



**WINDSOR-ESSEX CATHOLIC
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD**

Student Achievement K-12

1325 California Avenue
Windsor, ON N9B 3Y6

CHAIRPERSON: Barbara Holland

DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION: Paul A. Picard

Telephone: (519) 253-2481 FAX: (519) 253-0620

**Minutes of the
1st ARC Committee Meeting
St. Theresa, St. Bernard and Stella Maris
Monday, November 7, 2011 – 7:00 p.m.
Location: Stella Maris School**

PRESENT

Area Trustee: Mary DiMenna
Trustee ARC Chairperson: Frank Favot
Superintendent: JoAnne Shea
Administrative Resource: Colleen Norris, Policy Coordinator

Principals: Mike Pannunzio, St. Theresa
LeeAnn Poisson, St. Bernard
Bridget Russo, Stella Maris

Teachers: Victor DiNardo, St. Theresa
Teresa Marrazzo, St. Bernard
Donna Maitre, Stella Maris

Non Teaching Staff: Amy Just, St. Theresa
Lena Dzombak, Stella Maris

Parents: Katera St. Louis (Chair), St. Theresa
Jessica Barron, St. Theresa
Anne Fox (Chair), St. Bernard
Nicole Brush, St. Bernard
Nicole Bedard, St. Bernard
Rick Fryer, Stella Maris
Rob Way, Stella Maris

Pastor: Rev. Fr. Brian Jane
St. John the Baptist Church

Community Representative: Denise Bondy, St. Theresa

Regrets: Jim Fox, Non-Teaching Staff, St. Bernard
Tonya Jackson - Parent, St. Theresa
Jane Little (Chair) – Stella Maris
Jane Beneteau, Community Rep., St. Bernard

1. PRAYER**2. WELCOME/ INTRODUCTIONS** (Sign in of Committee Members)

- Trustee and Chair Frank Favot (Wards 2 & 9) and Superintendent Shea welcomed everyone to the first of four Committee Meetings for this Accommodation Review. Introductions were made of all committee members in the room.

3. TERMS OF REFERENCE/ PROCESS

- As Administrative Resource, Colleen Norris explained the ARC process and the framework that will be used by the Committee in conducting the accommodation review study involving St. Theresa School, St. Bernard and Stella Maris. It was explained that the process is ultimately meant to improve the schools and maximize the education opportunities for the students involved. She thanked everyone for coming out to assist with the process.
- The process began with a review of the capital plan for the entire school system, and in so doing, it was revealed that there is excess facility capacity and certain schools are suffering from declining enrolment. St. Bernard is operating at 57% capacity and the student population at St. Theresa is at 125.
- It is felt that there are other options to accommodate students and the Board is looking at a group of schools in Amherstburg to facilitate the educational needs of the community. Senior Administration is asking this committee to look at all options, whether it be blending of school communities, changes to boundaries, a new facility or an addition to one of the existing schools. Administration will also provide some options for consideration. All options are being brought forward through this process. It is the hope of Administration that all members will work together and that schools are not pitted one against the other in the process.
- An *Accommodations Review Package* to explain the needs of the school communities involved was handed out, along with *School Information Profiles* for each school. As well, Ms. Norris handed out the *Terms of Reference* for the committee and *Guidelines for Public Input*. The committee is comprised of a group of representatives from each school and its community. Ms. Norris indicated there are three municipal representatives that will also be involved but could not be present tonight due to municipal obligations. They will act as a resource for the group.
- There is to be a public consultation process that allows for community input, which involves four public meetings. The public consultation period will span at least 90 days from the date of the first public meeting. Ads will be placed in the Windsor Star and on the Board website advertising the meetings. Notices will also be sent out to school communities. ARC, from its study and input received through the public consultation process, will make recommendations that will assist the Board in deciding on the best accommodation options.
- A school's involvement in an ARC does not mean it is scheduled for closure, although school closure is an option that can be considered.
- Tonight's meeting of the committee involves explaining the process and looking at the school profiles. The profiles are intended to give value and objectively assess each school – i.e. programming, capacity, community access and involvement. Administration would like input from the committee. The school

profiles will change as the process evolves and we receive specific information from the group and from the public. The ARC can make amendments/additions to the profiles as it sees fit. The profiles will be tools used when coming up with options to the Director.

