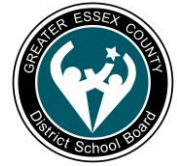


**Greater Essex County District School Board
2016-2017 PROGRAM AND ACCOMMODATION REVIEW
Report of the First Community Meeting
Wednesday, February 8, 2017 at 6 p.m.
Eastwood Public School**



At the December 13, 2016 regular meeting of the Board, Trustees approved the following recommendation regarding Eastwood PS, Parkview PS and Forest Glade PS:

THAT THE BOARD APPROVE THE IMMEDIATE COMMENCEMENT OF A STANDARD PROGRAM ACCOMMODATION REVIEW THAT INCLUDES EASTWOOD PS, FOREST GLADE PS, AND PARKVIEW PS, AS SET OUT IN THE PROGRAM ACCOMMODATION REVIEW - INITIAL STAFF REPORT, DATED DECEMBER 13, 2016.

Present: There were approximately 39 persons in the audience including committee members
Regrets: Cheryl Lovell, Trustee, and Scott Scantlebury, Public Relations Officer.
Chair: Superintendent Todd Awender
Recorder: Christine Breshamer

1. Welcome and Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m. by Superintendent Awender welcoming everyone to the meeting. Superintendent Awender introduced Trustees, the Director, and Committee members then introduced himself. Regrets were given on behalf of Trustee Lovell. He explained that notes were being taken and that the proceedings were being audio and video recorded. He then introduced the Principal of Eastwood, Mr. Arundine.

Principal Arundine welcomed everyone to Eastwood for this information session which would also afford the public an opportunity to ask questions, share ideas and be involved in the process. Principal Arundine pointed out the location of the washrooms and the exits.

2. Orientation (describes mandate, roles and responsibilities, procedures of the PARC)

Superintendent Awender gave history of how the Program and Accommodation Review process works and background as to what information was used to prepare the Long Term Accommodation Plan. He then described how the Initial Staff Report and School Information Profiles were prepared and presented to the Trustees and at the December 13, 2016, regular meeting of the Board, where Trustees approved the following recommendation:

THAT THE BOARD APPROVE THE IMMEDIATE COMMENCEMENT OF A STANDARD PROGRAM ACCOMMODATION REVIEW THAT INCLUDES EASTWOOD PS, FOREST GLADE PS, AND PARKVIEW PS, AS SET OUT IN THE PROGRAM ACCOMMODATION REVIEW - INITIAL STAFF REPORT, DATED DECEMBER 13, 2016.

The committee composition was reviewed. Superintendent Awender explained that the Committee will act as the conduit with respect to the gathering and sharing of information between the Board, the community, school, staff, parents, and students. Superintendent Awender emphasized that this is a

collaborative process and the committee is not a decision making body. They will give their recommendations to the Director who then will meet with Senior Administration before submitting to the Trustees of the Board. Trustees make final decision.

Superintendent Awender stated that this is a public forum and notes will be kept and then posted on the board website. He explained how to access this icon on our website. Be mindful that anything sent to the PARC mailbox will be posted as public information. He stated that postcards were available for anyone more comfortable writing statements they feel necessary to be expressed throughout the process or asking questions rather than speaking in public. Answers will be included in the notes of the meeting on the Board website.

Superintendent Awender asked that the community be respectful of others during public meetings and refrain from making derogatory remarks about other schools. All our schools have exceptional students, families, staff and administration. It is anticipated that public meetings should be approximately two hours in length.

Superintendent Awender explained the Committee has had an Orientation meeting where they reviewed the process of an Accommodation Review, the Initial Staff Report and the School Information Profiles. They will be looking at enrolment trends and other relevant data and hear community input before making recommendation for the Final Staff Report which will be presented to the Trustees in late May. The Committee will be exploring potential options all the while ensuring the public is well informed. He went on to explain that working groups of the Committee will take place over the next few months.

Superintendent Awender reviewed the Accommodation Review process being the presentation of the Initial Staff Report to the Trustees, formation and approval of the Committee, Committee meetings, Community meetings, presentation of the Final Staff Report to Trustees and ultimately the decision of Trustees in June.

3. Presentation

A PowerPoint presentation used to share information with the community has been posted on the website.

4. Future Meeting Dates

Any information related to the Program and Accommodation Review process is available on the Board website at publicboard.ca. The Student Accommodations icon is a red schoolhouse located at the bottom of the main page of the website. All information from this presentation will be available on our website.

