



**DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD ONTARIO NORTH EAST**

**Accommodation Review Committee  
For the Consolidation of:  
Coronation Public School  
Flora MacDonald Public School  
Queen Elizabeth Public School**

**Final Report to the Board's Administrative Council**

**March 17, 2009**

**Please note that this report summarizes and should be read in conjunction with the documentation available on the Board's Website <http://www.dsb1.edu.on.ca>**

## **Background**

**On June 3, 2008** District School Board Ontario East passed the following motion:

### **Motion No. 3360-08**

**THAT** the following schools: Flora MacDonald Public School, Queen Elizabeth Public School and Coronation Public School be put under accommodation review for the purpose of consolidating their students for a new French Immersion school provided the Ministry of Education gives the Board the funding for a new facility.

**On September 9, 2008** District School Board Ontario East passed the following motion:

### **Motion No. 3430-08**

**THAT** the following dates be approved for the Accommodation Review Public Meetings for the Timmins Schools.

Process Meeting..... September 8, 2008

First Public Meeting .....October 15, 2008

Second Public Meeting .....November 5, 2008

Third Public Meeting .....December 18, 2008

Fourth Public Meeting .....February 4, 2009

Report to Administration from ARC .....March 17, 2009

Administration Report and ARC Report to the Board  
For a Vote.....May 19, 2009

**On October 7, 2008** District School Board Ontario East passed the following motion:

### **Motion No. 3464-08**

**THAT** Accommodation Review membership Committee for the Timmins Schools be approved as follows:

Business Representative: Rob Galloway  
Municipal Representative: Pat Bamford

School Council Representatives:  
Alberta Litt (Coronation P.S.)  
Tracy Hautenen (Flora MacDonald P.S.)  
Sandro Purificati (Queen Elizabeth P.S.)

Trustees:  
Peter Osterberg  
Heather Bozzer  
Bert Schaffer

**Note:** Sandro Purificati resigned from the committee and was replaced by Peter Pidskalny.

Other members of the committee include:

Rosemary Pochopsky - Chair of the Committee (Vice-Chair of the Board)

Linda Knight – Secretary of the Board

Barry Peterson – Treasurer of the Board

Steven Pladzyk – Superintendent of Schools

### **Mandate of the Committee**

From the Board's Policy School Accommodation Review:

## **5. A SCHOOL VALUATION REPORT PREPARED BY THE BOARD APPOINTED ACCOMMODATION REVIEW COMMITTEE FOR THE SCHOOL OR SCHOOLS SUBJECT TO REVIEW**

5.4 The Accommodation Review Committee is responsible for:

5.4.1 Conducting a public accommodation review to determine the future of a particular school or schools, using a customized School Valuation Framework developed from the generic School Valuation Framework attached to this policy as Appendix 2, which assesses each of the following four considerations about the school or schools being reviewed:

- Value to the student
- Value to the community
- Value to the Board
- Value to the local economy

Once the review begins, the Board shall present alternate accommodation plans for the students of the school or schools as part of the review. The plans are to address where students would be accommodated; what changes to existing facilities may be required; what programs would be available to the students; and transportation.

5.4.2 Preparing a Draft School Valuation Report.

5.4.3 Conducting a minimum of four public meetings.

5.4.4 Sharing the Draft School Valuation Report, in plain language with the community at the public meetings.

5.4.5 Considering community feedback on the Draft School Valuation Report on options for accommodating students who would be affected by a school closures.

5.4.6 Preparing a Final School Valuation Report including findings and recommendations following consultation with the school community.

5.4.7 Submitting the Final School Valuation Report to the Administrative Council.

5.4.8 The Administrative Council shall present the School Valuation Report and their recommendations to the Board.

**After having conducted the public accommodation review in accordance with Board Policy, the Committee hereby presents its report and recommendation to the Board's Administrative Council.**

### **Committee Meetings**

**The Committee has met at the Schumacher Board Office four times:**

October 14, 2008 7:00 p.m.  
November 25, 2008 7:00 p.m.  
February 24, 2009 7:00 p.m.  
March 11, 2009 5:00 p.m.

