

**Report To Board**

**FROM: Gayle Stucke, Director of Education**

**DATE: October 13, 2009**

**SUBJECT: Pupil Accommodation Report October 2009**

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This annual Report is presented to the Board by the Director of Education in compliance with Regulation NO: R-AD-106-09. The most recent revision was September 15, 2009 based on revised Ministry of Education Pupil Accommodation Review Guidelines issued June 6, 2009.

The purpose of the Report is to summarize data to provide an overview of accommodation issues across the wide geographic area of the Lambton Kent District School Board. The study of current student enrolment data, demographic issues and Ministry of Education initiatives is key to future planning. The financial section of the Report reviews the Board's 2009-10 Budget including any funding changes for the next school year.

This October Report will include Recommendations to initiate Accommodation Reviews in three school areas. At a Board Meeting following the announcement of the Board's intention to conduct an Accommodation Review, the Board will establish an Accommodation Review Committee (ARC) with membership and Terms of Reference outlined in the Regulation.

The Board's most recent Accommodation Review was completed in May 2008 after four public meetings, with the ARC recommending to the Board the closure of Devine Street Public School for consolidation with Johnston Memorial School. On October 18, 2008 the Board approved Recommendations that began the consolidation process and construction of a new school.

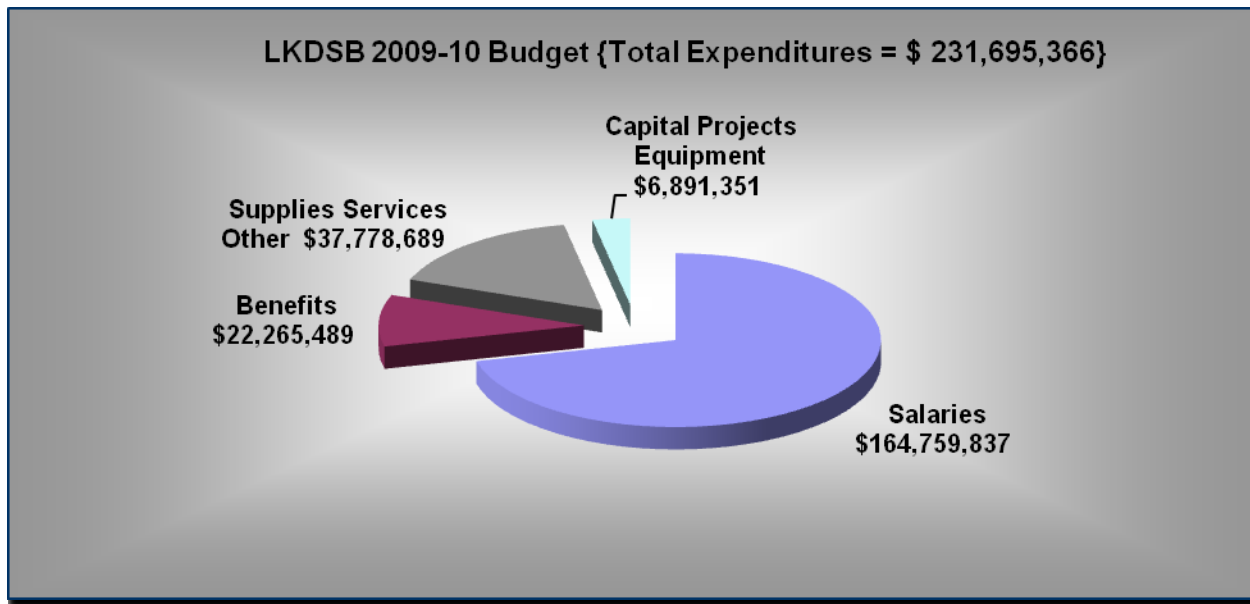
The Ministry of Education continues to support small schools through funding allocations for Rural Schools and Small School Grants. A further incentive to keep small schools open was introduced in an August 17, 2009 Ministry Memorandum, Encouraging Facility Partnerships. A new Policy in the consultation stage would require boards to identify facility partnership opportunities and to share unused space in schools with community partners. Boards would be able to remove the capacity of space occupied by community partners from their inventory. Should this Policy be enacted it could significantly support the viability of schools with low enrolment and particularly those in single school communities.

