

**Meeting of the Accommodation Review Committee (ARC)
Minutes of Public Meeting #3
December 18th, 2013
St. Andrew’s Catholic School, Killaloe**

1. Welcome & Prayer

At 7:00 p.m., Peter Adam, ARC Chair, welcomed 29 members of the public to the third 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

The ARC Chair introduced the Accommodation Review Committee that has been working as a group since September 2013. It was noted that the ARC Chair and the ARC Secretary are non-voting members of the ARC Committee.

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
Tracey Pecarski	Teacher Representative
Father Mervin Coulas	Community Representative
Bobbie Jean Kuehl	Parent Representative – St. Andrew’s
Tracy Glofcheskie	Parent Representative – George Vanier
Tracy Murray	Parent Representative – St. John Bosco
Judy Hartwig	Parent Representative – St. Casimir’s

Committee Members sending regrets:

Constance Bersan	Parent Representative – St. Mary’s
Sharon Yandernoll	Non-Teaching Representative

Resource Members Present:

Lygia Dallip	Facilitator, Ameresco Asset Sustainability Group
Linda Arsenault	Recording Secretary

Resource Members sending regrets:

Ivan Johnson	Manager of Plant Services
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The ARC Chair reminded the community members and the ARC 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 the Accommodation Review Committee is an advisory body that was set up to review challenges facing these schools, the most serious of which is declining enrolment.

The Accommodation Review Process:

- ✓ The process follows the guidelines and criteria outlined in the Pupil Accommodation Review Guide issued by the Ministry of Education. As part of its considerations, the ARC must have regard to four criteria set out in the Renfrew County Catholic District School Board’s Accommodation Review Committee Terms of Reference which forms part of the Board’s Accommodation Review Committee Process. The ARC Chair outlined the four criteria.
- ✓ During the 120 day process, 10 committee working meetings and 4 public meetings have been scheduled. The process is now 75% complete.
- ✓ All Meetings are open to the public.

ARC Recommendations:

- ✓ In February 2014, the Committee will present a report containing the ARC Recommendation to the Director of Education, which will then be forwarded to the Board of Trustees.
- ✓ The Board of Trustees will also receive a report from the Board’s Senior Administration staff with their recommendations.
- ✓ The Board of Trustees will make the final decision.

4. Accommodation Options

Each option is to be considered within the framework of the Terms of Reference (TOR):

- ✓ Declining Enrolment which may limit a student’s education and social opportunity;
- ✓ Physical Condition of the School which may impact the quality of the learning environment and financial resources of the Board;
- ✓ Surplus instruction space within a school or group of schools;
- ✓ Absence of instructional space.

(a) ADMINISTRATION STAFF PROPOSED ACCOMMODATION

**1. 5 SCHOOL COMMUNITIES TO 3 SCHOOL COMMUNITIES
Presented by Administration Staff**

PROPOSED SCENARIO	IMPLICATIONS
St. Casimir’s students to St. Andrew’s St. Mary’s students to St. John Bosco George Vanier remains status quo	<u>Programming:</u> Less multiple grade classrooms <u>Building:</u> Schools would not be over capacity, surplus space would decrease <u>Transportation:</u> Average total a.m. and p.m. bus rides would not increase significantly

(b) **ARC PROPOSED ACCOMMODATION OPTIONS**

1. STATUS QUO FOR ALL SCHOOLS

PROPOSED SCENARIO	IMPLICATIONS
All schools remain open	<u>Programming:</u> Multiple grade classrooms <u>Building:</u> Significant surplus capacity <u>Transportation:</u> No change

2. 5 SCHOOL COMMUNITIES TO 2 SCHOOL COMMUNITIES

PROPOSED SCENARIO	IMPLICATIONS
St. Casimir’s & St. Mary’s students to St. Andrew’s George Vanier students to St. John Bosco	<u>Programming:</u> Double and single grade classrooms <u>Building:</u> Very low surplus capacity <u>Transportation:</u> Average total a.m. and p.m. ride times considerably increase

5. ARC Preferred Option

At the last ARC Working Meeting members were split into three discussion groups. Each group was asked to take into consideration all data from the SIP packages, ARC mandate, policy, TOR, community comments from both Public Meetings #1 and #2 and input received by letter, e-mails and phone messages to discuss the current three options and develop their Preferred Option. All three groups then reported their findings to the Committee.

PROPOSED SCENARIO	IMPLICATIONS
St. Casimir’s & St. Mary’s students to St. Andrew’s George Vanier remains status quo	<u>Programming:</u> Less multiple grade classrooms <u>Building:</u> Surplus space would decrease at St. Andrew’s and St. John Bosco; surplus space at George Vanier would be high at 65% <u>Transportation:</u> Average total a.m. and p.m. bus rides would not increase significantly

The ARC Chair commended the ARC, especially the Parent Representatives, who volunteered to be a part of the Committee and have invested their time attending working and public meetings. These members are faced with the daunting task of proposing difficult options for the schools and communities they are committed to supporting.

