

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

**Date:** March 29, 2010

**Location:** Ridgetown District H.S.

**Present:** Committee Members: Gayle Stucke, Director of Education, Jim Costello, Superintendent of Education, Todd Tiffin, Principal Ridgetown P.S., Heather Simpson, Parent Representative Ridgetown P.S., John Ford, Community Representative Ridgetown P.S., Carol Kloostra, Principal Ridgeview Moravian E.S., Jane Lawton, Parent Representative Ridgeview Moravian E.S., Jim Brown, Community Representative Ridgeview Moravian E.S., Mark Hunt, Principal Ridgetown District H.S., Susan Kelner, Parent Representative, Ridgetown District H.S., Ed Little, Community Representative (designate for Renee Geluk), Ridgetown District H.S., Katharine Hopkins, First Nations Representative

**Resource Personnel:** Lorie Vandeschoot, Planning & Reporting Officer, Tracey Childs, Recorder

**Trustees:** Jim Townsend, Randy Campbell, Scott McKinlay, Carmen McGregor

**Regrets:** Marsha Coyne, Municipal Representative, Municipality of Chatham-Kent, Renee Geluk, Community Representative, Ridgetown District H.S.

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

<b>Item</b>	<b>Discussion</b>	<b>Action/Responsibility</b>
Welcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Director Stucke thanked everyone for attending and recognized Trustees Jim Townsend, Randy Campbell, Scott McKinlay and Carmen McGregor.</li> <li>Ed Little is the designate for Renee Geluk who sent her regrets.</li> </ul>	
Mandate of the Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Director Stucke reviewed the committee mandate which is to analyze data, consider alternatives and make recommendations to the Board.</li> <li>Committee members agreed they would be willing to stay later this evening rather than schedule another meeting date, if necessary.</li> </ul>	
Review of Record of Action (ROA) from	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Director Stucke reviewed the record of action.</li> <li>Director Stucke followed up with Director Paul Wubben of the St.</li> </ul>	

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the February 24, 2010 ARC Meeting	Clair Catholic DSB to discuss a possible partnership between the St. Clair Catholic DSB and Lambton Kent DSB. Director Wubben indicated there is no interest of partnering or sharing schools due to the basic philosophy of Catholic Education.	
Review of Options (attached)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jim Costello reviewed the ARC process that has taken place to date. At the third ARC meeting 8 options were narrowed down to 3 options.</li> <li>• Lorie Vandeschoot provided a detailed review of pertinent data for each of the 3 Options being considered and the opportunity for questions, discussion and input from the committee members, which culminated with a completed list of Pros and Cons for each Option.</li> <li>• Director Stucke gave a detailed explanation of how Ministry capacity is calculated.</li> <li>• Director Stucke explained “top up” as being every school with excess capacity receives up to 20% extra funding. Rural funding is in addition to “top up” funding.</li> </ul>	
Analysis of each Option (Pros and Cons)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mark Hunt recorded the pros and cons for the 3 (three) options on chart paper. The same information was projected on the screen for the public.</li> <li>• <b>Option A - Schools Remain Status Quo:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pros: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Keeping “family environment/feeling”;</li> <li>○ Avoid anxiety because of change.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Cons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Emotional attachment to “bricks and mortar”;</li> <li>○ Would not demonstrate community leadership;</li> <li>○ Programming challenges would continue with no projected increase in enrolment.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Option B – Consolidate two elementary schools into one JK-8 school, leave secondary school 9-12:</b> <p>Pros:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Better, richer programming;</li> <li>○ More single grade classes;</li> <li>○ More staff collaboration;</li> <li>○ More resources;</li> <li>○ More staffing beyond the classroom.</li> </ul> <p>Cons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Bussing space limited at Ridgetown P.S.</li> <li>○ Lack of sidewalk to Ridgeview Moravian E.S.</li> </ul> <p>Decision was made to move to Option C as most pros and cons for Option B and C could pertain to both.</p> </li> <li>• <b>Option C - Consolidate two elementary schools into one JK-6 school, with 7-12 in secondary school:</b> <p>Pros:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Better, richer programming;</li> <li>○ More single grade classes;</li> <li>○ More staff collaboration;</li> <li>○ More resources;</li> <li>○ More staffing beyond the classroom;</li> <li>○ Support to the high school for funding;</li> <li>○ Gr. 7 &amp; 8 student access to labs, gym, athletic field, computers, library, etc.;</li> <li>○ Maintain a high school in our community;</li> <li>○ Retention of students in secondary years;</li> <li>○ Stronger high school and stronger elementary school – better balanced numbers;</li> <li>○ Early Years and all other programs could locate at Ridgeview Moravian E.S.;</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Possible DD and Essential level programming at Ridgetown District H.S. – students are not transported to Chatham.</li> <li>○ Retention of and attraction of families to Ridgetown.</li> </ul> <p>Cons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Bussing space limited at Ridgetown P.S.</li> <li>○ Lack of sidewalk to Ridgeview Moravian E.S.</li> <li>○ Will gr. 7 &amp; 8's become lost in the shuffle;</li> <li>○ Loss of \$79,000. in top up and rural funding; however, removes necessity of \$1.3 million for new heating system needed at Ridgetown P.S.;</li> <li>○ Traffic congestion;</li> <li>○ Additional transportation cost of \$49,000.;</li> <li>○ Loss of leadership opportunities/roles.</li> </ul>	
<p>Questions/Input from the Pubic</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Question</b> - Susan Cudmore (Ridgeview Moravian P.S.) <b>Are gr. 7 &amp; 8's going to be bussed at the same time as secondary students or elementary students?</b> Answer – it would make sense to bus the gr. 7 &amp; 8's on the elementary schedule.</li> <li>● <b>Question</b> - Tracy Cofell (Ridgeview Moravian E.S.) <b>Are elementary special education programs worked in or cut because of lack of capacity?</b> Answer – Superintendent Costello confirmed the Special Education program would remain if numbers supported.</li> <li>● <b>Comment</b> – Lynn VanMaanen (Ridgetown P.S.) Would like to see the Ontario Early Years centre remain.</li> <li>● <b>Question</b> - Tracy McEachran <b>Will special education programs be implemented in the high school?</b> Answer – Superintendent Costello indicated it would be worthy of consideration if the numbers are warranted.</li> <li>● <b>Comment</b> - Katharine Hopkins (First Nations Representative) Gr. 7-12 would have a positive impact on First Nations students if special education were to be implemented in the high school. Students would remain in school longer if they were at home</li> </ul>	

