

**ACCOMMODATION  
REVIEW COMMITTEE  
- ADMINISTRATION  
STAFF REPORT  
24 February, 2014**

---

## **BACKGROUND:**

The RCCDSB Trustees established an Accommodation Review Committee (ARC) for the Madawaska Family of Schools in May 2013 according to the RCCDSB policy and procedures. The ARC process began on September 18, 2013 and was completed on February 5, 2014. The ARC Report and Recommendation was presented to the Director of Education on February 10, 2014 and subsequently posted on the board's website. The final report was presented to the Board of Trustees at the regularly scheduled February 24, 2014 meeting of the board.

The members of the ARC are to be commended for their commitment to a process that included 10 working meetings and 4 public meetings in the Madawaska school communities. The ARC members should be praised for their work as they strived to develop possible solutions to address declining enrolment and surplus pupil spaces in the Madawaska Family of Schools.

The ARC was chaired by Peter Adam, Superintendent of Education. MaryLynn Schauer, Superintendent of Business Services was designated ARC secretary and, along with Ivan Johnson, Manager of Plant Services formed the Board representation. Bob White, Manager of the Renfrew County Joint Transportation Consortium also provided additional resources to the ARC as required. The ARC was further supported by Linda Arsenault, recording secretary, who provided timely communication and precise information for the entire ARC process.

The ARC also utilized the services of Lygia Dallip, Ameresco Asset Sustainability Group Inc., to facilitate the process and provide advice to the ARC in adhering to the spirit and intent of the Ministry of Education's pupil Accommodation Review process and the Board's policy and procedure.

The ARC has engaged the community in comprehensive and courageous conversations which have shaped the recommendations contained in the ARC Report.

The ARC has fulfilled its mandate to consult with the community, report and make recommendations on pupil accommodations in five of the Madawaska Family of Schools consisting of:

- George Vanier Catholic School, Combermere;
- St. Casimir's Catholic School, Round Lake;
- St. Andrew's Catholic School, Killaloe;
- St. Mary's Catholic School, Wilno;
- St. John Bosco Catholic School, Barry's Bay.

### **ADMINISTRATION STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

- |  |
|--|
| ➤ St. Casimir's Catholic School, Round Lake Centre will close <u>effective August 31, 2014</u> , with student destination to St. Andrew's Catholic School, Killaloe. |
| ➤ St. Mary's Catholic School, Wilno will close <u>effective August 31, 2015</u> , with the preferred student destination to St. Andrew's Catholic School, Killaloe . |
| ➤ George Vanier Catholic School, Combermere will <u>remain status quo</u> .  |
| ➤ St. John Bosco Catholic School, Barry's Bay will <u>remain status quo</u> .  |

### **Staff Analysis and Findings:**

Board staff has reviewed the ARC Report and Recommendations to the Director as submitted on February 10, 2014. The administration staff findings and recommendations are as follows:

**Administration Staff Recommendation #1:** proposes that St. Casimir's Catholic School, Round Lake Centre close effective August 31, 2014, with the student destination to St. Andrew's Catholic School, Killaloe.

- The administration staff supports this ARC recommendation as the best option consistent with the Terms of Reference for the educational and social opportunity for these students.
- August 31, 2014 is the natural end date to the school calendar year.

**Administration Staff Recommendation #2:** proposes that St. Mary’s Catholic School, Wilno close effective August 31, 2015 with the preferred student destination for these students to St. Andrew’s Catholic School, Killaloe.

- Recognizing that the undue delay of a school closure may cause stress and instability in a school community, the administration staff support the delay in closing of St. Mary’s, Wilno for one school calendar year.
- Transportation data supports St. Andrew’s as the preferred student destination. Staff acknowledges the parental right to request an out of zone transfer currently under Board policy.
- A proactive transition plan, facilitated by the school principals, involving the students, staff and parents is needed to successfully transfer these students.
- Another year will allow for the students, staff and community members to “make a difference – as faith-filled community builders” at St. Andrew’s Catholic School.
- Another year will provide an opportunity for current staff to plan appropriate transfer options in accordance with our collective agreements and the RCCDSB vision statement.
- St. Andrew’s Catholic School, Killaloe has the capacity to accommodate these students.
- August 31, 2015 is the natural end date of the school calendar year.

**Administration Staff Recommendation #3:** proposes that George Vanier Catholic School, Combermerewill remain status quo.

- Although the George Vanier school community is also experiencing significant enrolment pressures, the administration staff recommends continued support for this school community.
- The staff acknowledges that George Vanier Catholic School has unique challenges due to remote geography, bus transportation and community needs.
- All Board employees, the George Vanier school community and the Holy Canadian Martyrs Parish community will continue to encourage enrolment to George Vanier Catholic School.

**Administrative Staff Recommendation #4:** proposes that St. John Bosco Catholic School, Barry’s Bay will remain status quo.

- St. John Bosco, Barry’s Bay will not be affected by any of the above recommendations except for those students who choose to apply for out of zone transfers.

## **IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES AND COMMITMENTS:**

- **The RCCDSB administration staff recommends that a celebration of thanksgiving for students, staff and community past and present take place at St. Casimir's School, Round Lake Centre prior to June 30, 2014 should the Board of Trustees recommend it to close August 31, 2014.**
- **A transition planning process be established to respect and honour past school and community traditions and integrate those into new school communities.**
- **Consolidated school communities need to recognize and respect current and future home parish connections and plan appropriate communication strategies.**
- **In consultation with the respective union representatives, develop a staffing reduction and transition process that is fair and transparent.**
- **Re-invest financial resources in each of the remaining school communities to strengthen and enhance the Madawaska Family of Schools. For example:**
  - **George Vanier Catholic School, Combermere would receive an investment to improve and modernize the roofing in 2014-2015.**
  - **St. Andrew's Catholic School, Killaloe would receive an investment to retrofit the front entrance and modernize classroom and office space.**
  - **St. John Bosco Catholic School, Barry's Bay would receive an investment to upgrade the handicap access at all entrances and retrofit the existing gymnasium.**

As Director of Education,  
I respectfully submit to the  
Board of Trustees  
the Accommodation Review  
Committee – Administration Staff  
Report.

Michele Arbour, Director of Education