Dr. Charles Pascal was commissioned by the Premier of Ontario to study through research and consultation the merits of full time learning for four and five year olds and to make suggestions as to how it could be best implemented. His comprehensive plan of action with 20 specific recommendations was released in June, 2009 in the report With Our Best Future In Mind. The Ministry of Education has yet to give official response or direction, however, the Minister has indicated a continued commitment to begin implementation in September 2010. The expectation is that the full day learning program would be introduced in selected schools next September and expanded to all schools over a two to five year period. Doubling the number of classrooms required to offer full day junior and senior kindergarten would have great impact on the capacity of schools with all boards in the province. Schools currently with two or three empty classrooms would be at full capacity and others would require additional classrooms. The implementation of full day learning would affect

options and recommendations of future Accommodation Reviews. A Ministry of Education announcement is expected by November, 2009.

Ministry financial support to school boards is provided through the Grants for Students Needs (GSN) as well as various other one-time project orientated grants for both program and capital building initiatives.

The 2009-10 school year budget for the Lambton Kent DSB totals \$231.69 Million which is based on a projected total full time student enrolment of 23,252 on this 31st of October 2009 count date. The following chart summarizes all expenditures into four major categories:



The funding changes for 2009-10 focus on enhancements that support Ontario's educational priorities to improve student achievement and the safer and healthier learning and working environments resulting from the Provincial Framework Agreements.

**A. Summary of the 2009-10 Enhancements:**

- Additional elementary teachers to support 10 more minutes of prep time.
- Additional elementary teachers to lower Grades 4 to 8 classes.
- More supervision in elementary schools.
- Support for professional learning activities for elementary teachers.
- Additional support to expand secondary programs.
- Increase in maintenance support staff for safer schools.
- Para-professional support directed to elementary students who are at risk.

**B. 2009-10 Ministry Constraint Measures:**

- Reduced funding for textbooks and computers.
- Reduced funding for staff development.
- Scaled down support from the Declining Enrolment grant.

**C. The Updating of Existing Funding Benchmarks:**

- A 2% increase in the school operations benchmark to assist with higher energy and insurance costs.
- A 2% increase in the transportation benchmark to offset higher fuel, capital and other operating costs.

**D. Funding Outside the Grants for Student Needs**

- The government indicates \$198M in investments outside the GSN.

The Ministry funding constraint measures applied in 2009-10 result from the current economic environment both in Ontario and throughout the global economies. Collectively these measures reduced school board funding this year about \$107M dollars.

The current GSN grant formulas have evolved over the last several years to where some formula components provide funding to the Board based on student enrolment, and other formula components offer a baseline fixed amount plus an enrolment driven top-up allocation. Examples of significant formulas in these categories are as follows:

- Pupil Foundation Grant {EST \$105.2M} is calculated entirely on enrolment, \$4,180 per Elementary student and \$5,387 per Secondary student.
- School Foundation Grant {EST \$16.7M} provides funding for a principal and secretary in every school over 50 students and funds additional vice-principal and secretarial support on a school size enrolment driven formula basis.

**RURAL / SMALL SCHOOL COMMUNITIES:**

For qualifying rural schools the Ministry of Education supports some of the operating costs through the Geographic Circumstances Grant.

There are 3 components to this rural support formulas consisting of: Remote and Rural Allocation, Supported Schools Allocation, Rural and Small Community Allocation.

## 1. Remote and Rural \$287,927.

The Remote and Rural funding supports the higher cost of purchasing goods and services for small school boards and boards with schools that are distant from one another.

## 2. Supported Schools \$0

The supported schools funding provides additional funding for teaching staff to keep low-enrolment schools that are far from other schools of the board viable.

An elementary school is deemed to be "supported" if the next closest elementary school of the board is at least 20 kilometers away.

A secondary school is deemed to be "supported" if the next closest secondary school of the board is at least 45 kilometers away.

