

**ACCOMMODATION REVIEW COMMITTEE
RECORD OF ACTION
DRESDEN AREA SCHOOLS**

Date: March 31, 2010

Location: Dresden Area Central School

Present: Committee Members: Gayle Stucke, Director of Education, David Doey, Superintendent of Education, Brad Holmes, Principal, Dresden Area Central School, Michael Pishl, Parent Representative, Dresden Area C.S., Stuart Kiar, Community Representative, Dresden Area C.S., Mary Lynn Anderson, Principal, Dawn-Euphemia School, Emily Faflak, Parent Representative, Dawn-Euphemia School, Wilma Sonneveld-Wright, Principal, Thamesville Area Central School, Scott Sproule, Parent Representative, Thamesville Area C.S., Darren Carther, Community Representative, Thamesville Area C.S., Ann Balkwill, Principal, Zone Township Central School, Jodi Robb, Parent Representative, Zone Twp. C.S., Jackie Beatty, Community Representative, Zone Twp. C.S., Rob Lee, Principal, Lambton-Kent Composite School, Barbara McCaughrin, Parent Representative, Lambton-Kent C.S., Lynda Weese, Community Representative, Lambton-Kent C.S., Emery Huszka, Municipal Representative Township of Dawn-Euphemia

Resource Personnel: Joy Badder, Superintendent of Education, Lorie Vandeschoot, Planning and Reporting Officer, Trish Johnston, Recorder

Trustees: Randy Campbell, Ruth Ann Dodman, Carmen McGregor, Scott McKinlay

Regrets: Audrey Wagner, Community Rep., Dawn-Euphemia School, Marsha Coyne, Senior Planner - Municipality of Chatham-Kent,

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All in attendance were welcomed and the format for the Meeting was explained. There was agreement to extend the meeting past 9:00 p.m. if necessary. 	
Review of Record of Action (RoA) from March 3, 2010 ARC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Record of Action was accepted as presented. Director Stucke reviewed the Board's policy on Pupil Accommodation. <i>It is the policy of the Lambton Kent District School Board to operate and maintain its schools as effectively and efficiently as possible to support student achievement while exploring all opportunities to enhance the learning environment.</i> 	

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Options for Further Consideration	<p>Dave Doey explained the process for reviewing the five options agreed upon at the March 3 ARC meeting. Lorie Vandeschoot would review the information in the agenda package and then the Members would reflect on each of the options. It was suggested that perhaps upon reflection, one option may be preferred while others no longer considered viable options.</p> <p>Appreciation was expressed to Lorie and the members of the Finance and Transportation Departments for their time spent preparing the data provided to the ARC members.</p> <p>Lorie provided a detailed review of the pertinent data for each of the five options being considered and the opportunity for questions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Option A – Schools Remain Status Quo 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Option B – Boundary Change between Dawn-Euphemia and Lambton Centennial ○ The data provided did not include the domino effect of moving students from Petrolia to Lambton Centennial. ○ The data provided in the package was limited to the Dresden ARC. Maps of the Petrolia boundary scenario were reviewed as part of the Petrolia ARC. Trustees would be provided with all the data prior to making any decisions. The mandate of this ARC did not include looking at Petrolia. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Option C - JK – 12 School in Dresden (consolidation of students from Dresden Area and Lambton-Kent Composite School) ○ It was noted that an additional gym would add approximately another \$1M to the projected construction cost. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Option D – School Closures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Map Scenario 1 – School Closure of Lambton Kent Composite School, relocate students to CKSS and WDSS <p>It was explained that in each of the school closure scenarios, relocation of students was limited to two schools. It takes the transportation department staff about two days per scenario to develop the transportation data. If a school were to close, community input would be obtained on new boundaries and would likely involve more than two schools, depending on where the students lived.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Option D – School Closures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Map Scenario 2 – School Closure of Dresden Area, relocate students to Dawn-Euphemia or Thamesville ○ The transportation cost for this option was not available at the time of printing. It would be an annual estimated cost of \$103,725.00 to transport the students to alternate locations. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Option D – School Closures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Map Scenario 3 – School Closure of Dawn-Euphemia, relocate students to Lambton Centennial or Dresden Area ○ Bentpath line was used in the scenario because it is currently the boundary at the secondary level. ○ The identification of a cost savings in transportation if the school were to close was questioned. It was felt to be an unfair advantage compared to the data presented for the other schools. ○ It was explained that the same amount of buses would be required to relocate the students and it might be possible in this scenario to eliminate some bus routes based on where students live. In some scenarios buses must be added to the routes to adhere to the ride time limitations. ○ It was confirmed that these are very preliminary estimates. A number of factors go into costing transportation of children to school and home and depending on the number of destination schools and ride times, the numbers can shift easily. These are not intended to be hard and fast numbers or skew the perception but just to show if the students went to two schools an estimated costs. If a recommendation went forward detailed information would have to be provided to Trustees. ○ It was noted that students may choose to attend schools under the jurisdiction of other school boards if their local school closed. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Option D – School Closures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Map Scenario 4 – School Closure of Thamesville, relocate students to Dresden Area or Zone. ○ It was clarified that the Superintendent of Business provided the figures and indicated that the minimum cost for adding a classroom is \$500,000. ○ The Board must follow a prescribed tender process and meet required building codes. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Option D – School Closures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Map Scenario 5 – School Closure of Zone, relocate students to 	

