

Good Evening Trustees

My name is Mary Ethier, a resident of South-West Sarnia. I am the mother of two, & a SCITS ARC member. As we are approaching the end of the process I have to admit that I probably would have gotten involved one way or another. But now I reflect back on how and why I was chosen to be a leader in this process. It was because I was at the school council meeting of 8 November, 2015. The only other parent there was my husband. I wonder, as Principal Keane was considering people for the ARC if his choice was between the only two people to attend the school council meeting, if he weighed each and thought to himself... *I wonder who will give the process the least amount of push back. A stay at home mom or the retired police officer with 30 years of police investigative knowledge, an ex-OPP instructor, the media officer for Lambton region and years of court room experience dealing with lawyers and has no fear of challenging so called experts and conclusions....* And I got the call..

Moving on.

I'd like to challenge the \$1.1 million that the LKDSB proposes to save with the closure of SCITS which include staff and utilities reductions and operating expenditures.

The savings associated with staff and benefit reductions make up 70% of this \$1.1 million but this is also true if St. Clair were to close. (Page 9 of the Q&A for South Sarnia ARC answer to question 27) so it's not an argument for the closure of SCITS vs SCSS. The only real difference is that SCITS will still cost money if it is closed because it will have to be maintained or demolished.

In all fairness, to determine the net savings in utilities, it is not as easy as providing numbers. We have to remember that SCITS is 24 thousand square feet larger than St. Clair. Other contributing factors include:

- the Manufacturing shop – a learning space- uses much energy, something SCSS does not have but will have if promises from the LKSDB are kept.
- 1788 hours of community use, two recent examples of auditorium use listed by VP Leystra at the final working meeting (21 march); on 2 April there was an Impromptu Design Challenge for Secondary School kids and on 16 April was the annual Mathletics competition for grades 5-8 both put on by Professional Engineers of Ontario, Lambton Chapter. Each event used the auditorium and several classrooms for more than 5 hrs on a Saturday. Both days also had a second group in the building using space on a Saturday.
- ALL Classrooms of SCITS have air conditioning, St. Clair classrooms do not (although in fairness the science labs, library and offices do) but if the consolidation goes through then you will put A/C in SCSS and your utilities will go up.

It's been noted that hydro spikes during the summer at SCITS but this was caused by A/C use, which is obviously necessary to keep the students comfortable. Heaven help the student if SCSS doesn't get its full capital grant. "Jam yesterday, jam tomorrow but never jam today," so said Alice in Wonderland who was clearly an astute judge of bureaucratic promises

Finally the pool – with its dehumidifier, pump and heating of: Heat and water cost combined are equally efficient at both schools and that's factoring in the amount of water held in the pool.

SCITS hydro costs \$0.65 per square foot more than St. Clair. This can be further reduced by applying the Ministry's PSI grant of \$34,000 and community use revenue of \$17,118. It is difficult to compare hydro consumption with any high school in Sarnia as they are not fully air conditioned like SCITS, nor do they have the amenities.

Because my son is on the swim team I frequently visit the pool facilities. Back in January, I pointed to a crack in the south wall, and made a comment that the walls could use some refreshing. I was told the crack had been there for at least 15 years. This is the crack that a locally hired engineering consulting firm says is a structural deficiency and will cost \$1 million to repair. The 2014 Condition Assessment Report done by VFA, a third party vendor for the Ministry, makes no mention of a structural deficiency. I question why it is a concern all of a sudden.

The pool is an asset to SCITS but not for the hydro it consumes or the maintenance it requires. To make it more affordable to the LKDSB, allow the community the time to seek partnerships for the pool. A successful example is the Toronto District School Board (TDSB). It has 66 pools. 33 are managed by the City of Toronto, 31 are managed by the Toronto Land Corporation (a wholly owned subsidiary of the TDSB) and only 2 are managed by the school board itself. I grew up in Toronto and was on the private swim team called the Toronto Aquanauts. We swam at Harbord Collegiate downtown 3 times a week and Castle Frank High School (now the Rosedale School for the Arts) on the other side of downtown 2 times a week. Both pools are buried deep within the buildings. I recently called each school and found out that both pools are still functioning. In fact the Principal at Rosedale said there are swim groups in the pool before he arrives at 7am! Every morning! It's utilized by swim teams, community swim lessons, mommy and me groups, elderly aquafit groups, as well as having general community public swim times and birthday parties! These pools are thriving and paying for themselves.



Harbord CI in Toronto looks a lot like SCITS!

I spoke to the owner of a local electrical company who said that it would be very easy install a clamp-on metering system which are priced, he said, for under \$1000.00. This way usage of kilowatts could be measured and billed separately. This same system could also work for the auditorium.

By consolidating St. Clair students with SCITS, you can utilize the school to its fullest capacity, partner out the pool to maximize its potential for the school and the public. SCITS is in an area where the need for access is greatest. The potential is there. Make SCITS a money-maker for you and the community will benefit.

The Board of Trustees can, and should, choose a different outcome (as per PARG 2015) from what is presented in the Final Staff Report. I would hope the trustees look at the condition of SCITS compared to St. Clair. There are ways to involve the community to keep SCITS a vibrant hub in southwest Sarnia. The Board has the option to sell the Sherwood Village land and invest in a dual track elementary school at the St. Clair site. The School Consolidation Capital program also provides funding to right-size schools through partial demolition. The land that St. Clair sits on is too much for an elementary school and Superintendent Girardi stated (29 Feb working

meeting of South P/Wyoming ARC) that the MOE does not require schools to have green space, so part of SCSS's 18 acres could be sold off to a developer. As acknowledged in the ISR (pg 14) the proceeds received from the sale of surplus properties would also be used as funding source for capital work.

In summary the LKDSB can lease the pool facilities with collective community partnership. Taking away learning spaces that contribute to higher hydro costs is not an option unless the LKDSB is of the opinion that the current learning spaces at SCITS do not enhance student programs (i.e. air conditioned classrooms and manufacturing program). Community use rental fees should be increased beyond cost recovery to include the full hydro costs.

I hope that I have disappointed Principal Keane about the push back possible from a stay at home mom; there are just too many good reasons for keeping SCITS open.

Now, my son Ellis would like to conclude with his concerns about the closure of the SCITS pool.

Hello my name is Ellis and I am in Grade 9 at SCITS. When I had to choose a high school I toured Alexander Mackenzie twice and St Clair twice but SCITS was my high school of choice. I just knew I would fit in there and I liked it as soon as I walked in the door. When school began I tried a few different activities that didn't work out but I really took to swimming and loved being on the swim team. This worried my mother because I have to swim deaf. We practised 3 times a week and I never missed one. At the local swim meet in February at the Y I placed 2nd in my event. For the swim-a-thon I swam 50 laps and raised almost \$800 to help support the team.

The future of the swim team is uncertain. If we combine at St Clair then we'd have to find time at the Y to practise. But my mom asked and there are already 3 school teams plus the Rapids swim team who swim mornings and evening several times a week, plus, the Y always keeps two lanes available for their members only at all times. With so many other groups using the pool I fear there will be no time for us to rent lane time. So when you think about closing my school keep in mind that you're not just taking the opportunity away from me but you will be cutting off a 1000+ kids who will lose the opportunity to use an on-site pool facility. Oh, and BTW, my deaf sister was looking forward to joining the swim team in 2017!

Thank you for your time