## 3. Rural &amp; Small Community \$166,417.

This Rural and Small Community funding supports boards with schools in rural or small communities.

This allocation is based on the Rural and Small Community Measure, which represents the proportion of a municipality's population residing in rural areas or small communities.

**COMMUNITY USE OF SCHOOLS:**

The government provides funding to school boards through the Community Use of Schools program to make school space more affordable and accessible for use outside of the regular school hours.

This funding allows boards to reduce the rates for school space used by the community by helping pay for costs of utilities and cleaning. The Lambton Kent DSB has been provided with \$345,000 to support this program during the 2009-10 school year.

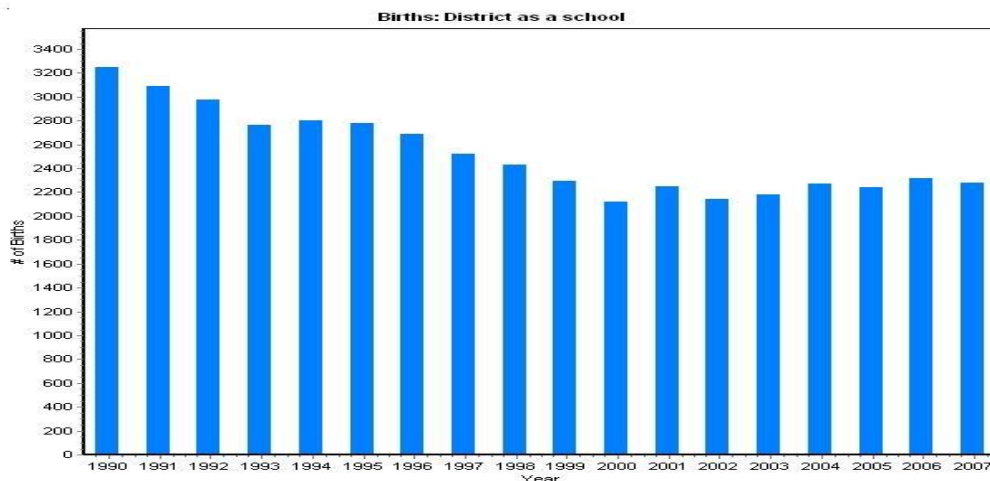
Each school board also provides a Community Outreach Coordinator who is responsible to support initiatives that promote schools as hubs of the community. The Community Coordinator works with our schools and community groups to maximize access and to determine community and school capacity to deliver and manage programs.

**DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS OF THE LAMBTON KENT DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD**

Demographic trends have been important in the collection of data for the planning required in pupil accommodation studies. The study of birthrates and census information is ongoing and assists in predicting future school enrolment.

▶ **Birthrate in L.K.D.S.B. from 1994 to 2007**

<u>Year</u>		<u>Actual # of Births</u>	
1994	▶	2802	
1995	▼	2781	(-21)
1996	▼	2687	(-94)
1997	▼	2522	(-165)
1998	▼	2432	(-90)
1999	▼	2293	(-139)
2000	▼	2152	(-141)
<b>2001</b>	▲	<b>2246</b>	<b>(+94)</b>
2002	▼	2182	(-64)
2003	▲	2182	(0)
<b>2004</b>	▲	<b>2275</b>	<b>(+93)</b>
2005	▼	2239	(-36)
<b>2006</b>	▲	<b>2300</b>	<b>(+61)</b>
2007	▼	2282	(-18)

