

**CHATHAM ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS  
TRANSITION COMMITTEE  
MINUTES / RECORD OF ACTION**

**Date:** April 16, 2018

**Location:** Tecumseh Public School, 287 McNaughton Ave. W, Chatham, ON, N7L 1R8

**Present:** Committee Members: Daphne Zondag, Principal, John N. Given Public School, Nicolle Evans, Teaching Staff Representative, John N. Given Public School, Chris Moore, Principal, Tecumseh Public School, Kristin Heaton, School Council Chair, Tecumseh Public School, Susan Bond, Teaching Staff Representative, Tecumseh Public School, Yvette Caron, Clerical Staff Representative, Tecumseh Public School, Jessica Spafford, Parent/Community Representative, John N. Given Public School, Shawna Ray, ECE Staff Representative, John N. Given Public School, Cristina Haskell, EA Staff Representative, Tecumseh Public School, Carrie Lynn Brown, School Council Co-Chair, Tecumseh Public School, Jenn Jackson, Teaching Staff Representative, John N. Given Public School, Gabriella Ostropec, Student Representative, Tecumseh Public School, Judy Rountree, Teaching Staff Representative, Tecumseh Public School, Melanie Hadlock, Student Representative, John N. Given Public School, Kerry Lynn Buse, Clerical Staff Representative, John N. Given Public School

Resource Personnel: Dave Doey, Facilitator of the Transition Process, Gary Girardi, Superintendent of Education – Capital Planning and Accommodation, Jaime Shannon, Recorder

**Regrets:** Angie Barrese, Superintendent of Education – Program: Special Education, Maclean Norris, Student Representative, Tecumseh Public School, Laurel Liddicoat, President, LK-ETFO, Kevin Hadlock, Parent/Community Representative, John N. Given Public School, Michele Lalonge-Davey, CUPE 1238 President, Theresa McFadden, Parent/Community Representative, Tecumseh Public School, Jolene Greenbird, First Nation Representative, Tecumseh Public School, Daloni Van Goethem, School Council Chair, John N. Given Public School, Dylan Purdy, Student Representative, John N. Given Public School, Della Lambkin, Parent/Community Representative, John N. Given Public School

*Note: This document is not a verbatim transcript. Questions and answers have been paraphrased for the sake of clarity and brevity*

Item	Discussion	Action/Responsibility
Welcome	Facilitator of the Transition Process Dave Doey welcomed the committee and the audience to the meeting.  He introduced himself to the audience and explained that his role is to help make	

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	the transition process the best as possible for students, their families, and staff.	
Traditional Territory Acknowledgement	<p>Facilitator Doey read the Traditional Territory Acknowledgement, as follows:</p> <p><i>We acknowledge that the land on which we are gathered is part of the traditional territory of the Chippewa, Odawa, Potawatomi and Delaware Nations.</i></p> <p><i>These Indigenous Nations, known as the Anishinaabeg and Lunaapeew, agreed through their ancestral languages to the mutual sharing of the land, with obligations and responsibilities to the environment.</i></p> <p><i>Today these responsibilities and obligations extend to all Peoples.</i></p>	
Review of Agenda	Facilitator Doey reviewed the agenda with the committee and members of the public.	
Review of Record of Action – February 28, 2018	The <a href="#">Record of Action</a> from the February 28, 2018 meeting was reviewed and approved by the committee.	
Presentation from the Tecumseh Secondary School Alumni Association	<p>Dan Foster was welcomed to the meeting and thanked the committee for the opportunity to make a presentation. He introduced Andy Ramsz, Richard Gosnell, and Clare Wiersma, and explained that they are the other crafters of the totem pole that were in attendance at the meeting. Eric Stang, another crafter of the totem pole, was not in attendance.</p> <p>The presentation from Mr. Foster and Mr. Ramsz is posted on the <a href="#">LKDSB website</a>.</p>	

