

Accommodation Review Committee Meeting
Ridgetown Area of Schools
Questions and Answers Following the Meeting

Question

We have a significant number of potential students who don't enrol because of Home Schooling. What rules apply to parents teaching their children at home?

Answer

The Education Act allows families to Home School by registering with the local school board. There is no monitoring of the program offered. We are aware of some students experiencing enriched learning opportunities being taught at home. Other families may not be able to offer the same level of academic and social experiences.

Most Home School families send their children to secondary school to make them eligible to achieve credits toward a diploma.

Question

In small high schools all compulsory courses are offered but there are limited optional course offerings. Students take E-Learning courses but many parents don't realize or understand the opportunities. Could there be a workshop to explain and promote E-Learning?

Answer

E-Learning and Virtual Learning are providing exciting learning opportunities for secondary students throughout the province. Most college or university programs require students to be involved in E-Learning.

The use of technology does enhance programs in small secondary schools and it would be helpful for the community to have a better understanding of the programs available. If there is interest we could offer an evening workshop for parents and community to demonstrate the capacity of E-Learning and experience a Virtual classroom.

Question

There are many questions about grade 7 and 8 students in secondary schools. Which Boards are doing this? Is there any research available?

Answer

There are many positive experiences with the reconfiguration of schools into grades JK to 6 and 7 to 12 schools in a number of Boards throughout the province.

Nearby Avon Maitland has had four schools JK to 6 and 7 to 12 in the city of Stratford for the past ten years. In September two schools in Goderich consolidated into one JK-6 school and the secondary school educates grade 7 to 12.

The Ottawa Catholic Board has its schools entirely organized JK-6 and 7-12. The public board, Ottawa Carleton, has just introduced that organization with its first JK-6 and 7-12 opening this past September.

Another option is to have all students in a community JK to 12 in one school. Greater Essex is building a school with that configuration in the town of Tecumseh.

Question

What staffing levels are necessary to provide delivery of minimum mandated curriculum at secondary school? What is the student population necessary to sustain that level of staffing?

Answer

While there is no minimum number of staff required or recommended by the Ministry for elementary or secondary schools to be considered viable and effective, most Ontario school boards deem secondary schools with 300 or fewer students/20 staff and elementary schools with 200 or fewer students/8 staff to be less able to offer a significant range of courses and programs. When Principals of such schools remove French instructional minutes, Library and Resource time from the required program minutes, he/she usually has to combine classes in elementary schools and eliminate some optional classes (Music, Visual Art, and Physics) in secondary schools. This results in fewer choices for students.

Question

What projection does the Lambton Kent District School Board forecast as a shortfall (if any) assuming the best case scenario from grade 7 & 8 in the Ridgetown area over the next several years?

Answer

The enrollment projections are posted in the ARC section of our website. First, we know that Ridgetown District High School is at 48.44% of its capacity so there is space for a full Intermediate program (Grade 7 & 8 students) to be placed there. Ridgetown Public School combined Grade 7 & 8 numbers are at 47 this year and are expected to decline slightly over the next four years (44, 29, 25, and 41). Ridgeview Moravian Elementary School Grade 7 & 8 numbers are at 62 this year and are also expected to maintain and increase slightly over the next four years (51, 52, 56, and 61). We can safely say that there is room in Ridgetown District High School for all of these students.

December 14, 2009