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6. Community Questions and Comments

NAME/ SCHOOL AREA	QUESTION/COMMENT	RESPONSE BY ARC CHAIR
David Tesluk (George Vanier)	<p>Does the Director of Education have to choose the Option presented from the ARC? Could ARC Option #2 (5 schools to 2 schools) still be considered, even though it was not the recommended option from the ARC.</p> <p>What are the calculated savings from the current cost of transportation compared to the bussing of students from George Vanier to St. John Bosco?</p>	<p><i>The Director of Education does not make the final decision. The Board of Trustees would make the final decision. The Trustees' decision may be a recommendation put forward by the ARC or another Option.</i></p> <p><i>The Superintendent of Business Services spoke to Mr. Tesluk after the meeting to present data from the St. John Bosco and George Vanier SIP's as follows:</i></p>

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS OF GEORGE VANIER SCHOOL		
COST DESCRIPTION	TOTAL COST	BOARD AVERAGE
Current per pupil cost to operate the school (administration, operating and maintenance)	\$10,334	\$7,064
Per pupil transportation cost	\$2,139	\$1,028
TOTAL COST	\$12,473	\$8,092

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS OF ST. JOHN BOSCO SCHOOL		
COST DESCRIPTION	TOTAL COST	BOARD AVERAGE
Current per pupil cost to operate the school (administration, operating and maintenance)	\$7,576	\$7,064
Per pupil transportation cost	\$1,265	\$1,028
TOTAL COST	\$8,841	\$8,092

Difference between George Vanier and St. John Bosco total costs = \$3,632
\$3,632 x 45 pupils = \$163,440

Carol Ann Gieske (George Vanier)	<p>There are two reports that will be presented to the Board of Trustees, one from Senior Administration, and one from the ARC. Who makes up the "Senior Administration" presenting the report? Will the Senior Administration report carry more weight than the ARC report?</p>	<p><i>Senior Administration consists of the ARC Chair/Superintendent of Education; the ARC Secretary/Superintendent of Business Services; Resource/Manager of Plant Services and the Manager of the Transportation Consortium.</i></p> <p><i>The Senior Administration's report may support the ARC's recommendation or it may provide a different recommendation that is defensible from the perspective of the existing Terms of Reference criteria.</i></p>
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<p>Elaine Schwieg (George Vanier)</p>	<p>A letter written to the Ministry of Education and Premiere Wynne was read to the audience. This letter states that small schools with declining enrolment have enhanced student success, evidenced by impressive higher than provincial graduation rates. Ms. Schwieg challenges the Ministry of Education to be responsible and accountable to the needs of rural communities, to research and re-think policy and to stop small school closures in Ontario.</p>	<p><i>The ARC Chair thanked Mrs. Schwieg for her well-researched input provided for the ARC’s consideration.</i></p>
<p>Father Ken O’Brien (George Vanier)</p>	<p>Of the two recommendations going forward to the Board, the ARC Option has community input. There is no community input on the Administration Option.</p> <p>Will the community have input on the Senior Administration Options?</p>	<p><i>Once the Senior Administration Staff Report and recommendations are submitted to the Board of Trustees, the community would have the opportunity to share their views on the contents of both reports and the recommendations directly with the Trustees prior to the Board of Trustees making a final decision.</i></p>
<p>Amy Lapierre (George Vanier)</p>	<p>Could students request a transfer from St. Mary’s Wilno to George Vanier?</p>	<p><i>There has always been an option to request a Cross-Boundary transfer. The RCJTC will consider such requests as needed, as long as there is a current bus route scheduled to travel in the same direction.</i></p>
<p>Carol Ann Gieske (George Vanier)</p>	<p>If the decision is made to keep George Vanier open as a result of this process, could this decision be changed at a later date?</p>	<p><i>If the Trustees make the decision to keep George Vanier open, it is expected that this decision could not be revisited for five years.</i></p>
<p>Shirley McLean (George Vanier)</p>	<p>Once this ARC has presented their options, when could the next ARC be formed?</p>	<p><i>If there is a need for an ARC within this same area, a new ARC could not be established for at least five years.</i></p>
<p>Elaine Schwieg (George Vanier)</p>	<p>What is the appeal process?</p>	<p><i>The Facilitator explained that an appeal cannot be launched against the publicly elected Trustees’ decision. An appeal would need to be initiated with the Ministry of Education based on a claim and proof that the ARC did not comply with the Board’s Accommodation Review policy and procedure when determining its recommendation to the Board of Trustees.</i></p>

<p>David Tesluk (George Vanier)</p>	<p>The ARC Preferred Option suggests St. Mary’s students attend St. Andrew’s, not St. John Bosco. What advantages were seen on this decision?</p>	<p><i>Under the Administration Staff Option, transportation times and distances for students were originally based on school building to school building. In-depth investigation showed the actual home location of the population was more accurate. This new data prompted a different recommendation by the ARC.</i></p>
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7. Next Steps

The next ARC Working Meetings will take place at St. Casimir’s on Wednesday, January 8, 2014 and at St. Mary’s on Wednesday, January 15, at 5:30 p.m. The public is welcome to share feedback with the Committee by the following methods: ARC phone line, e-mail, regular mail, or on the comment sheets provided at this meeting. Agendas, minutes of meetings, and presentation material can be found on the ARC link on the Board website.

NEXT PUBLIC MEETING:

Public Meeting #4 will be held on Wednesday, January 22, 2014 at 7:00 pm at St. Andrew’s Catholic School in Killaloe. At this meeting a report to be given to the Board of Trustees will be presented.

The ARC Chair thanked the Community for their attendance and input into the discussion to find the best option for Madawaska Valley students.

The meeting ended at 7:55 p.m.