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	<p>Mr. Foster presented the “Save the Tecumseh SS Totem Pole” petition to Superintendent Girardi, which is posted on the <a href="#">LKDSB website</a>.</p> <p>Facilitator Doey thanked Mr. Ramsz and Mr. Foster for being at the meeting and sharing with the committee.</p> <p>There were no questions from committee members.</p>	
<p>Follow-up from February 28 Meeting</p>	<p><u>Totem Pole</u></p> <p>Facilitator Doey said that it is important to mention that one of the focuses of this Transition Committee has been to learn more about Tecumseh the man, about Indigenous culture, histories and perspectives, and about the use of Indigenous names, references and depictions. He said that the committee has been keenly interested and there has been information shared by LKDSB Indigenous Lead Minogizhgd, and there would be further sharing that evening in order to extend the discussion about the totem pole.</p> <p>Facilitator Doey explained that at the last Transition Committee meeting more information was requested about the West Coast perspective, as the committee has learned that totem poles are a representative of West Coast Indigenous communities and are not a representative of local Indigenous communities. He said that those at the meeting were there to learn and be respectful of where everyone comes from. He added that the work of the totem pole is appreciated, but it is important to understand its broader impact and the impact, in particular, on members of Indigenous communities. He announced that Denise Helmer-Johnston, LKDSB Secondary Special Projects Teacher – Indigenous Studies and Minogizhgd, LKDSB Indigenous Lead, were in attendance, and introduced Dr. Mark Aquash.</p> <p>Dr. Mark Aquash, Chair of Walpole Island First Nation Board of Education and descendent of Tecumseh, greeted the audience and said that we are all bound together by history, by our present, and most certainly our future. He explained</p>	

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	<p>that his daughter married into a First Nations community in British Columbia, and her mother and father-in-law are leaders of their longhouse. He explained that their community uses the term 'house posts' instead of 'totem pole,' recognizing those people in the community, house, or village, and the Chief is at the bottom of the pole as the Chief carries the people. He said he asked them two questions in regard to the Tecumseh Public School totem pole – what they thought about it and what they would do with it. He said their response to his first question, what they thought about it, was that it made them feel sad because the approach did not follow the protocols; did not respect the spirit of the tree; did not respect ancestors; the west coast community wasn't consulted; and the images used had an impact and impact their spirits. He said they felt hurt that it was done improperly. The answer to his second question, what they would do with the totem pole since the protocols were not followed, was that the family that created it is responsible for it, either for displaying it or taking it out. They said that if it had been done in their community they would have shredded the pole and distributed the pieces to the ancestors or put them into the bush to allow them to go back to the earth. He said that he would share their perspective and explained that he did not have a perspective since his community does not have these traditions.</p> <p>Dr. Aquash said that it is good that Tecumseh is being memorialized and suggested that others visit his memorial on Walpole Island First Nation, where he is buried. He also suggested that as the group moves forward, to move forward in a good way and involve the First Nations and that they will not say 'no,' and will always be there. He mentioned "Tecumseh Days" in the 1970s, in recognition of the Battle of the Longwoods and the importance of that time in history and its very connectedness to Chatham; as time has evolved, the memorial and celebration of Tecumseh Days has ceased to take place. He said that the need to memorialize Tecumseh might be something bigger that we are all connected to, such as bringing back Tecumseh Days or bringing a memorial back in Chatham – some type of statue or understanding the history because being from Chatham means you have a special place in Canadian history, and without that partnership there wouldn't be a Canada.</p>	

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	<p>Dr. Aquash thanked the committee and audience for their time and said he looked forward to hearing more as you move forward with your decisions.</p> <p>There were no questions from the committee or members of the public.</p> <p>Facilitator Doey thanked Dr. Aquash and introduced Superintendent Girardi.</p> <p>Superintendent Girardi thanked Dr. Aquash for his comments.</p> <p>Superintendent Girardi said that in the Transition committee's work there have been discussions on what will be kept at the school and what items will be removed. He said there have also been many good discussions around the name Tecumseh and the mascot, the Braves. He noted that the Records of Action that include those discussions are posted <a href="#">online</a>.</p> <p>Superintendent Girardi explained that that the decision on the totem pole will rest with LKDSB Senior Administration and that his role is to gather information to help with this decision. He said that the information shared will include Richard Gosnell's presentation at the previous meeting, the presentation from the Tecumseh Secondary School Alumni, and the information shared by Dr. Mark Aquash. He said that he wanted it to be perfectly clear that the decision will be made by LKDSB Senior Administration.</p> <p>Superintendent Girardi noted that the Pupil Accommodation Review Committee discussed how to better understand the greater context of some of the school items. The Transition Committee requested that the LKDSB reach out to the local Indigenous community and the Indigenous communities on the West Coast.</p> <p>Superintendent Girardi said that in support of the Board's commitments to students and to reinforce the lessons they are being taught through Indigenous Education, the Board feels it is important to address the LKDSB's concerns with the totem pole as a symbol of cultural appropriation. He said to help further the understanding, the LKDSB reached out to Haida Nation, which has indicated this</p>	