### **Community Consultation Meetings**

**The Committee has held four public consultation meetings at the schools:**

October 15, 2008 @ 7:00 p.m. – Flora MacDonald Public School  
November 5, 2008 @ 7:00 p.m. – Coronation Public School  
December 18, 2008 @ 7:00 p.m. – Queen Elizabeth Public school  
February 4, 2009 @ 7:00 p.m. – Coronation Public School

The Committee agreed that in accordance with the School Valuation Framework, the items for consideration would have the following values:

Value to the Student – 70%  
Value to the Community – 10%  
Value to the Board – 10%  
Value to the Local Economy – 10%

### **The Value of Consolidation**

#### **Value to the Student**

##### **Enrolment**

October 31 projected combined French Immersion enrolments are as follows:

2009 – 418  
2010 – 431  
2011 – 445  
2012 – 464  
2013 – 473  
2014 – 480  
2015 – 482  
2016 – 483  
2017 – 484

Currently declining enrolment is a major issue within this Board as well across the Province, however, it is projected that enrolment in a new consolidated school will grow slowly over time providing a solid base for an efficient and effective school organization and economical school operations.

## **Replacing Three “Old” Schools with a New Technologically Advanced Facility**

The new school will replace three “old” schools. The Board will have the opportunity to include all of the new technology available to support student success. Such technology includes FM hearing systems in classrooms which have proven to increase student achievement, the latest computer assisted learning technology such as interactive Smart Technologies (Smart Boards) as well as wireless systems which aid in the location and use of computer technology to best support student learning.

### **Curriculum Expectations and School Organization**

The expectations of the curriculum are numerous and rigorous. The expectations for a classroom teacher to present and meet the individual needs and learning styles are huge in classrooms containing three or more grades.

The expectations for each grade listed below shows the extensiveness of the demands placed on both the teachers and students:

JK and SK - 150 in each grade  
Grade 1 - 377  
Grade 2 - 387  
Grade 3 - 393  
Grade 4 - 483  
Grade 5 - 456  
Grade 6 - 462  
Grade 7 - 516  
Grade 8 - 538

While there is little empirical evidence that student outcomes are either better or worse in combined classrooms, when classrooms in excess of two grades are established the expected outcomes become daunting, detrimental and a barrier which limits the student’s potential for greater success.

The new school as planned will have no combined grades.

### **Same Age Groupings**

It is important for children to grow up in settings or groups where children are of the same age. Same age groupings promote stronger friendships, skills and abilities. As well, friendly competition and age development occurs. This also helps promote greater self-confidence and self-esteem for the student and promotes a broader learning experience for the children in our care.

This discrepancy in age and stage of development in multi-grade classrooms leads to a lack of social capital with a broad difference in age of up to five years.

From the Ministry document “Education for All”; Ornstein and Langley, 2004 in their research on student learning in classes state “Such confidence is essential for students to cope with minor frustration; to play with ideas; and to select a plan of action to carry out through peer groups and cooperative learning strategies can help relieve anxiety and stress.”

The children will be in the same age groupings in the new school.

## **Student Support Within the Classroom**

In a multiple classroom setting of three or more grades there is less support for each student available from the teacher as the teacher is required to instruct more lessons, and modify more programs to address individual needs. The students in this setting receive significantly less assistance and as a result are required to work independently most of the time.

The students in the new school will not compete for attention in the single grade classrooms.

## **Full Program Options**

With the decline of enrolment and the establishment of multiple grade classrooms in the existing schools over time, fewer programs may be offered.

In the school the students will continue to have access to a full range of program options.

## **Teacher Professional Development**

Teachers in today's classrooms must be able to discuss and collaborate on learning strategies for students in their class. They must do running records of assessment which are developed through same grade and divisional dialogue. In multiple classrooms where the teacher is the only primary, junior or intermediate teacher, we are greatly inhibiting the growth of both the teacher and the students.

In "Education for All" the Ontario Ministry of Education expects the following "A Professional Learning Community is exemplified by collaborative work that is grounded in reflective dialogue, in which staff in each division have conversations about students, teaching, and learning, identify interrelated issues and problems and debating strategies that could bring about real change....it refers to a way of operating that emphasizes the importance of each individual staff person and of supporting the collective engagement of staff in such activities as problem identification, capacity building and vision for classroom learning."

Through Professional Learning Communities, O'Connor's research showed "As teachers deepen their understanding, they change their practice, and as they improve their practice, students' learning improves commensurately."

The opportunities for teacher professional development will be greatly enhanced.