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	<p>(Ridgetown).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Comment</b> - Phoebe Murray (Ridgetown District H.S.) Has been involved in communities and is in favor of Option C – Ridgetown District H.S. is a much better facility. If we don't put efforts behind our high school, who will move into the community? Option C makes the most sense – we need to keep our high school.</li> <li>• <b>Comment</b> - Tracy Robinson Took part in the Goderich field trip. Gr. 7 &amp; 8's were part of the high school assemblies, track and field, etc. They lost leadership opportunities and went from smaller classrooms to larger classrooms.</li> <li>• <b>Feedback</b> - Todd Tiffin (Ridgetown P.S.) Discussion with gr. 5 to 8 students re: implementation of gr. 7 to 8 moving to the high school. Majority of gr. 7 students seem to be very excited. The gr. 7/8 students were more cautious. The gr. 5/6 students were ecstatic about the possibility.</li> <li>• <b>Feedback</b> - Carol Kloostra (Ridgeview Moravian E.S.) Students had questions about graduation still taking place and would they still have school teams. The older junior grades were excited and there was no fear.</li> <li>• <b>Feedback</b> - Mark Hunt (Ridgetown District H.S.) Students have already assumed that this needs to happen.</li> <li>• Director Stucke explained that any leadership lost in gr. 7 &amp; 8 would be experienced by gr. 5 &amp; 6 students who would now be "top dogs". Gr. 7 &amp; 8's felt special in the new school setting ie. Student Council.</li> <li>• <b>Concern</b> - Darren Robinson (Ridgetown P.S.) If we go with Option C we increase enrolment at the high school. Is there a concern as to whether or not the school will be up for review in 5 or 6 years down the road. What can we do to reduce this possibility? Mark Hunt indicated that Goderich had students enroll from the Catholic system which increased enrolment. If we could bring back</li> </ul>	

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	<p>special education students from Chatham, the enrolment would increase again. Director Stucke indicated some students will be lost but more were gained in Goderich scenario than were lost.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Question</b> - Tracy Cofell (Ridgeview Moravian E.S.) What will happen to gr. 7 and 8's if high school eventually closes? Mark Hunt explained that it is anticipated that enrolment will eventually level off. Director Stucke explained that the Board would be required to accommodate those students (gr. 7 &amp; 8's) back to an elementary school in their hometown.</li> <li>• <b>Comment</b> - Ed Little (Delegate for Renee Geluk) We need to try to put forth the best education possible for our students. There are no guarantees. We need to continue to make our schools attractive and make it a positive experience for the kids.</li> <li>• <b>Question</b> - Katharine Hopkins (First Nations Representative) Are First Nations enrolment numbers included in the enrolment projection? She indicated that birthrates could be higher than projected. Answer - Lorie Vandeschoot explained how enrolment is determined and that projections include First Nations students. Susan Gillepsie, a delivery room nurse, shared that there were fewer births at her Chatham-Kent hospital this year and are projected to be fewer again next year.</li> <li>• <b>Question</b> – Mary Whiteye - First Nations parent (Ridgeview Moravian E.S. &amp; Ridgetown District H.S.) Will the Delaware language room be eliminated or remain? Answer – Superintendent Costello indicated that the language room and program would continue.</li> </ul>	
Discussion of Preferred Option/s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After in-depth discussion, committee members reached consensus to remove Options A and B. Consensus was reached to make a recommendation using Option C, which was to consolidate two elementary schools into one JK-6 school, with 7-12 in secondary school. The committee reached consensus and agreed that the consolidated elementary school would be at the existing Ridgeview</li> </ul>	



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• April 13, 2010 – ARC recommendation to Board.</li> <li>• April 27, 2010 – Administration recommendation to Board.</li> <li>• June 22, 2010 – Board of Trustees will vote on recommendation.</li> <li>• Opportunities to bring delegations to the Board between Apr. 27 and June 22.</li> <li>• Members and public were encouraged to continue to use the website to communicate effectively.</li> </ul>	
Adjournment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting was adjourned at 9:57 p.m.</li> </ul>	