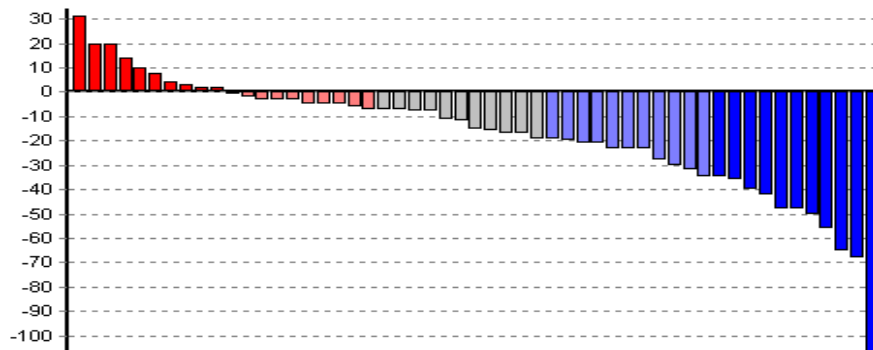


**Table #1 – School Age Population Change from previous year (data as of October 31, 2008)**

<b>Population Change from last year in Chatham-Kent and Sarnia-Lambton</b>				
<b>Age 1 to 4</b>	<b>Age 5 to 8</b>	<b>Age 9 to 12</b>	<b>Age 13 to 16</b>	<b>Total Pop. Change (%)</b>
<b>-0.4%</b> <b>(Decrease 34)</b>	<b>-0.9%</b> <b>(Decline of 90)</b>	<b>-2.9%</b> <b>(Decline of 316)</b>	<b>-3.3%</b> <b>(Decline of 421)</b>	<b>-2.0%</b> <b>(Decline of 861)</b>

**Table #2 – Elementary School Attendance Areas with a Positive Change in School Age Population from previous year (data as of October 31, 2008)**

<b>Elementary School Attendance Areas with a Positive or Stable Change in School Age Population from Last Year</b>					
	<b>Age 1 to 4</b>	<b>Age 5 to 8</b>	<b>Age 9 to 12</b>	<b>Age 13 to 16</b>	<b>Total Pop.Change (%)</b>
Cathcart Boulevard	16.7%	6.3%	0.4%	-0.6%	3.5%
Winston Churchill	-2.1%	11.9%	5.8%	-3.9%	2.3%
Devine Street	9.3%	0.0%	-2.3%	1.0%	2.0%
Indian Creek	-1.2%	7.3%	-1.0%	1.9%	1.6%
Bosanquet Central	17.0%	5.3%	-5.5%	-7.5%	0.9%
Queen Elizabeth II-Chatham	-1.8%	8.0%	3.5%	-4.7%	0.8%
Wheatley Area	1.7%	1.2%	-0.3%	0.0%	0.6%
DA Gordon	0.0%	-2.8%	1.2%	3.0%	0.4%
Hillcrest	7.0%	0.9%	-0.8%	-4.3%	0.3%
Queen Elizabeth II-Petrolia	7.0%	0.9%	-0.8%	-4.3%	0.3%
Kinnwood Central	2.6%	0.0%	0.0%	-1.2%	0.2%