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	<p>particular issue will be added to the Council’s agenda for discussion this week. He added that the LKDSB has contacted an academic scholar, Dr. Robin Gray, who has written on this particular topic and is a member of the West Coast Indigenous community. He explained she is a Ts’msyen from Lax Kw’alaams, BC, and a University of California Santa Cruz President’s Postdoctoral Fellow from 2015-2017 and that she will begin her tenure at the University of Toronto this summer. Superintendent Girardi read the comments from Dr. Gray, which the LKDSB received via email and are posted on the <a href="#">LKDSB website</a>.</p> <p>Superintendent Girardi continued with the following points:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">As we have heard, totem poles are of cultural significance to Indigenous communities on Canada’s West Coast. They are a traditional way of telling the stories of Indigenous families and of keeping records of important historical events. As a West Coast Indigenous tradition, we also acknowledge that there is not a direct relationship between Tecumseh, a Shawnee from what is now known as Ohio, and totem poles.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Moving forward, we see this as an opportunity for education and understanding of Indigenous histories and traditions and to further the educational goals of the <i>Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action</i>.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">One of the Calls to Action is “Building student capacity for intercultural understanding, empathy, and mutual respect.”</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">The Lambton Kent District School Board is committed to supporting safe, caring and inclusive learning environments. One of our strategic priorities is that: “We will develop the capacity of all students and staff to embrace safe and caring learning environments and ensure respect for and understanding of the world around us.”</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">We appreciate and understand the sacred tradition within which these monuments are created. We support Indigenous peoples’ right to preserve</p>	

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	<p>their cultural traditions, knowledge and cultural expressions.</p> <p>LKDSB’s Senior Administration has raised concerns about culture appropriation and has reached out to representatives from Indigenous communities, both locally and on the West Coast, in order to further our understanding. Our focus is on making the right decision that will honour the Indigenous community, as well as honour the spirit of the school’s namesake, Tecumseh.</p> <p>You may recall a similar discussion during the processes of determining a school name and choosing a mascot for the consolidated school. The LKDSB’s Indigenous Lead offered insightful comments on the term “Braves.”</p> <p>The consolidation presents an opportunity to review and consider the memorabilia and artwork that will be included in the consolidated school moving forward.</p> <p>We are not the first school board to face such a decision. However, we have an obligation to our students to do our part to support the <i>Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action</i>. In the spirit of reconciliation, we also want to move forward with honouring Tecumseh’s legacy in a respectful way that incorporates Indigenous voices, as well as promotes education and understanding of Indigenous histories and perspectives.</p> <p>Again, we appreciate the comments provided today. The next step is to take the information from today’s conversation to LKDSB’s Senior Administration, who will make the final decision.</p> <p>Should the decision be to remove the totem pole, we will work with the Alumni Association to return it to the original artists. Considering its size, the timeline for removal would be during the summer as part of the Tecumseh Public School site renovations.</p>	