## **Student Participation in Some Curricular, Extracurricular and Team Sports**

Students in schools with fewer students have limited ability to participate in curricular, extracurricular and team sports with other schools as their groups are too small. This inhibits their ability to develop many necessary life skills such as sportsmanship among their peers that they will not necessarily obtain in the regular classroom.

The students in the new school will have the opportunity to participate in more curricular, extracurricular and team sports.

## **Student Supervision**

Student supervision has been an ongoing issue at these three schools among the three parties involved, the Board, the Elementary Teachers Federation and the government appointed commission mainly because of the size of the teaching staffs in smaller schools available to provide the supervision necessary to ensure student safety.

The new school will have sufficient staff to provide the required supervision within reasonable agreed guidelines. As well there is an opportunity to design the school and school yard in such a way as to reduce required supervision to enhance student safety.

## **Value to the Board**

### **Replacement of Old Schools**

The consolidation would eliminate from the Boards inventory of schools three old schools, Coronation, Flora MacDonald and Queen Elizabeth 52, 89 and 71 years old respectively.

The gross floor area of the three schools 7,040 square meters would be reduced to an estimated 4,088 square meters.

Replacement of the three schools with a new consolidated school would result in the right sizing of available pupil places and increase the Ministry of Education's rated capacity utilization thereby ensuring maximum grant revenue.

### **Range of Program**

The range of programs to be offered will meet and perhaps exceed the Ministry of Education's requirements through the synergistic opportunities presented by the consolidation of the three schools. Having the best of the best programming is possible.

### **Availability of Specialized Teaching Spaces**

All required specialized teaching spaces will be available in the consolidated school.

### **Condition of the Existing Schools**

It is estimated that close to \$8 million in repairs may be required in the next five years to maintain the existing three schools. This expenditure would be eliminated through consolidation.

### **Value of the School**

The three schools are located in residential areas. The dollar value of the schools and their potential for disposal are considered reasonable given their age.

### **Fiscal Factors**

It is estimated that savings of \$799,350 would have been realized by the Board had the schools been consolidated in the 2008 – 2009 school year.

## **Value to the Community**

### **New Facility for Community Use**

The new school facility will be available for use by the community. With the focus of the new Community Use of Schools Outreach Coordinator being expanded use of the Board's facilities, a new modern school will allow for a greater range of programs being offered to the public.

## **School Grounds for Recreational Use**

The new school's grounds will also be available to the public. The potential for the development of playgrounds promoting the greening of play areas and alternative methods of providing positive play experiences can be a part of the development of the new play areas. Combined with the relocation of existing play structures that can be salvaged and moved from the existing sites, there is the potential for expanded use of the new school's grounds.

## **School as a Partner with Other Government Agencies and the Municipality**

The building of a new school provides the opportunity to partner with other government agencies as well as the municipality. Consultation with potential community partners prior to construction may lead to the new school being established as a hub for several services complimentary to regular educational activities.

## **Value to the Local Economy**

### **The School as a Local Employer**

Since the staffs of the three schools already live within the community the economic benefits from employment within the community will not change except to the extent that some staff reductions in staffing levels will occur.

### **Availability of Cooperative Education**

The availability of experiential opportunities for students will remain unchanged.

### **Economic Development**

A new school facility would support economic development within the community.

### **School Value to the Community**

As previously demonstrated the new school would be of great value to the community.

## **Results of Community Consultation**

### **Support for the Consolidation**

There was general support for the consolidation.

One of the major questions asked by many parents was "where will the new consolidated school be located". Choosing a site for the new consolidated school is beyond the scope of this review process and would be determined when and if a new consolidated school is approved by the Ministry of Education.

The members representing the school community also expressed the desire that as in the past, the Board make them part of the consultation process when and if a new consolidated school is approved by the Ministry of Education.

Some parents expressed support for the current transition to school available at Coronation Public School. This ease of transition can be maintained at the new school through the school organization process and the location of the primary division within the school.

**Recommendation:**

**MOVED by Peter Osterberg and SECONDED by Albert Schaffer:**

**That this Committee, having completed the accommodation review of the possible consolidation of Coronation Public School, Flora MacDonald Public School and Queen Elizabeth Public School, recommends that should the Ministry of Education approve the consolidation and provide the necessary funding, the Board proceed with the consolidation of the three schools into a new consolidated school.**

**Carried**

**Submitted to the Board's Administrative Council on behalf of the Committee**

  
**Rosemary Pochopsky**  
**Chair**