Future meeting dates were discussed as follows:

Committee meetings at 4:00 p.m.:

1. Wednesday January 25 at Eastwood PS
2. Wednesday March 1 at Parkview PS
3. Tuesday March 28 at Forest Glade

Community meetings at 6:00 p.m.:

1. Wednesday February 8 at Eastwood PS
2. Wednesday April 19 at Parkview PS

Board meetings at 7:00 p.m.:

1. Wednesday May 24 - Board meeting where public delegations will be heard
2. Thursday June 8 - Board meeting where Trustees make final decision

The Superintendent re-emphasized that this is a collaborative endeavor. We take note of all community input. He reminded that the committee is an advisory body, not a decision-making body and that sometimes during a PAR process the ideas which evolve have not even been considered at the onset, while sometimes the ideas are very similar. Input is collected through the PARC email at parc@publicboard.ca which is then posted publicly. Questions will be responded to and posted for all to see, as well as all notes from both Committee and Community meetings.

Superintendent Awender reiterated that everyone in the room is aware their school is excellent. He stated he will not tolerate derogatory comments toward another school and asked everyone to be respectful of each school and other's opinions. We understand it is difficult to please everyone but we have to continue to have the interests of the 35,000 plus students of the Greater Essex County District School Board at heart.

5. Questions and Input

The floor was opened up to questions and comments which would be followed by student focus groups, for each individual school included in this review.

Nikki Gray - Eastwood Public and Riverside Secondary parent

Q: Is Riverside being looked at with this transition? Riverside is aging as well - pool has been closed. When recruiting is being done, the first thing they say is, "Get over that there's no air conditioning. That doesn't matter. It's a great school to be at." Where did that rank in these changes for this area to focus on three grade schools in such a small area where there's not a newer high school for the kids that are going to be moving up and moving forward?

When looking at the data it shows there is need with the facility condition index (FCI) as well as the low numbers in enrolment. When we look at the other part to Riverside where we have our Dr. David Suzuki, Princess Elizabeth and Hetherington schools that are also feeder schools to Riverside, as recent as approximately two years ago a boundary study was conducted in order to balance the enrolment numbers as Dr. David Suzuki was extremely over capacity, whereas Princess Elizabeth and Hetherington were under capacity. This allowed the Board to balance enrolment across all those schools. At this point in time the Secondary School was not a factor in this review based on the Long Term Accommodation Plan. It is not to say it may be considered in the future. There is a track going in at Riverside Secondary School when weather permits. The International Baccalaurerette program is starting at Riverside in September, as well as at Leamington District Secondary School. There have been some information nights with tremendous turnout. There are renewal needs in a number of our schools across the system. All data needs to be reviewed and then prioritized based on highest need to improve the

infrastructure, the possibilities for program enhancement, the ability to decrease empty space, while being fiscally responsible as a School Board.

Q: Compared to Vista and Herman, is that something in this area that's going to become the norm? A mega school?

In those situations it made sense. Right now, this area cannot support that.

Q: We got solar panels recently. I'd hate to spend money on renovations unnecessarily.

The Board has an Accommodation Advisory Committee which looks at needs across the system. I believe solar panels can be transferred to a new school. The Board received a large amount of money for renewal needs that went to improvements such as h-vac systems, doors, windows, boilers, and electrical panels, but not to new builds. That amount only covers approx. 20% of the high and urgent needs across the system. New schools do not have high renewal needs. If there are needs which have to do with the safety of students, money is allocated to those schools first. An example might be a fire alarm system.

Q: The Board owns property in back of Forest Glade. Would a new build be put there or would other property be acquired? That property was supposed to be for high school.

If there is vacant property, that's a possibility. Assessments on property need to take place before a determination is made as to whether it's suitable for a school.

Q: If a new building is built, how long will that take?

This Program and Accommodation review will not be finished until June. If it is approved by the Trustees, a business case is put forward to the Ministry for a school consolidation grant which would be submitted typically in late fall, early winter. If we received Ministry approval, we wouldn't know until early Spring. Following Ministry approval, property needs to be acquired, assessments done, architect hired, designs done, and consultations with staff and administration take place. RFPs are put out for the construction companies who are going to build. From start to finish, if all goes according to plan, it takes approximately 2-3 years after the business case receives Ministry approval for completion.

Chris Brulard

Q: It was indicated on one slide that if the proposal for Eastwood and Parkview to consolidate went forward, a second proposal would involve merging Forest Glade main site with Forest Glade PLC to request funding for a new right sized JK-8 building. Would that be a brand new building?

Yes.