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	<p>Dawn Euphemia or Thamesville.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It was noted that some students who are currently not bused may need transportation if the school were to close. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Option E – Grade 7 to 12 School at Lambton Kent Composite School (grade 7 & 8 students from Dresden Area, Thamesville and Zone) ○ Rob spoke to the need for additional classrooms to accommodate the grade 7 and 8 students. 	
Analysis of Each Option	<p>Stuart stated that there had been a lot of emails between the ARC Members since the last meeting. ARC Members, having reviewed all the scenarios put out at the last meeting and the corresponding data, and in the best use of time, would like to remove Options C, D, and E from consideration. Implementation of these options would not result in cost savings or enhancement of student achievement.</p> <p>A school closure would have a devastating impact on a community. The public are passionate about their schools and the schools are thriving. He clarified that this did not mean that ARC Members were content with status quo. They want to make the schools more viable.</p>	
	ARC Members reached consensus to remove Options C, D and E from consideration.	
Scenario A Like to change from status quo to enhance all of the existing schools	<p>It was agreed to change Option A from status quo to enhance all of the existing schools.</p> <p>It was agreed that it was not necessary to go through the pros and cons of the options but to focus on how to enhance the schools.</p> <p>Dave asked for consensus of the group and all members agreed.</p>	Agreed
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ARC Members would still like to recommend a boundary change even though the Petrolia ARC was not in favour of it. They feel that if students from Petrolia were moved to Lambton Centennial, the need for expensive additions at the Petrolia Schools could be eliminated. ○ They would like to put shared facilities between the Catholic and public school boards on the table to see if something can be worked out. A single education system would save cost and eliminate duplication of services. They acknowledged that it is an unlikely solution but worth pursuing. ○ They would like to see Vice Principals placed in the schools with a shared Principal. (twinning) 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The formation of a Committee at arm's length from the school Board was proposed to obtain an objective view and provide opportunity to flush out issues. This would be a method of obtaining input from the local people. ○ It was suggested that this could be the role of School Councils. There should be a free flow of information through the School Councils. ○ Community partnerships could be formed and ideas generated. ○ It was agreed that the goal was to get the community involved in the schools to maintain and grow enrolment and that the committees should be designed to meet the school community needs. ○ A re-examination of School Council functions was suggested. ○ It was agreed to recommend the concept of forming committees. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It was suggested that reductions at the Board Administration level should be investigated to see if the reductions reflect the declining enrolment data before schools are looked at for closures. ○ The Ministry funding structure was explained and reductions that have occurred in Board Administration to remain within the funding provided in this area. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It was suggested that Board staff assist the committees with establishing partnerships, like approaching the Mennonite community to come to our schools or the colleges to use our space. ○ The Board has a Community Partnership Officer who could provide committees with contact information. The Board does not have a recruitment person. ○ Gayle meets with College Presidents, municipal representatives, businesses and is always open to investigating partnership opportunities. School boards are currently being directed to develop new policies on partnerships. Our Continuing Education Department works with our communities as well. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It was stressed that the ARC Members were choosing these options because they feel that they can explore all opportunities to enhance learning in the schools. They want to ensure they are using the schools as effectively and efficiently as they could. They want the opportunity to enhance and change their focus and get communities to consider using the schools rather than just the students. Their goal is to make the schools the centre of the community and a place people want to come. They do not feel this is wishful thinking and feel they can build on what they have. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Methods of welcoming and accommodating the new immigrant population should be considered. The Board has staff who work with the Cultural Coalition. ○ Perhaps classes could be offered to parents in the evening to reach out through language and technology. ○ Emily has talked to one of the head masters of the Mennonite community and this person indicated that if we start a class that was offered in a way that they need to be comfortable with, then they would come to our school to learn English. ○ It was suggested that English Language night courses could be offered for parents of the students who speak Low German. 	
<p>Questions From the Public</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Comment –Dan Wallace, Dawn-Euphemia School Parent, commented on the refreshing conversation and applauded the ARC for listening to the community and for being respectful of the tax payer. He supported the development of community partnerships. He feels the intent of the Ministry’s Working Group on Declining Enrolment has been captured. He encouraged the Board to accept the recommendation. He acknowledged that the community members are the only ones that can make the school community use grow. ● Question – Donna Jacobs, Teacher at Dresden Area Public School, explained that she was one of the Teachers who participated in the visit to the schools in Goderich. She acknowledged that Option E Grade 7 to 12 School at LKCS was off the table but questioned why gym schedules and transportation issues were not noted as part of the requirements for this option. ● Response It was noted that if the Board were to consider implementing a grade 7 to 12 school it would be mindful of the need to consider gym schedules and transportation. <p>Comment - Brad Holmes, Principal of Dresden Area Central School, expressed appreciation for all the efforts of the Board personnel to assist the ARC Members to arrive at this point tonight. He noted that many people in the audience felt very stressed because their schools were mentioned as closure options.</p>	