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	<p>Superintendent Girardi added that regardless of the decision the totem pole will be moved at the time of the construction in the summer of 2018.</p> <p><u>Exterior Artwork on John N. Given Public School Building</u></p> <p>Superintendent Girardi noted that the committee requested more information on the artwork on the exterior of the John N. Given Public School building. The John N. Given Public School Golden Anniversary Book received at the last meeting from Principal Zondag was passed around as it contained more information on the artwork.</p> <p><u>Mascot Design and Colours</u></p> <p>Committee member Sue Bond reported that the sub-committee is still working through some of the mascots and colours and have brought a few ideas to the graphic design artist. She added that there has been information from staff and students about what it might look like and what should be included, but there have been no final decisions made at this point.</p>	
<p>Presentation of Pedestrian Review for Tecumseh Public School</p>	<p>Superintendent Girardi explained that during the Pupil Accommodation Review, concerns were expressed from parents and community members on the traffic on McNaughton Avenue. He said that the Board agreed to work with the Municipality of Chatham-Kent to discuss ways to ensure the crossing at McNaughton Avenue is safe, given a consolidation. He said that the Board submitted the Pupil Accommodation Review Committee's request to move the existing crosswalk to the east side of the school. He added that due to short timelines, the Board completed a traffic study through a third party.</p> <p>Superintendent Girardi presented the Pedestrian Review for Tecumseh Public School to the committee. Each committee member received a copy and it is posted on the <a href="#">LKDSB website</a>. The report concludes that the existing crosswalk should remain and a Level 2 Type B crosswalk should be added to the east side</p>	

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	<p>of the school.</p> <p>Committee member Kristin Heaton asked if the additional crosswalk would cause a traffic backlog. Superintendent Girardi responded that the report has been submitted to the Municipality of Chatham-Kent, but there has not been further conversation.</p> <p>Committee member Jessica Spafford asked if the new crossing would be the same type as the existing crosswalk. Superintendent Girardi responded that it would be a Type B crossing, which is a flashing light, and different than the full stop that is in place now near the tennis court.</p> <p>Superintendent Girardi suggested that this item is to be on the agenda for the next meeting in order for the committee to provide further input.</p>	
John N. Given Public School Golden Anniversary Book	This item was shared with the committee during the "Follow-up from February 28 Meeting" item on the agenda.	
Principal Reports	<p>Principal Moore provided the following update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tecumseh Public School continues to have John N. Given student and staff visits.</li> <li>- Principal Moore attended a staff meeting at John N. Given Public School, and everyone there is aware of the organizational plan for September 2018, and the class organization charts were expected to be completed soon.</li> <li>- There was a suggestion to host a Meet the Teacher BBQ for both schools in an evening in June, with the plans for the new school on display.</li> <li>- He reported that the students seem quite excited and have completed a tour of the school. At the time of the meeting, the enrolment number was expected to be 530 students for the 2018-19 school year.</li> </ul>	

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	Principal Zondag did not provide an update.	
Updates from Sub-committees	<p><u>Graduation</u> Karen Walker was not in attendance, but asked another committee member to report that the two schools will be operating separate graduations for this year; they are archiving plaques for graduation. It was added that they will be looking at what is in common and different between the two ceremonies, and what the memorial awards and traditions are, and that the work will continue next year as the sub-committee looks towards the first amalgamated graduation.</p> <p><u>Memorabilia</u> Committee member Nicolle Evans reported that the sub-committee has gone through all of the John N. Given Public School memorabilia in preparation for the May 5 Open House. She added that they have sorted what is going to Tecumseh Public School and what is going to the silent auction.</p> <p>Principal Moore suggested that the committee look at the showcases on the wall as they leave the building, as they have been redesigned and you can see how much space there is for displaying items.</p> <p><u>Resources</u> Committee member Jenn Jackson reported that she would be passing her role on to Principal Zondag at John N. Given Public School.</p> <p>Committee member Cristina Haskell reported that they are still purging, cleaning, and organizing, and Tecumseh Public School teachers are going to John N. Given Public School to look at their supplies.</p> <p><u>Traditions and Identity</u> Committee member Sue Bond reported that the mascot and colours have yet to be decided, and the sub-committee will work on establishing some of the favourite traditions from each school that will continue in the future.</p>	