Q: If we look at moving PLC students to main site, with open concept both FI and English, how would that play out? Presumably, would both new buildings be closed concept classrooms?

Yes. We'd speak with staff and administration, and look at philosophies as a Board to come to a decision. I do believe the design would be much different than the current design.

Q: Would the PLC move over to the main site? Is that down the road? It was indicated that this could be done quicker or sooner. Is that something that would not happen until the new school was built or could that happen before?

The intention at this time is for students at Eastwood and Parkview as well as Forest Glade PLC and Forest Glade main site to stay in their buildings until the new builds are completed and then they move over.

Q: Is the Board looking ahead at the possibility of future new builds to have year round schooling?

The Board has examined that idea previously. ; There are many logistical pieces that go along with that idea that have been explored. I cannot say either way. The Board is always willing to explore new ideas.

Q: Would new builds accommodate summertime climate and have air conditioning?

All of our new builds have air conditioning.

Rene, Forest Glade parent

Q: With respect to childcare, if there is daycare at Eastwood and not at Forest Glade would there be bussing to daycare?

When there is a school without childcare we look at all childcare facilities in the catchment areas.

If there isn't availability in a catchment area for one school and there's child care out of the district, we do bus to that school. In consultation with the Transportation Services Department, we determine these circumstances in advance so families are well informed.

Janet, Eastwood parent

Q: How do you help children adjust to transitioning to another school when you're changing the boundaries? What do you do to help accommodate this situation?

Whenever we have children moving to a new build there is a transition committee comprised of administration, parents, and staff, as well as superintendents. The transition committee provides input to allow the move to be as seamless as possible. Barbecues, a visit day to the other school where they are paired with a friend, information evenings, and school councils typically come together to meet, just to provide a few examples.

Q: Would notice of these events be sent out about what's happening to help the children adjust better?

Yes.

Zack Cacilhas, Parkview parent

Q: Looking at the map, if consolidation takes place it looks like there may be more students who require bussing. How does the school board determine who receives bussing and what criteria is used?

Superintendent Awender referred to the following policy:

"Students may access transportation services if they are attending an in boundary Board designated school and their primary address is at a distance of more than:

- 1.0 km, for junior and senior kindergarten;
- 1.6 kms, for Grade 1 to Grade 8 inclusively;
- 3.2 kms, for Grade 9 to Grade 12 inclusively."

Q: With respect to Forest Glade, parents are concerned that there are currently 32 students which would be outside the zoning area for busses. Parents are looking for accommodation to help with transportation.

Are you referring to the Forest Glade "island" – the area away from Forest Glade?

Currently there are 32 students that live closer to Parkview that were rezoned for French Immersion.

With the new proposal it looks like they would then be outside of bussing area.

French Immersion is still covered as far as bussing goes. FI students going to Forest Glade would still receive bussing. The English students who are living in this area are still able to go to Forest Glade if the parents choose to keep them there but they will not receive transportation as their new proposed area would be Parkview. However, they are given the choice to stay at their current school according to the proposed recommendation

Jessica

Q: When consolidations were being looked at, was consideration given to making a JK-12 school like Vista?

All options are considered. In this case there is not enough enrolment to support that idea in the area and specific schools referred to.

Q: Which building would be utilized if Eastwood and Parkview consolidate?

At this point in time we don't have a determined site. The property at Eastwood is a possibility, property at Parkview is a possibility, and the other property referred to earlier tonight is a possibility.

Q: Where would students go in September?

Students remain at their current schools until the proposed new build opens its doors.

Obviously this also only happens with Ministry approved funding.

Q: The Board is not going to try and combine populations during construction?

No.

Cheryl Germaine, Eastwood parent

Q: Has the Board considered that some people may not stay with the public board if Eastwood and Parkview are combined? What would that look like if they went to HJ Lassaline or LA Desmarais?

The Board always considers those factors. We feel opposite to that statement. We've found communities embrace the excitement of a new building. We believe the modern 21st century learning environment will attract families. In saying that, we know the students, families, and staff are already exceptional.

Q: Forest Glade parents would like to see non-open concept builds.

Community input is very important. Over the last 4 years, new builds have not been designed with this type of open concept. Some rooms do have open space for collaborative teaching and learning.

Q: Does Parkview have the Empower group that Eastwood does?

Not at this time; however, this is going to be implemented at every school.

6. Focus Groups

There being no further questions, Superintendent Awender thanked everyone for coming and invited the community to join the focus groups.

7. Closing Comments and Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:14 p.m.