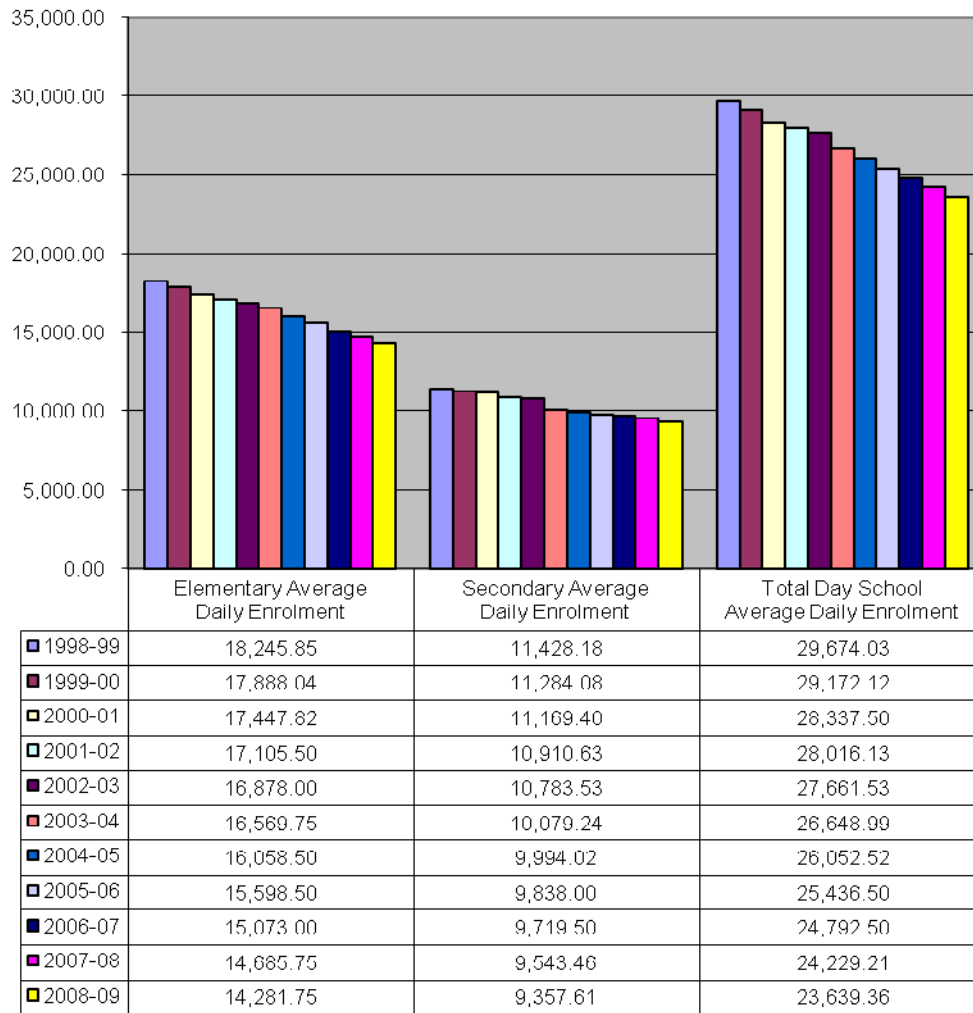


Population Trend 2008, Ages 1 to 16 – Theme Map, Baragar Demographics

**Table #3 – Elementary School Attendance Areas with a ≥5.0% decrease in School Age Population from last year (data as of October 31, 2008)**

<b>Elementary School Attendance Areas with a ≥5.0% Decrease in School Age Population from last year</b>					
	<b>Age 1 to 4</b>	<b>Age 5 to 8</b>	<b>Age 9 to 12</b>	<b>Age 13 to 16</b>	<b>Total Pop. Change (%)</b>
WJ Baird	4.6%	-8.9%	-3.3%	-10.2%	-5.1%
Brigden	6.9%	-10.3%	-10.3%	-12.4%	-7.3%
Grand Bend	-3.6%	9.2%	-18.4%	-11.6%	-7.6%
King George-Sarnia	-2.7%	-10.8%	-4.8%	-12.3%	-8.1%
Lakeroad	0.0%	-9.5%	-12.2%	-9.3%	-8.2%
London Road	0.0%	-8.1%	-18.8%	-10.2%	-9.7%
Hanna Memorial	-8.8%	-13.3%	-23.1%	-10.5%	-14.4%

L.K.D.S.B. AVERAGE DAILY ENROLMENT HISTORY  
1998-99 to 2008-09



More meaningful than population and enrolment predictions are the trends in the actual enrolment figures. Declining enrolment continues to be an important issue throughout both rural and urban communities within the Lambton Kent District School Board. As indicated by the bar graph above, average daily enrolment (ADE), in both elementary and secondary schools of the Lambton Kent District School Board, continues on a steady decline. The average daily enrolment is determined by averaging the October 31<sup>st</sup> and March 31<sup>st</sup> enrolment on an annual basis. The smallest annual decline occurred with 321 fewer in 2001-02, followed shortly after with a drop of nearly 1,000 students in the double cohort year of 2003-04. Since that time, the average daily enrolment decline has averaged over 500 students each year.

The enrolment numbers reported from this point forward will be based on full time equivalent (FTE) numbers. On September 30, 2009, enrolment in the Board's 54 elementary schools has declined by 233 since October 2008 and its secondary schools has decreased by 236 students. On a positive note, the elementary decline was not as great as in previous years. However, the trend of decline over the past five years does continue. In addition, secondary schools regularly experience an enrolment decline of 4 to 5% between semesters.

