

My name is Scott Sills, and I am in favour of keeping SCITS open.

First, I would like to thank the Trustees for allowing us to address you this evening, as well as for holding the next meeting at Alexander Mackenzie Secondary School, rather than at the Board offices; also for going overtime in meetings; for rescheduling meetings in Sarnia rather than Chatham; for accommodating our request to have one of the open public input meetings in the SCITS auditorium; and for extending the ARC process.

I would like to note that when I refer to the Board, I am speaking of the employees of the LKDSB who advise the Trustees. When I refer to the Trustees, I am speaking of those who will vote on the decision as to whether SCITS should be closed.

We did not want to compete with any other schools to keep SCITS open. We made several alternate suggestions, some of which had already been implemented by this Board at other locations, yet they were rejected here in Sarnia. Once it turned into a competition, however, we did expect a fair, impartial hearing. I am not sure that we are getting that.

Some examples:

On the LKDSB web site, in the FAQ, question 64 asks how many times the SCITS library has flooded, and the cost and time of remediation each time. The answer offered, while giving the impression that it happened 7 or 8 times, was a listing of dates, invoice numbers, PO numbers, costs, and firms that performed the work. Due to previous mention of an issue with grey water, the implication was that the library was flooded with gray water 7 or 8 times. The truth was that the library flooded once, due to someone leaving the hose running when (over)filling the pool. The other flooding that occurred was in those basement areas of the school that are not accessible to the students. The library flood was not grey water. It was city-supplied drinking water. Wouldn't the easiest response to the question have been to say, "Once, due to human error when filling the pool," and then listing the cost, and the time that the library was out of service? In their enthusiasm, the Board gave a complex answer that hid the true circumstances, casting SCITS in a bad light. The public, and possibly the Trustees, will have been misled by this answer.

Question 24, from the LKDSB FAQ, asks how much the new sound board in the auditorium cost? The answer was, and I am going to quote this in its entirety, as it is sublime in its brevity: "In 2008 the SCITS Auditorium received a new sound booth. The cost was \$4000.00." Nice simple answer. Except, again, the answer is misleading, both to the public and to the Trustees. I believe that the cost of the sound board, as are the costs of most if not all of the workings of the auditorium, was paid by monies collected via admission to the SCITS Revue and other student productions. The Board did not have to pay for this, just as they don't have to pay for the curtains, the seats, the other sound equipment, the lighting board, the other lighting equipment, the sets, the props, or much of anything else that the auditorium has. In their enthusiasm, the Board gave a simple answer that hid the true circumstances, again casting SCITS in a bad light, and again misleading the public and perhaps the Trustees.

At the last ARC meeting, on March 21st, a panel of experts was called in to answer any questions the ARC members might have. One expert explained the FCI, a critical component in determining whether the LKDSB gets the grant from the Ministry. He used a bar graph in comparing SCITS and SCSS as one part of the data that makes up the FCI. The bar representing SCITS was at least twice as high as

the bar representing SCSS (copy on last page, original at 5 Year Renewal needs, pg.5 of Asset Replacement Value Calculation, <http://www.lkdsb.net/Board-Info/arc/2015/Sarnia%20South%20Secondary/Asset%20Replacement%20Value%20Calculation%20and%20FCI.pdf>). Yet the values represented were actually quite close, at approximately \$13 million for SCSS, and \$15 million for SCITS. If anyone here made a bar graph comparing two numbers, the first draft of such a computer-generated graph would show the entirety of the scale. The graph was altered; the bottom line, so to speak, was moved up. This could be acceptable, if the y value at the bottom of the graph was labelled as 12 million, rather than not labelled, indicating a default value of 0. No such label was on the y-axis at the bottom. It also begs the question as to why the graph would be presented in such a way. To save pixels? Now the bars were labelled, but as projected on an overhead projector, with the fuzziness that entails, it would be easy to believe that SCITS needed over twice as much money for the 5 year renewals. This would be a misguided belief. Again, the enthusiasm of the Board, or in this case, their expert, would seem to obscure what is actually happening—again, casting SCITS in a bad light. Again, the public, and possibly the Trustees, would not get an accurate portrayal of what is actually happening.

I especially have issue with the staff and students at SCITS being told that the closure of their school was a done deal, and that the staff, in particular, was told not to speak with the public. As far as I know, no such censure was placed on the staff at SCSS.

Sue Mackenzie tells me she has counted eight occasions where the 5 & 10 year renewal needs have changed along with the FCI, in the past 5 months; (listed on the penultimate page of this presentation).