- Based on the procedures found on page two of the Terms of Reference the ARC, at the first public meeting with the assistance of Board administration, shall explain the process and present the School Information Profiles for community feedback.
- After considering feedback received from the community, the ARC may add to or amend the profiles and these will again be presented at the second public meeting. The ARC at that meeting will also present for feedback the accommodation options prepared by board administration or proposed by the ARC.
- The third meeting will involve presenting viable accommodation options and receiving community input.
- At the fourth meeting, the committee will present their draft Accommodation Report with its recommendations and receive community input.
- Minutes of all meetings will be made public by posting them on the Board's website.
- At any time in the process, committee members can ask Board administration any questions or request information that will allow them to fulfill their mandate.
- By the end of the fourth meeting in 90 days, we hope to see a report from the ARC committee to the Director of Education by mid-April, 2012, with a goal of having the study completed by end of June, 2012. We can then move on as a community so that the process is not made difficult with issues being dragged on into the next school year. The work of the committee is then completed.
- The Director will consult with Sr. Administration and produce a report to the Board with his recommendations to the community. The Board will hear from the community, changes will be made if required and a new report will go out to the community.
- The whole ARC process is set by the Ministry, with the intent to have the community involved. The process is to be overseen by you, the Committee and not the Director of Education or the Board of Trustees.
- As a committee, the group can ask for any and all information from the Board, the Superintendent of Business or the Sr. Manager of Facilities Services if required through the process.
- In the end, the Board of Trustees will make the final decision.
- As questions were asked regarding the validity of the process and final decision, it was clarified by the Trustees that ARC is a transparent process from which recommendations are brought forward and a final decision is made by the Board of Trustees. No decisions are made beforehand. For this reason, the Chair of the committee is never the Trustee of the area. All decisions are made in the best interest of the students.
- There were questions as to when the decision by the Board would be implemented. Timelines would be required for moving students if required, boundary issues and transportation setup and construction, if required. There were also concerns of student transfers to the public board because they are hearing of the possibility of school closures. The committee will be looking at the statistics of all schools in the area, and assurances were made that all information would be considered. There were concerns that full-time JK/SK and daycare

were deciding factors for parents who work when considering a school for their children, however, the Ministry mandates the openings based on certain criteria in the five year rollout. Some parents prefer small class sizes and schools.

- There was concern that St. Joseph's school was not considered in this ARC, as they are part of the Amherstburg community. It was advised that Administration is open to looking at how the three schools relate to **all** surrounding schools in the community and whether boundary changes are required.
- It was suggested that the committee consider a French Immersion program in one of the schools being studied.
- There was frustration by parents of having a Transportation consortium for all four boards, as well as that of having the Trustee of the area who is in a conflict of interest situation.

4. REVIEW OF SCHOOL PROFILES

- Superintendent JoAnne Shea referred to the School Information Profiles handed out. These are the framework to begin the process.
- The valuation framework assesses each school in an ARC review study in accordance with the following criteria, where value to the student is weighed above all of the other components:
 - ✓ Value to the Student
 - ✓ Value to the Community
 - ✓ Value to the School Board
 - ✓ Value to the Local Economy
- She went through and explained the valuation and information profile of all three schools.
- It was explained that the information on the handouts was simply what we had captured to this point, and that more could be added as we go forward through the process.

5. PUBLIC CONSULTATION MEETINGS

- At this point we attempted to commence working out a schedule of meetings.
- The first public consultant meeting will take place Friday, December 9 at 7:00 p.m. at St. Thomas of Villanova High School in the Learning Commons Area.
- Suggested Guidelines for Public Input were circulated as information for the Committee.

**Motion by LeeAnn Poisson and seconded by Nicole Brush that we agree to the Guidelines for Public Input.
Carried.**

- Trustee Favot then moved discussion to the roles and responsibilities for the first public meeting and opened a question to the floor. The committee was asked how they see themselves involved in a role for the meeting in an attempt to find the best fundamental way of presenting education to our children. Discussion ensued.
- Based on the Terms of Reference the committee looked at what the purpose of the first public meeting is; to explain the process for the general public.
- Prior to the first public meeting, the profiles and background information booklet will be made available on the public web site.

- Ministry has mandated a fair, open public process, but there is no Ministry representation at meetings. When a large ARC makes strong recommendations, if required, Administration would go back and have contact with the Ministry. The committee was assured that ARCs are taking place province-wide as a result of declining enrolment.
- ARCs are truly a process of consultation and the Board requires the assistance of parents for input and for getting the message out and sharing with other parents. This committee is passionate about the issues for their schools, but it was advised to be patient and to follow the process as it progresses.
- If there is an interest to meet with other parents from their individual schools, committee members can do so and formulate options.

6. NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING

- **January 9, 2012 at 7:00 p.m.** at St. Theresa School

7. ADJOURNMENT

- Meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.