On September 30, 2009, enrolment in ten elementary schools within the LKDSB has dropped below 175 and three of our secondary schools have enrolment below 375. There is evidence of effective programming in schools with student populations below those numbers; however, there is also recognition that schools can become so small that students and staff would be negatively impacted.

<b>Elementary Schools with fewer than 175.0 F.T.E. students on September 23, 2009</b>		<b>%Full</b>
Aberarder	151.50	75.37%
Bosanquet	145.00	41.67%
Bridgeview	148.50	59.16%
Dawn Euphemia	123.00	54.67%
Errol Village	172.00	108.86%
Grand Bend	163.50	103.48%
Lakeroad	168.50	45.42%
Mooretown Courtright	124.00	48.44%
Ridgetown Public	156.00	60.94%
Thamesville	156.00	80.83%

<b>Secondary Schools with fewer than 375.0 F.T.E. students on September 23, 2009</b>		<b>%Full</b>
Lambton Kent CS	373.75	52.35%
Ridgetown DHS	295.00	48.44%
Tilbury DHS	345.75	65.86%

**French Immersion Review**

The Lambton Kent District School Board announced in September 2009 that a French Immersion Program Review would be formed to include community members, staff and Trustees. This will be the first review of program delivery and location of sites since 2002. Many issues were identified and options were considered but no changes were recommended at that time. Since then the French Immersion Program was gradually phased out at Bosanquet Central Elementary School and North Lambton Secondary School due to insufficient enrolment.

Currently the Board offers French Immersion, Kindergarten to grade eight, in eight elementary locations. In Petrolia, Hillcrest has the JK-3 program and Queen Elizabeth II offers the Grade 4-8 program. In Chatham, McNaughton offers Grade 1-6, and John N. Given provides the FI program for Grade 7-8. At the secondary level there are three schools offering French Immersion. There are 1,208 elementary and 269 secondary students enrolled in French Immersion with many travelling to schools outside their home school boundaries. Any changes to the French Immersion program delivery or location of sites could have an impact on accommodation issues throughout the District.

**SUMMARY**

The Board has conducted 31 community accommodation reviews since 1998. Results included blending of schools into primary and junior/intermediate campuses, boundary changes, relocation of programs, closures and consolidations. In several instances the final recommendation was to make no change in the particular school/s studied. In addition to the range of options recommended in previous LKDSB studies, many boards have made changes to traditional grade offerings in elementary and secondary schools, specifically, reorganizing into JK to 6 and 7 to 12 schools to maximize effective use of facilities.

The October 2008 Pupil Accommodation Report made no recommendations for the establishment of Accommodation Review Committees and provided rationale, stating six reasons, why no schools or school areas were recommended for review. However, it was noted that the number of schools (68) within the LKDSB was disproportionate to the number of students (23,841). It was acknowledged that there would be efficiencies with a higher level of service to students and staff with fewer schools.

Today, the enrolment in our 68 schools has decreased to 23,372. In order to operate and maintain the schools of the Lambton Kent District School Board as effectively and efficiently as possible, it is important that accommodation issues in all areas of the Board be monitored by administration and reviewed annually by the Board. Nine areas of schools are considered to be of highest priority at this time and there is an expectation that all listed and potentially others will be studied through

Accommodation Review Committees over the next three to five years:

- Aberarder, Errol Village, Kinnwood Central Public Schools;
- Corunna and area, including Mooretown and Riverview Public Schools;
- Dresden and area elementary and secondary schools, including Dawn Euphemia, Thamesville Area and Zone Township Central Public Schools;
- Grand Bend, Bosanquet Central, Kinnwood Central Public schools;
- Lakeroad and Sarnia area schools;
- Petrolia and area elementary and secondary schools, including Lambton Centennial Public School.
- Ridgetown elementary and secondary schools;
- Sarnia secondary schools;
- Tilbury elementary and secondary schools.

Three school areas are identified as having the most urgent accommodation issues, either ongoing decrease in student population or unexpected imbalance in enrollment among the elementary and secondary schools. Through an open and collaborative process of community consultation creative alternatives can be considered and solutions that will improve learning opportunities for students can be explored.