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<p>Questions/Suggestions from the Committee and Public</p>	<p>Superintendent Girardi provided an update on the construction at Tecumseh Public School. He reported that the tender would close that week, which would need to be approved by Trustees. He added that \$2.6 million was awarded from the government to make changes to the building, which will include reconstruction of some of closed classrooms and the exterior parking area, which will be completed over the summer.</p> <p>Principal Moore added that for the ALLP classroom, the Board has done construction and the ceiling reinforcement was completed during March Break.</p> <p>There were no questions from committee members.</p> <p><b>Question:</b> An audience member asked if the Board had any future plans for John N. Given Public School at this point in time.</p> <p><b>Response:</b> Superintendent Girardi responded that the process for surplus space in the Board rests with Trustees should it be declared surplus, and at present it has not been declared surplus. He said that if the Trustees decided it was surplus then, according to Ontario Reg 444, it would be offered for sale to tier one community agencies at market value and then to the public if not purchased by a tier one agency.</p> <p><b>Follow-up Question:</b> The audience member asked if it is a drawn out process.</p> <p><b>Response:</b> Superintendent Girardi responded that the Board is currently focused on moving the students together and added that if there is a way to reduce costs around other places in the Board, it might look to those options as well.</p> <p><b>Follow-up Question:</b> The audience member asked about security issues at John N. Given Public School, as she lives nearby and there is activity at the school after hours. She said if she sees things she will call in.</p>	

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	<p><b>Response:</b> Superintendent Girardi responded that the Board is concerned with that as well and concerns like this have come out of all of the Pupil Accommodation Reviews the Board has managed. He added that there are some additional conversations to have should the facility be deemed surplus, but the Board is not there yet. He encouraged her to call in and said that safety is important to the LKDSB and has been a priority in all of the Pupil Accommodation Reviews.</p> <p><b>Question:</b> Mr. Ramsz commented that it was mentioned that the Board has not made a decision in regard to the totem pole, but that it will come down to accommodate the construction. He said he would like to offer the Alumni's services in monitoring how it does come down so they don't find it in a bunch of pieces or destroyed. He asked when it is anticipated that the Board will make that decision, and if it would be before it comes down, or after the fact.</p> <p><b>Response:</b> Superintendent Girardi responded that in reference to a decision on the totem pole it has been asked what the criteria is to make the decision. He said it is difficult to have criteria when it comes to an item where research was needed to help with understanding. He said that other boards in similar processes have reached out to local Indigenous communities and West Coast Indigenous communities. He said that he understands there has been some concern that there is not enough communication. He said that Administration would like to make the decision sooner rather than later, and are still waiting on information from Haida Nation. He said that he will talk to the Senior Administration and when the decision is made the LKDSB will make a public statement.</p> <p>Superintendent Girardi added that there have been conversations with Building Services about the process for taking the totem pole down and that there could be discussions with Alumni prior to taking it down to ensure a sounds process.</p> <p><b>Comment:</b> An audience member asked the Board to remember that the intention of all parties involved truly was to honor Tecumseh.</p>	

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	<p><b>Response:</b> Superintendent Girardi appreciated this and said that it is an opportunity to talk about a way do something together to remember everybody and work together to move forward in a positive way. He reminded the committee and audience that no decision has been made.</p> <p><b>Question:</b> An audience member asked if there would be a memorabilia representation in the school from all of the past schools.</p> <p><b>Response:</b> Committee member Kristin Heaton explained that she is on the Memorabilia Sub-committee, and that they have focused so far on the John N. Given Public School items, but their work will continue next school year and will then be more focused on Tecumseh Public School memorabilia, which would include both the secondary school and elementary school items.</p> <p><b>Question:</b> An audience member asked where the totem pole will be housed when it is taken down.</p> <p><b>Response:</b> Superintendent Girardi responded that Building Services is still working on the process and that it will come down after the students leave the building.</p> <p><b>Follow-up Question:</b> The audience member asked when the Board will know where it will be held.</p> <p><b>Response:</b> Superintendent Girardi said that the information will be made public with the Alumni Association, and that he told Dan Foster and Richard Gosnell that he will make them aware of where it will be stored during construction if it is not to be removed permanently. He said that he will look into timing, and that Building Services has been making plans for either outcome.</p> <p><b>Follow-up Question:</b> The audience member asked if there has been any consideration given to keeping it in place and not taking it down during construction.</p>	

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	<b>Response:</b> Superintendent Girardi responded that Building Services has stated that keeping it in place is not possible during construction.	
Next Meeting Date	The next meeting will be held on May 23, 2018 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at Tecumseh Public School.	
Adjournment	The meeting was adjourned at 7:58 p.m.	