

**Meeting of the Accommodation Review Committee (ARC)  
Minutes of Public Meeting #4  
January 22, 2014  
St. Andrew's Catholic School, Killaloe**

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**1. Welcome & Prayer**

At 7:02 p.m., Peter Adam, ARC Chair, welcomed 36 members of the public to the last 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.

Committee Members Present:

Peter Adam	ARC Chair/Superintendent of Education
Mary Lynn Schauer	ARC Secretary/Superintendent of Business Services (Via Teleconference)
Randy Bissonnette	Principal Representative
Christina Brown	Principal Representative
Tracey Pecarski	Teacher Representative
Father Mervin Coulas	Community Representative
Constance Bersan	Parent Representative – St. Mary's, Wilno
Tracy Glofcheskie	Parent Representative – George Vanier
Tracy Murray	Parent Representative – St. John Bosco
Judy Hartwig	Parent Representative – St. Casimir's

Committee Members sending regrets:

Sharon Yandernoll	Non-Teaching Representative
Bobbie Jean Kuehl	Parent Representative – St. Andrew's

Resource Members Present:

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

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 was set up to assess the challenges faced by Madawaska Valley area schools, with particular attention to the continued decline in enrolment.

The Accommodation Review Process:

- ✓ During the 120 day process, 10 committee working meetings and 4 public meetings have been scheduled. This is the last public meeting before the draft of the ARC Report is finalized at the last working meeting on February 5, 2014.

ARC Recommendations:

- ✓ Following the last ARC working meeting in February 2014, the ARC Chair, on behalf of the ARC Committee, will present a report containing the ARC Recommendation to the Director of Education.
- ✓ This report will be posted on the RCCDSB website at least ten days prior to the next Board Meeting.
- ✓ At the regularly scheduled Board Meeting on February 24, 2014 the ARC Report will be presented to the Board of Trustees.
- ✓ On February 24, 2014 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 at the regularly scheduled Board meeting on May 26, 2014.

**4. Accommodation Options**

The ARC Chair stated that the Accommodation Review Committee is an advisory body guided by four criteria set out in the Terms of Reference, which forms part of the Board's Policy and Procedure regarding Pupil Accommodation and reflects the requirements of the Accommodation Review Guideline issued by the Ministry of Education:

- ✓ 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.

**5. ARC Report and Recommendation to the Director of Education and the RCCDSB Board of Trustees**

The ARC Chair outlined contents of the various sections of the Draft ARC Recommendation Review Report for public review and input.

Section One: The "ARC Accommodation Recommendation" reads as follows:

➤ St. Casimir's Catholic School, Round Lake Centre will close effective September 2014, with student destination to St. Andrew's Catholic School, Killaloe.
➤ St. Mary's Catholic School, Wilno will close effective _____ ( <i>a date for closure will be decided by the Board of Trustees</i> ). Preferred student destination for St. Mary's Catholic School students will be St. Andrew's Catholic School, Killaloe ( <i>understanding that parents may request out-of-zone transfer to St. John Bosco Catholic School</i> ).
➤ George Vanier Catholic School, Combermere will remain status quo.
➤ St. John Bosco Catholic School, Barry's Bay will remain status quo.

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It was noted that implications to enrolment under this recommendation will result in remaining surplus space in each school: St. Andrew’s at 17%, George Vanier at 63% and St. John Bosco at 23% surplus space.

The “Supporting Rationale” and “Implementation Challenges” sections are not part of the ARC Recommendation, however, were included to help the trustees understand and consider the next steps required in the Accommodation Process.

Sections Two and Three: The “Executive Summary” and “Accommodation Review Process” outline the purpose, background and process that were followed by the Accommodation Review Committee.

Tabs 1 – 7: Appendix information containing graph data, minutes of meetings, public correspondence and school information profiles are included as reference at the end of the report.

**6. Community Questions and Comments**

NAME/ SCHOOL AREA	QUESTION/COMMENT	RESPONSE BY ARC CHAIR
<b>Janice Visneskie Moore</b> (Mayor - Killaloe/Hagarty/Richards)	The Mayor and Council Members in attendance are disappointed that two schools in the community are closing. The loss of a school has a negative effect on the community, and contributes to a loss of identity. A delegation from Killaloe/Hagarty/Richards will meet with the Minister of Education to advocate for small schools with the message to the Province that “big schools are not better”.	<i>The ARC Chair acknowledged the Mayor’s comments.</i>
<b>Ed Chippior</b> (St. Mary’s)	As the School Council Community Representative for St. Mary’s, Wilno, Mr. Chippior shared the message that “it takes a community to raise a child”. The school is a focal point of the community, and an essential part of the Parish/Family/School triad. He urged the Board to consider saving the life of the community and retain the status of small rural schools. He asked that the following be included in the ARC Report: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Create means to share resources and administration costs to reduce costs;</li> <li>2. Adjust plant requirements to keep physical structures viable;</li> <li>3. Determine the reasons why Catholic students attend public schools;</li> <li>4. Ensure that Catholic property owners support Catholic Schools.</li> </ol>	<i>The ARC Chair thanked Mr. Chippior for his prepared statement, which will be included in the ARC Correspondence files and posted on the Boards’ website.</i>

<p><b>Elaine Schweig (George Vanier)</b></p>	<p>Mrs. Schweig cited research based evidence produced by various studies and articles to indicate that the current model followed by the Ministry of Education is not producing quality education for Ontario students. In relation to the ARC Terms of Reference, she stated the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. No school is too small. Big schools are not better. Students receive a quality education at small, rural schools.</li> <li>2. Maintenance costs at older schools are being neglected in order to gain new schools funded by the Province.</li> <li>3. There is no evidence to prove that closing schools results in cost savings.</li> </ol>	<p><i>The ARC Chair thanked Mrs. Schweig for her input.</i></p>
<p><b>Ed Chippior (St. Mary's)</b></p>	<p>Who determines the Terms of Reference, is it the Board?</p>	<p><i>The Ministry of Education's Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline requires that the Board's Policy and Procedure on Pupil Accommodation include a Terms of reference to guide the ARC. The Ministry's Guideline is specific regarding elements that should be included in a Terms of Reference document developed by a school board.</i></p>

**7. Next Steps**

The final ARC Working Meeting will be held on February 5<sup>th</sup>. As noted above, the ARC Report will be presented to the Director of Education and posted on the Board website. On February 24, 2014 the ARC Report and Recommendation and the Administration Staff Report and Recommendation will be presented to the Board of Trustees. A Trustee decision is expected to be made May 26, 2014 Board Meeting.

After the final meeting, the ARC Committee process will be completed, however, members of the public are directed to address further input, comments and concerns to the Board of Trustees who have a minimum of 60 days to review the recommendations and to listen to the community.

**Closing Remarks:**

The ARC Chair acknowledged the hard work of parents and resource members of the ARC. He especially commended the effort of the ARC Parent Representative who have shown dedication to their individual school families, and have worked together in service to their communities through a very difficult process.

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The ARC Chair concluded by thanking the audience for their input and effort over the four public meetings, and expressed the hope that the remaining Catholic school communities in the Madawaska Valley will remain strong and viable.

**The meeting ended at 7:51 p.m.**