**1. Petrolia and area schools** –Hillcrest, Queen Elizabeth II and Lambton Centennial Public Schools and Lambton Central Collegiate and Vocational School

A Community Consolidation Committee met four times in 1999 to study accommodation issues in the Petrolia elementary schools. At that time Hillcrest Public School was declining in enrolment resulting in consideration of closure and/or boundary changes. The projected September 2000 enrolment of Hillcrest was 120 and Queen Elizabeth II, 381 FTE students. Lambton Centennial Central School, just four kilometers from Petrolia, had enrolment of 372 students. The solution recommended by the Committee and strongly supported by the school communities was to blend the schools with Hillcrest Public School becoming a Primary School (JK to Grade 3 English and French Immersion). The Recommendation was included in the October 1999 Pupil Accommodation Report and approved by Trustees for implementation September 2000.

Since that time there has been significant housing development in the Hillcrest area resulting in increased enrolment and a decision to identify it as primary school separate from Queen Elizabeth II. The separation of the schools occurred in 2007 and both schools were assigned fulltime Principals. Today the enrolment at Hillcrest has grown to 232 requiring 3 portable classrooms to be added to the property. Queen Elizabeth's student population has dropped by 100 students in the past ten years. Lambton Centennial enrolment has dropped to 254, a decrease of 118 students since 2000. There is an imbalance in the numbers of students in the three elementary schools in the Petrolia area; however there are 106 students fewer today than ten years ago.

At the time of the last accommodation study in the Petrolia area, the student population at Lambton Central Collegiate Vocational Institute (LCCVI) was 1,359. That number has dropped to 1,074 in September 2009.

The Council of the Town of Petrolia has formally requested the Board to conduct an accommodation review of schools in Petrolia. In order to have a full understanding of the issues and explore all possible options, it is recommended to include LCCVI and neighbouring Lambton Centennial in the study area.

**2. Dresden and area schools-**Dresden Area Public School, Thamesville Area Public School, Dawn Euphemia Public School, Zone Township Central School and Lambton Kent Composite School

In the spring of 2002 a Community School Consolidation Committee was established to review declining enrolment issues in the Dresden area, including Lambton Kent Composite School and its feeder elementary schools. Dawn Euphemia Elementary School was not included in that review as it had previously been reorganized into a consolidated school in the year 2000. The Board supported the recommendations of that Consolidation Committee to continue to operate the three elementary schools and one secondary school in the Dresden area as status quo. It was hoped that there would be a resurgence of the rural population; however, it was recognized that enrolment numbers would continue to be monitored.

Since that time the student population at Zone Township Public School has risen from 162 to 185 in September 2009, largely as a result of students transferring from the Catholic school in Bothwell that closed. Enrolment in the other elementary schools, however, has continued to decline with 88 fewer students in Dresden Area Central and 40 fewer in Thamesville Area than seven years ago. Dawn Euphemia, which had 234 students at the time of the consolidation of Dawn and Euphemia Public Schools in 2000, today has an enrolment of only 123.

The impact of declining enrolment in elementary schools across the District over the past ten years has begun to significantly impact secondary schools. The most significant shift in student population has occurred at Lambton Kent Composite School where enrolment has dropped from 528 in 2002 to 374 in September 2009.

**3. Ridgetown and area schools-** Ridgeview Moravian Elementary School, Ridgetown Public School and Ridgetown District High School

In November of 2002, the Board heard a delegation from the School Council of the Ridgetown District High School requesting permission to introduce grades 7 and 8 into the secondary school facility. The Board directed administration to study the educational viability of offering an optional grade 7 and 8 program into Ridgetown District Secondary School. Research was gathered and reviewed and staff attended individual School Council Meetings. A public meeting was held in January 2003 at which a wide variety of opinions were expressed. While there was strong support for the proposal from a large number of parents and students there were serious concerns raised by others. The Board decided later in the month that due to the lack of community consensus, the proposal to introduce grade 7 and 8 program into the secondary school be declined until further community consultation could occur.

