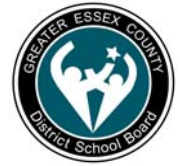


# Greater Essex County District School Board PROGRAM AND ACCOMMODATION REVIEW HERMAN FAMILY OF SCHOOLS

Monday, May 14, 2012 at 7 p.m.

Report of Community Meeting 3 held in the gym of Davis School

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THAT THE SUPERINTENDENT RESPONSIBLE FOR ACCOMMODATIONS CONDUCTS A PARC STUDY OF THE HERMAN FAMILY OF SCHOOLS TO:

- i. ALLEVIATE OVER CAPACITY ENROLMENT AT McCALLUM
- ii. REDUCE THE NUMBER OF EMPTY STUDENT SPACES AND IMPROVE THE UTILIZATION RATES WITHIN THE FAMILY OF SCHOOLS.

## **Present:**

There were approximately 123 persons in the audience including committee members

**Regrets** : non received at the time of the meeting

**Facilitator:** Terry Lyons, Superintendent of Education

**Recorder:** Lynne Hornby

## **1. Call to Order and Welcome**

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. by Principal Breshgold.

## **2. Introductions**

Several introductions were made, including, the Director of Education, W. Kennedy, and Trustees Bailey, McKinley and Lovell.

## **3. Background**

Superintendent Lyons noted this is the third public meeting, The committee is presenting their draft recommendations this evening. Input will be collected and the committee will meet again after this evening, review the input and will then present their final report to the community at the fourth public meeting, June 12 at Roseville school.

## **4. Review of Process**

- A committee is formed with representation from every school participating in the PARC.
- The PARC committee has regular meeting to review data and determine recommendations
- Four public meetings are held, this is the third in the series
- The committee writes a report and submits the recommendations to the Director of Education
- The committee presents their report to the Board, probably at the end of June.
- The Director of Education analyses the committee report, write his own report and submits recommendations to Trustees
- Trustees vote and make the final decision, probably in the Fall term of 2012, and implementation will not take place before September 2013

## **5. Presentation of the Program and Accommodation Review Committee's (PARC) draft recommendations**

A powerpoint presentation of the PARC Committee presentation is attached.

The rationale for all four recommendations moving forward was discussed.

At the conclusion of the presentation, Superintendent Lyons opened the floor for questions and comments but first asked that the audience be respectful of everyone else. He explained the Facility

Condition Index. Simplified, this is the percentage calculated when you divide the repair costs for a building by the building replacement costs.

He asked that audience members keep the questions to the point and ask only one at a time to give everyone a chance to speak. The committee wants to hear input and be able to take it back and reflect upon it before finalizing their recommendations. The committee has worked very, very hard and began by examining thirty-three recommendations.

#### 6. Review of timeline

The final Community meeting is on June 12 at Roseville at 7 p.m.

#### 7. Questions and collection of input

McCallum parent

has concerns about a JK-12 school. Her friend was a Massey parent who was involved when there was a Massey elementary panel and told her it was awful and to do whatever she can to stop the board implementing a JK-12 school. If the board moves to such a grade restructuring, she won't be sending her son.

Member of Ford City Residents in Action Group. (copy was provided)

My name is Kerry Ippolito. I come here tonight to represent my community. I live in Ford City. I am a member of the Ford City Residents in Action, the co-chair of the Ford City Redevelopment Committee and the Executive Director of the Ford City Business Improvement Association.

I want you to know that I do not have children of my own, so my statements do not reflect any personal bias as these recommendations do not affect me as an individual.

Ford City is a very isolated community within Windsor. We are surrounded by train tracks, brown fields and factories. We are very much "our own little town". Since the closing of Holy Rosary Elementary and Holy Rosary Church, our population demographic has changed substantially. Our little town is aging. More and more young families are moving away and being replaced with older workers and singles. The bakeries, delis, pharmacies, hair dressers, and restaurants that used to line Drouillard Road have mostly disappeared. The families that supported these businesses are migrating closer to schools.

In the past two years we have made great strides to redevelop and reinvent our community. But, we need you to keep our remaining families in Ford City. Give them a reason to stay. Also, by supporting Gordon McGregor staying open you may even help breathe new life into the community by attracting some families displaced from other neighbourhood schools. Gordon McGregor is tied very closely to Ford City and enjoys a great relationship with Drouillard Place and Gino & Liz Marcus Community Centre. We are your friends and family. Please help us, don't hinder us.

I would also like to point out that of the 4 recommendations being put forward, keeping Gordon McGregor open is the only option that keeps students in grades JK-6 out of Herman High School!!!! Young children should not be mingling with young adults. There are too many negative prospects with mixing such a vast age group.

