

**Meeting of the Accommodation Review Committee (ARC)
Minutes of Public Meeting #1
October 16, 2013
St. John Bosco Catholic School, Barry's Bay**

1. Welcome & Prayer

At 7:00 p.m., Peter Adam, ARC Chair welcomed fifty-six members of the public to the first of four public meetings scheduled for the Accommodation Review Committee (ARC) in the Madawaska Valley.

The group joined together in the Board prayer.

2. Introductions

Members of the ARC Committee were introduced.

Committee Members Present:

Peter Adam	ARC CHAIR/Superintendent of Education
Mary Lynn Schauer	ARC Secretary/Superintendent of Business Services
Randy Bissonnette	Principal Representative
Christina Brown	Principal Representative
Sharon Yandernoll	Non-Teaching Representative
Tracey Pecarski	Teacher Representative
Tracy Murray	Parent Representative – St. John Bosco
Father Mervin Coulas	Community Representative
Bobbie Jean Kuehl	Parent Representative – St. Andrew's
Tracy Glofcheskie	Parent Representative – George Vanier
Constance Bersan	Parent Representative – St. Mary's
Judy Hartwig	Parent Representative – St. Casimir's

Resource Members Present:

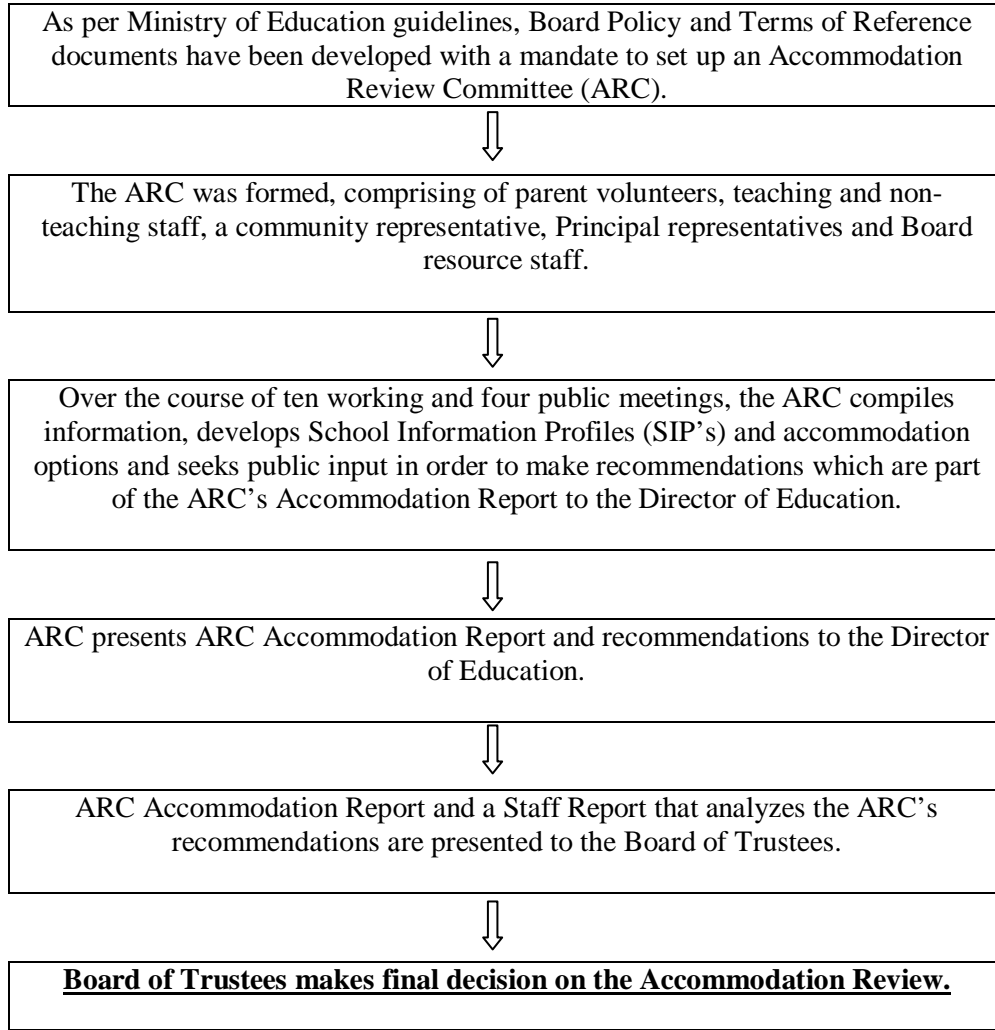
Lygia Dallip	Facilitator, Ameresco Asset Sustainability Group
Ivan Johnson	Manager of Plant Services
Audrey Cormack	Resource
Linda Arsenault	Recording Secretary

The ARC Chair reminded the community members and the Committee members to sign in.