I find this enthusiasm by the board unsettling. The playing field has been tilted, the fix is in, the competition has not been fair. I feel the Trustees should want any information prepared on their behalf to be clear, to remove any possibility of misunderstanding or perception of favouritism. As it now stands, we don't have faith in the information that the Board has supplied. We hate to think that the Trustees will be making a decision based on this information.

This entire process has been difficult, for everyone, so I now recommend a change of pace. If those of you with a web device could bring up Google, then click the "Images" tab, upper right corner, then type in a country, any country, into the search bar, then scroll, you will see the point I am trying to make: you will see maps of the country, flags of the country, and the architecture of that country. On the first page. Try this with any country. Try it with cities, too. Google, or rather the people who use Google, seem to think that architecture is important. I think it is as important as music, as literature, as the visual or the performing arts. Perhaps part of the reason it is sometimes not seen as important as the other arts is that we have to seek the others, but architecture is lived. We don't just look at it; it surrounds us. Like the other arts, it shapes our minds, our personalities, our life. It can be a little more subtle than the other arts, but countries, cities, corporations and people spend time, talent and money on excellent architecture, both to create it, and to maintain it. So why can't we? At the April 12th Board meeting, one Trustee expressed concern over historical status potentially being conferred upon SCITS. Firstly, my understanding is that this would only be done if the Trustees decide to close SCITS. Secondly, such a designation would be done for a reason: The architecture of SCITS is worthy of being preserved. The designation would be a mark of distinction, and the LKDSB should be proud that this jewel is counted among their schools. I know the citizens of Sarnia are.

There has been much discussion concerning the distress caused amongst the students of both schools by our desire to keep SCITS open. I feel that the opportunity for the kids to become engaged, to use their analytical skills, to develop or display passion for a cause, and to learn ways to communicate those passions, beliefs and ideas is a worthy result of this campaign. This is something they can, and should take with them once they graduate from SCITS. Not just the skills learned, but the realization that they can make a change, and that doing so is worthwhile—and that sometimes it won't be easy, but that they can win. I remind the Trustees that it was a SCITS student, Mackenzie George, who got this ball rolling. She started the SaveSCITS FB page. I wasn't taught "good acceptance" at SCITS, nor compliance. I am glad that somehow she managed to miss those lessons too.

Thank you.

The Facility Condition Index

NUMBER OF TIMES RENEWAL NEEDS & FACILITY CONDITION INDEX (FCI) % HAS CHANGED

5-YEAR RENEWAL NEEDS

30-Nov-15

LKDSB SIP's (attachment)
(2014 - 2018)
SCITS \$6,496,333; FCI 21.99%
SCSS \$13,369,585; FCI 39.75%

01-Mar-16
LKDSB/B. McKay Email
(2016 - 2020)
SCITS \$15,327,812; FCI 51.90%
SCSS \$13,076,479; FCI 39.75%

21-Mar-16
ARC Working Meeting
VFA/Renewal by Discipline
(2015 - 2019)
SCITS \$15,165,980; FCI 51%
SCSS \$13,046,479; FCI 40%

21-Mar-16
ARC Working Meeting
VFA/Renewal Needs in %
Pie Chart
SCITS FCI 54%
SCSS FCI 46%

12-Apr-16
LKDSB/FSR

10-YEAR RENEWAL NEEDS

24-Nov-15

LKDSB/ISR
Total Cost of Facility Work
(2015 - 2024)
SCITS \$17,695,459; FCI 59.90%
SCSS \$13,369,585; FCI 40.64%

17-Dec-15
ARC Q & A; Pg 3 Q# 1
Capital Project
Requirements
(2014 - 2023)
SCITS \$17,695,459; FCI 59.91%
SCSS \$13,369,585; FCI 40.64%

07-Apr-16
LKDSB/ARC Website
FCI Comparison
SCITS \$18,152,066; FCI 61.46%
SCSS \$13,407,185; FCI 40.75%

(2015 - 2019)
SCITS \$36,021,726; FCI 121.96%
SCSS \$17,031,572; FCI 51.77%

SCITS - FCI ranges from a low of 21.99% to a high of 121.96%
SCSS - FCI ranges from a low of 39.75% to a high of 51.77%
Eight changes to 5 & 10 year renewal needs & FCI% over a course of 5 months

The most important point to observe in the flow chart is how St. Clair's 5 & 10 year renewal needs do not fluctuate and vary to the extreme that SCITS does. It is difficult to be objective when these numbers can be so easily influenced. We are hopeful the Board of Trustees will evaluate this.

