Petrolia gymnasium project is the number one priority of the Board.

Note 2: The Board may propose to allocate a part of its annual school renewal funding to finance a long term loan to provide part of the proposed project financing needs.

In the event that the approved funding is insufficient to build the entire addition being proposed, the Board may need to consider using a blend of portable classroom units and permanent construction.

**Recommendation:**

**“That the Board approve the reorganization of program delivery to offer JK to Grade 8 French Immersion in a single track model at Hillcrest Public School, Petrolia, with Queen Elizabeth II Public School Petrolia offering regular JK to Grade 8 program effective September 2011.”**