3. Review purpose, mandate and process of the ARC

Five Catholic schools are under review: St. Andrew's, Killaloe; St. John Bosco, Barry's Bay; St. Casimir's Round Lake; St. Mary's, Wilno and George Vanier, Combermere. The ARC Chair stated that Accommodation Review public meetings have been scheduled to review challenges facing these schools, to provide an overview of the ARC process, and most importantly, to seek community input on the issues. He noted that tonight's goal was to provide information to the community on the reason for the establishment of the accommodation review and to seek the

community's input on the development of School Information Profiles (SIP's) for each of the schools under review. He explained the ARC process as follows:



4. Compare School Information Profiles (SIP's)

The ARC Chair presented data from the draft SIPs detailing enrolment projections, financial analysis, transportation, operations and renewal figures for the five schools involved in the ARC process: The ARC Chair noted that the major challenge in the Madawaska Valley community is declining enrolment, a problem faced by many schools in rural Ontario. The five-year projected cost to operate a school increases significantly with a lower enrolment, resulting in a much higher per pupil cost. Information shows there is not a considerable difference in projected transportation costs.

5. Next Steps?

Presentation of an Administration Staff Option will take place at the next working meeting, to be held on October 30th, 2013 at 5:30 p.m. at St. Mary's School in Wilno. Members of the public are welcome at all meetings, however, in the working meetings, attendees must remain as observers only. The public is welcomed to share input with the Committee through a special ARC phone

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number, e-mail and comment sheets. Agendas, minutes of meetings, and presentation material can be found on the ARC link on the Board website.

NEXT PUBLIC MEETING:

Public Meeting #2 will be held on Wednesday, November 27, 2013 at 7:00 pm. at George Vanier Catholic School in Combermere.

6. Community Questions and Comments

NAME/ SCHOOL AREA	QUESTION/COMMENT	RESPONSE BY ARC CHAIR
Carl Bromwich (Wilno)	In reference to the declining enrolment trend, is the Board missing out on potential students from the Home Schooling community? It was noted that a decline in enrolment means a declining interest in the school.	<i>Declining enrolment is a serious issue. The ARC will consider Mr. Bromwich's comments at its next Working Meeting.</i>
John Lynch (Combermere)	If the Public Board is going through a similar process, facing the same issues, would it be possible to have collaboration and co-operation between the Public and Catholic Boards.	<i>The Ministry of Education instructs Boards to find common ground and there are areas where the two Boards co-operate. The two Boards are facing similar challenges. The ARC, as part of its mandate, may explore partnership opportunities as part of a solution to the accommodation issues being examined.</i>
Margaret Miaka (Combermere)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Communication with Home Schoolers is vital. Serious attempts should be made to meet to determine why families decide not to use Catholic schools. 2. Support was given to Mr. Lynch's suggestion to share resources, and work together to keep schools open. 	<i>Sharing resources is very important. This will be noted in the School Information Profiles.</i>
Isabel O'Reilly (Combermere)	The documents handed out were informative. Schools and teaching of students by parents is a personal decision. Agreement was expressed with Mr. Bromwich that the school is important to the community. When a community loses its school, it loses its sense of community.	<i>The statement was acknowledged.</i>

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Carmel Rumleskie (Barry's Bay)	Can the Board find ways to attract Catholic students back to Catholic schools?	<i>The declining population, especially among the young demographic poses problems. It was acknowledged that the Board needs to attract as many students as possible.</i>
Lynne Yantha (Combermere)	We need to find out how to bring students back. Large families are a thing of the past. Similar decline in enrolment was noted as the community of Palmer Rapids opted to home school, or go to public school.	<i>The statement was noted.</i>
Rob Bersan (Wilno)	With a dwindling school population, and possible school closure, initiatives to bring families to Wilno will be in vain. People will not settle in a community that has no school.	<i>Economic values are important to the community.</i>
John Artymko (Barry's Bay)	George Vanier school is the last Catholic school before Bancroft. The "outer limit" should be maintained, to show Catholic perimeter and presence.	<i>The statement was acknowledged.</i>
Amy Lapierre (Combermere)	How does the Board propose to support student achievement?	<i>Student achievement and top quality educational programming is important. Double grade and triple grade structures present difficult educational decisions. This is one of the issues before the ARC.</i>
Wayne Giffin (Combermere)	Are parents being paid to teach their own children when they choose to home school their children?	<i>There is no knowledge of this practice.</i>
Mary Doyle (Combermere)	Parents who Home School their children do not receive payment, and need to use their own resources to educate their children. They are required to pay taxes, with money going to support schools that they do not use.	<i>The statement was acknowledged.</i>
Dave Schulist (Wilno)	Heritage is essential in a community such as Wilno. Identity is lost when a school is lost. Education should be important to sustain the economic development of a community.	<i>The statement was noted.</i>

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The ARC Chair thanked the Community for their attendance and input into the discussion and acknowledged Trustee members who were present.

The meeting ended at 8:45 p.m.