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<p>Recommendation to Board</p>	<p>Committee members reached consensus to make a recommendation to Board using a reworded Option A and the boundary reconsideration in Option B as follows.</p> <p>To enhance all our existing community schools (including boundary reconsideration):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommend a boundary review between Petrolia Area Schools and Dawn-Euphemia School to relocate students from Petrolia schools to Lambton Central Centennial School to Dawn-Euphemia School; • Pursue the sharing of facilities with St. Clair Catholic District School Board and lobby for a single education system and for provincial policies to promote sharing of facilities between school boards; • Place Vice Principals in schools and share Principals between schools (twinning); • Establish partnerships with other education groups, pursue municipal opportunities and make buildings more community user-friendly; • Lobby for a review of the funding formula; and • Form Community Committees to aid in maintaining and increasing school populations and to assist in the use of excess capacity in our schools. Strategies to enhance our schools would include programs to welcome immigrant families (for example, ESL courses for parents, make school facilities such as gymnasium and shops available for use by immigrant families), developing and recommending policies to make use of facilities by community groups easier and more user-friendly (for example, insurance issues), and investigating partnering with post-secondary educational institutions to offer adult learning opportunities at our schools. These committees would work with the Board to ensure the community is aware of what is happening at the board level and to ensure that the Board is more aware of the concerns and needs of the community. <p>Lorie shared the boundary scenarios discussed at the Petrolia Area ARC Meetings. They considered boundary changes as a way of solving their excess enrolment issue but ultimately did not include a boundary change as part of the recommendation they will present to Board. Lorie shared the maps of the Petrolia area and explained the various scenarios considered by the Petrolia</p>	<p>Recommendation to Board agreed upon.</p>

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	<p>Area ARC. Hillcrest School is a JK to grade 3 school and Queen Elizabeth II School is a grade 4 to 8 school. Both schools offer the French Immersion program as well as English. Principals of the two schools surveyed parents about moving and the proposed boundary change. No support was expressed for moving the French Immersion program or moving students to Lambton Central Centennial School. The maps of the Petrolia area are available under the Petrolia ARC section of the Board web site.</p>	
<p>Next Steps</p>	<p>Gayle Stucke stressed that the ARC report to Board has to be the Committee's report and questioned if anyone would like to write the report.</p> <p>It was agreed that Gayle would draft the report and send it to all Committee Members on April 1.</p> <p>It was agreed that ARC members would send their feedback on the draft report to Stuart Kiar by end of day on April 5. Stuart would then incorporate the revisions and resend to ARC members on April 6 for final consensus. Stuart will send the final report to Gayle by April 7 for inclusion in the April 13 Board Agenda. Board packages are delivered to Trustees on April 9.</p> <p>Two parents from the ARC were requested to volunteer to present the report to Trustees at the April 13 Board Meeting. All ARC members were encouraged to attend the Board Meeting.</p> <p>Gayle will be presenting the Administrative report to the Trustees two weeks later at the April 27 Board Meeting to be held in Sarnia. A copy of the report will be shared with ARC members prior to the Board Meeting. There would be opportunity for delegations to the Board at the Board Meetings in May and June if ARC members wanted to expand on some of the ideas in the report.</p> <p>All ARC information is available on the Board website.</p> <p>It was suggested that consideration be given to holding the April 13 Board Meeting at Lambton-Kent Composite School instead of the Chatham Regional Education Centre because it would be a more central site and able to accommodate more people.</p> <p>Gayle expressed her appreciation to the ARC Members for their respect, willingness to share and time. She acknowledged the stress and pressure they</p>	<p>Gayle</p> <p>Stuart</p> <p>Parents to Present ARC Report to Board</p>

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	felt and the tension the various options created in their communities. She thanked the Principals for their contributions and the audience, and teachers for attending. This has been a valuable experience for the Board, part of forming a stronger partnership.	
Adjournment	The Meeting adjourned at 8:48 p.m.	