As a result of continued decline in enrolment at each of the schools in Ridgetown, the Board began an Accommodation Review of those three schools in October 2003. At that time the FTE enrolment of Ridgeview Moravian Elementary and Ridgetown Public Schools had dropped to 338 and 220 students, respectively and Ridgetown District Secondary School had a student population of 293. One Community Meeting was held in November before the Ministry of Education called for a Moratorium on all school closures. The Minister of Education announced that there would be “revised provincial guidelines with procedures to include among other things, consideration for the education and community value of schools, with special processes for rural areas.”

In October 2004 there was another attempt to study possible accommodation options with the Ridgetown community through the formation of a Ridgetown Community School Consolidation Committee. However, by January the expected new Ministry Guidelines had not been released and it was determined it would be premature to proceed. That school year saw increases in funding allocations for Rural Schools and Small School grants.

New Ministry of Education School Closure Guidelines were released in 2005 and the long anticipated Pupil Accommodation Review Guidelines, were issued in October 2006. The School Foundation Grants for 2006-07 allocated funding for a full time principal and secretary in all schools with more than fifty students. The funding increases for small and rural schools combined with the new Ministry Guidelines requiring a more extensive Accommodation Review process combined with funding was a strong indication the government was making every effort to keep schools open.

The enrolment of Ridgetown District Secondary School has remained low but has not seen the same drop as other high schools throughout the Board with a September 2009 student population of 295. The town’s elementary schools have had a continual decline in enrolment to 156 students at Ridgetown Public School and 241 at Ridgeview Moravian Elementary School.

If the Board approves the formation of the ARCs, membership on the ARCs will consist of the following representatives from each school: a parent, a school administrator, a community representative, a municipal partner and a First Nations representative if appropriate. The Director and/or area Superintendent of Education facilitates and Chairs the ARC meetings. The Board’s Planning and Reporting Officer will attend as a resource person. Trustees would attend as observers.

The proposed meeting dates for the ARC for the Petrolia Area Schools are November 12, 2009, January 7, 2010, February 4, 2010 and March 4, 2010. The first meeting will be held at Hillcrest Public School from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

The proposed meeting dates for the ARC for the Dresden Area Schools are November 16, 2009, January 18, 2010, February 8, 2010 and March 22, 2010. The first meeting will be held at Lambton-Kent Composite School from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

The proposed meeting dates for the ARC for the Ridgetown Area Schools are November 23, 2009, January 25, 2010, February 22, 2010 and March 29, 2010. The first meeting will be held at Ridgetown District High School from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

**Recommendation #1:**

**“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”**

**Recommendation #2:**

**“That the Board approve the commencement of the Accommodation Review process and the establishment of an Accommodation Review Committee for the Dresden Area of Schools, including Lambton-Kent Composite School, Dresden Area Central School, Dawn-Euphemia School, Thamesville Area Central School and Zone Township Central School.”**

**Recommendation #3:**

**“That the Board approve the commencement of the Accommodation Review process and the establishment of an Accommodation Review Committee for the Ridgetown Family of Schools including Ridgetown District High School, Ridgetown Public School and Ridgeview Moravian Elementary School.”**

- APPENDIX: A** P-AD-106-09 and R-AD-106-09 Pupil Accommodation/School Closure Policy and Regulations – Revised September 15, 2009
- APPENDIX: B** Ministry Capital Projects Activity/Needs Plan
- APPENDIX: C** Lambton Kent District School Board October 31, 2008 & March 31, 2009 Enrolment submitted to the Ministry of Education for grant purposes
- APPENDIX: D** Relationship of September 30, 2009 Enrolment to School Capacity for the Lambton Kent District School Board
- APPENDIX: E** Out of Boundary/Out of District Students as of September 30, 2009
- APPENDIX: F** Lambton Kent District School Board Elementary & Secondary Current and Projected Enrolment (To be handed out at the Meeting.)
- APPENDIX: G** Lambton Kent District School Board
- Portables
  - Utilities Summary
- APPENDIX: H** Map of Area School Catchments
- Dresden Area
  - Petrolia Area
  - Ridgetown Area