On behalf of both the Ford City business community and Ford City residents I beg of you: Do not close our school!!!! The impact of closure would have far greater impact on our neighbourhood than you could ever imagine. We have already seen it and felt it with the closure of Holy Rosary. And by keeping Gordon McGregor open, you have an opportunity to help us rejuvenate our community in transition. There are many things you may measure and put a price on when you make your

decisions, but you are not able to effectively quantify this decision's impact on this community unless you live here.

Please, Please, Please, consider more than just the numbers you have on paper. Help us save Ford City!!!! I believe Gordon McGregor himself would ask you himself to help preserve the community he built!

McCallum parent who is also a Century employee

noted that Forster PARC has immersed Giles campus in their PARC. How long will the board keep Giles open?

Giles is a temporary site until a permanent site is found. We can't give you a length of time which it will be open, but part of the mandate from last year was to continue searching for a permanent location for French Immersion which is part of the Forster PARC mandate.

Will the permanent site be in the west end?

No decision has been made. The earliest a decision could be made is September 2013. We are trying to serve students in the western part of the city.

Maxwell parent

congratulated the committee on their work but noted their work is only half done. In order to sell recommendations we need concrete data but none is provided. We want to see a cost analysis. We don't want to see JK-12 at Herman. It isn't the best environment for young children. That recommendation is no good. You have decided to make this whole study about schools that aren't at capacity but you are keeping the school open that is at 53%. It doesn't make sense to close a school that remains at close to 100%. Show us what you have done. You aren't showing us the facts and cost of infrastructure. Guarantee the public that our children will have a good quality of education.

Maxwell and Herman parent

was concerned about a JK-12 grade restructuring. There is no way I would want a youngster traipsing around the halls of Herman. I like Herman but let's face it, there is a big drug problem there and at any other high school.

Superintendent Lyons cautioned this speaker about derogatory remarks being made. How will you keep the younger children away from the older students with swearing etc, They are very impressionable. Not long ago we were talking about Maxwell expanding and now we are talking about closing the school.

Maxwell isn't expanding, we are implementing Full Day Kindergarten at all our elementary schools, which is being funded by the Ministry of Education. All of our schools will have FDK within five years. It isn't an expansion.

Will there be added bus costs ?

We are collecting input tonight. The committee has reviewed a lot of data but we will be examining these recommendations in further detail after collecting input this evening. A lot of research has already been undertaken. The audience was referred to the Board website for minutes of previous meetings, and copies of School Information Profiles. The Superintendent clarified that Massey Elementary was grade 7 and 8 and it wasn't scrapped because it didn't work it. Massey Elementary closed when Talbot Trail school

opened and a boundary was set for that school, the elementary students were transitioned back to elementary facilities.

What will happen to these elementary students when the population increases?

If you look at demographics, our population is aging. Our population over 55 years of age is increasing and there will be less children over the next 20 years. This is happening throughout the province. A number of school boards throughout the province are in the same position. Status quo is not an option for our board and if we aren't proactive, we will need to be reactive. Our enrolment has dropped significantly over the past seven years. As enrolment drops, funding drops. We have over \$300m deficit in renewal needs and we get \$5m per year to address those needs. Our buildings were the fifth oldest in the province. We have to make some difficult choices, we need to utilize our buildings better or we will have to make choices that will affect children every day.

All these choices affect many children and I don't agree that it is positive.

Maxwell parent

asked how students will get from Maxwell to McGregor. How will you get them there? There are dogs on the Ford test track.

We would follow the board transportation policy.

We bought a house in this area, what will you do with Maxwell. I live right next door to the school. Will it be abandoned?

Coronation parent

asked that the committee consider a few other things; it's all about numbers and money. I chose to live where I do so my child didn't have to take a bus, it's not your choice to make, it is mine. It is another stress for my child. Have you looked at corporate sponsors to help keep buildings open? It is unimaginable to me that you would consider a JK kid with a grade 12, there is no common sense. You are asking public school supporters to make a choice; if you ask me to do this I will go to the catholic system.

You are right, it is all about the students. Your focus is on your child, as it should be, but as a Supervisory Officer of this Board my focus has to be on every child in the system, not just one child. We have to make sound decisions for all of our students. I understand your passion and thank you for your comments.

When you talk about demographics, I want to point out that Talbot Trail was not even three years old and they were already using portables so when you make these decisions it is hard to predict human behavior and jobs, unemployment. Yes, Ford City is aging. I grew up in the area but now I live in Talbot Trail area. You have to invest in the best of the majority but there will be more difficulty down the road; arguments over transportation, busing, portables etc. Keeping Herman open is another albatross. A lot of money was put into Begley. Is FCI so high due to the possibility of year round schooling, and the fact that air conditioning must be fitted? I have a lot of questions and observations.

Maxwell parent who is a Maxwell and Herman graduate.

My son is third generation to attend Maxwell starting in September. It is important to their family. I am unhappy about JK-12 at Herman; what are my other options? There aren't any. It is unsafe, drugs, swearing, the clothing. They will be going to the bathroom in the same area, it is not good. I

know what goes on at Herman, I went there. I don't want my son there. Has the board looked into any type of fundraising for repairs to keep the schools open? Families would be more than happy to help financially.

Davis parent

stated that numerous families access the Delta Chi daycare in Coronation. What are Delta Chi's options?

Delta Chi was referenced in the School Information Profile. These are draft recommendations; we can't assume Coronation will close.

Maxwell parent

noted they were well represented this evening and we don't want small children in a high school. Superintendent Lyons spoke about programming at Tecumseh Vista, JK-12 school and the Design 2000 program in Essex DHS noting he has seen tremendous successes throughout the province with different grade restructuring models. I appreciate there are some fears because this is different than when we went to school. We are trying to provide viable opportunities.

Why is Maxwell in three of the four recommendations; we are at 100% capacity yet you want to close it?

There are a number of different recommendations all of which consider renewal costs, viability, overall size. Could that school incorporate more students or could another school incorporate Maxwell? We are trying to find right size for the Board and the Herman family. The audience was directed to the board website to review all the scenarios the committee examined. Maxwell has one of the highest FCI and renewal rates in the Herman family.

Not long ago we were told we were expanding because of FDK, we have good EQAO scores, we have a daycare across the street. Closing the school will disrupt families; the philosophy of the committee is to have the least impact on their decision making. Are you considering building a super school?

The committee has determined to look at solutions which have the least amount of impact but someone will be affected. They are attempting to minimize disruption. The committee looked at the possibility of a new K-12 facility but in that scenario it is understood that Ministry of Education funding would be limited. This family of schools could house students in the empty spaces.

Then invest in the old schools you have.

Maxwell parent who went to Coronation

and knows both schools offer great education. Until I know more I am not in favour of K-12. Is anything being discussed regarding the children being displaced. She won't want to leave her friends. I would have no problem moving my child to a catholic school. This PARC recommendation; is it a long term solution?

It is long term, ten or more years.

I agree with a lot of these parents, I agree with not having JK-12 in Herman. Tecumseh Vista is purpose built; how will you segregate these kids and keep them safe?

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We can't give you an answer until a decision is made. We have taken a preliminary look at the school layout and gone through the classrooms with the principal and there is a natural separation that could occur. Kindergarten areas could be segregated easily.

Maxwell parent

Our tax dollars go to fixing these schools and what has been done to fix Maxwell up?

Monies for repairs and renewal are shared across the board. We making some difficult decisions. At this time, we can't answer what will happen to Maxwell.

What will happen to Maxwell if it closes?

There is a process that must be followed. Again, these are draft recommendations, no decisions have been made.

Maxwell student

Please save my school. It seems that a choice will be made for us. If you close this school we will move.

Maxwell parent

Many here didn't agree with JK-12 so are you taking that off the recommendations?

The committee is here tonight and is listening to the input. They are their recommendations. I am the facilitator and my recommendations don't come forward until next October.

Davis students who will be going to Herman

We are excited and don't want little kids running around. There are already too many students at Davis so would be good to add more. We can't fit the Coronation students in.

Giles campus parent

I don't envy the committee their difficult task, and I hope you can find a solution that will make most people happy. If some McCallum students are redirected to Giles then they will be welcomed. He cautioned that enrolment is falling at catholic schools too, so before you make any rash decisions look really carefully about moving kids to another school where the same thing could happen.

McGregor parent

I want the school to remain open as there is daycare there, and none at Davis. My son doesn't do well with transitions. Ford test track is in proximity for students to use and run around and get fit and exercise. Why are you closing an overpopulated school?

McGregor is not over-populated, there are a lot of empty spaces. It has the second highest FCI. It is in very poor condition but has the ability to house the greatest number of students. If you convert Herman to a K-12 facility, you will have to put little toilets in there; what a waste of money. Keep it a high school and keep the little kids where they are supposed to be.

Maxwell parent

Did the committee considered closing Herman and moving older students into a smaller school?

Consideration was given to this idea, but committee decided that keeping the high school was something this family of schools wanted. It was part of the frame of reference to keep a high school in this family.

Maxwell parent

By putting all these kids together we will end with 40 or 50 in a class.

Class size average remains same. We have contractual obligations and have to maintain the Ministry of Education class cap size.

**9. Closing Comments and Adjournment**

Superintendent Lyons reminded the audience information pertaining to the PARC can be located at [www.publicboard.ca](http://www.publicboard.ca). There being no further questions, the meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.