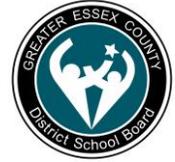


Greater Essex County District School Board
2015 PROGRAM AND ACCOMMODATION REVIEW
Report of a Committee Meeting held on
Monday, March 9, 2015 at 5:30 p.m.
In the library of Kingsville District High School



At the December 9, 2014, regular meeting of the Board, Trustees approved the following recommendation regarding General Amherst HS, Harrow DHS, Harrow PS, Kingsville DHS and Western SS,

THAT THE SUPERINTENDENT RESPONSIBLE FOR ACCOMMODATIONS FACILITATES AN ACCOMMODATION REVIEW OF GENERAL AMHERST HIGH SCHOOL, KINGSVILLE DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOL, WESTERN SECONDARY SCHOOL, HARROW DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOL AND HARROW PUBLIC SCHOOL, TO ADDRESS CAPACITY ISSUES.

Present:

General Amherst HS: Hazel Keefner, Principal, Amy Soucie, Staff Rep, Mary Lippert and Kim Laframboise, parents

Harrow DHS: Mary Edwards, Principal, John Konopaski, Staff Rep, Bill Parr and Sheri Dzudovich, parents

Harrow PS: Michelle Sprague- Keane, Principal, Teri Gorick, Staff Rep, Trudy Richards, parent

Kingsville DHS: Dina Salinitri, Principal, Chris Clements, Staff Rep, Michelle Hedge and Bill Orawski, parents

Western SS: Melissa McIntyre, Principal, Alison Oldfield, Staff Rep

Community Reps: Elaine Mailloux, Barry Mannell, Mary MacLauchlan, Pat Catton

Regrets: Robin Trepanier, Valerie Cormier, Rebecca Robinson

Facilitator: Superintendent, Todd Awender

Recorder: Lynne Hornby

There were three observers in the audience.

1. Call to Order and Welcome

The meeting was called to order at 5.45 p.m. by Chairperson Orawski thanking everyone for their attendance and Principal Salinitri for hosting the meeting. Everyone was seated in working groups. Superintendent Awender introduced Gail Kiss of our I.T. department.

2. Review of notes of committee meeting of February 9

The notes of the March 9 meeting have been circulated to the committee and posted to the Board website under the PARC icon.

A committee member requested that the notes be circulated to them prior to their being posted on the website.

A committee member clarified that in the brainstorm idea "Consolidation of KDHS and HDHS school populations in one new building. Both schools close. Grade 7 and 8s transition back to Harrow Elementary school." only the second part of the suggestion was to be eliminated. This will be amended in the file copy of the notes.

3. Community input to date and Information Responses:

Input received was distributed along with responses to information requests from this committee.

Western student distribution maps were shared, noting that we do not have the data to review beyond the last two years. Western SS was built by the previous county board. Another similar school was planned for the Leamington area called Eastern, but it never transpired.

Principal McIntyre explained that students in Adapted Basic programs generally have literacy gaps, are at about a grade 3 reading level or lower. They have the ability to achieve credits however they would not be able to meet the literacy requirements for a diploma. These students need 14 credits to

graduate (7 compulsory, 7 elective) with a OSSC (Ontario Secondary School Certificate). Most students will earn the credits but stay to continue to achieve more credits and work towards transitioning to the work world.

Locally Developed and Essential workplace pathway courses (otherwise known as Modified Applied courses) are also offered at all other secondary schools. Western SS offer many more essential courses and options in grade 11 and 12 than any other school.

A committee member felt that the student body needs a lot more support than they would in the regular high school; there are 15 support staff at Western.

Locally Developed class size is capped at 18 across the board but Western SS has open, applied and college and essential classes that are capped at 20. This is slightly higher in community high schools. AB classes are capped at 14 as per the teachers' contract.

If a student at WSS is doing OYAP, what are they considered?

The majority of OYAP students will be taking college level English and math courses. An Academic pathway is not accessible at WSS.

The Superintendent addressed the request for graduation rates by school. These are not produced by individual school; the Ministry of Education collects graduation data by Board. Because during any given school year, students transfer, change programs, enter mid-year and some students return for a fifth year of instruction, data would not provide an accurate number of students graduating based on the number of those entering in grade 9.

For a full time elementary student in school for the whole year, MoE funding is approximately \$9,800.

For a full-time secondary student in school for the whole year, MoE funding is approximately \$10,500.

Principal Edwards reported that she provided graduation percentages for the past few years. For example, only 73% graduated from these coming in. Some return for a fifth year, some attend summer school to reach the 30 credit requirement etc. It was pointed out that IEP students may continue at school beyond the required 34 credits. Ministry of Education provides the board average for graduation rates. We have provided the Board average graduation rate. As a board, we are within 1% of the provincial graduation rates.

A committee member said she would like to see the data of those students entering grade 9 versus those leaving grade 12 purely from a funding standpoint.

This information had been provided in the handout.

A committee member asked when would the School Information Profiles be finalized and not in draft format.

It was explained that these documents are constantly evolving and as a result, it has been past practice that they are always displayed on the website as DRAFT.

4. Debrief - Community meeting of March 2

M. Hedges has more questions collected at the Community meeting. She was asked to provide them to L. Hornby for inclusion in the notes.

We are still collecting data for answers to questions raised and the notes will not be published until everything is completed.

The distinction between Chair of committee meetings vs. Chair of Community meeting was clarified. A committee member mentioned that several people would be passionate at community meetings and some felt that the whole meeting should be open mike.

Others felt that some people were intimidated by some of the speakers at the mike while others in the crowd were worried about talking to those at the tables.

Concerns were raised that questions weren't answered on the spot. It was clarified that we prefer to take the questions back and have the appropriate staff provide answers to be published with the notes.

The best constructive feedback was received through the table feedback. Some people are not comfortable speaking at the mike and are afraid to say something in that setting. In consultation it appears that the two ways of collecting input provide for the maximum participation and so we will continue in that manner.

A suggestion was made to let the audience know that we won't be answering the questions at the meeting but they will be appended to notes. It was suggested that slides need to be in a larger font and to include the format for the community meeting in the letter and on the website.

It was again clarified that community meetings are for everyone, not just for the community where the meeting is held.

Discussion took place about audience use of the open mike. While some felt it was beneficial, the majority felt that it is not a very positive method of collecting input. It was generally felt that the most positive feedback collected was at the round table session. The collection of community input was debated. A suggestion was made that the comment cards should be available at schools and municipal office.

We will follow the Board's communication plan and they will be at school offices. Instructions will be included in the next community meeting notice.

5. Discussion to develop Guiding Considerations

Can we close/demolish parts of the schools to lower the utilization rates?

That way we can keep a viable school in every community. This would make the schools more efficient and would reduce the OTG. How do we do this?

Ministry of Education approval is required to demolish a portion of the school. In addition approval from the Ministry of Education to provide funding to carry out the demolition would be required.

Completion of an assessment to identify areas that could be demolished without impacting program would be necessary.

School additions are built in phases and are usually linear. Therefore, the only accessible spaces may only be the oldest or the newest and these may have programs or facilities that would be cost prohibitive to replace.

The repair costs of the remaining infrastructure also needs to be reasonable.

Demolition of a portion of the school does not address ongoing difficulties in providing a range of program options in schools with smaller populations.

A lot of the current ideas depend on a new school – is this feasible?

Recommending a new school is not a guarantee that the Ministry of Education will approve such funding.

6. Working groups:

Review of current recommendations

Development of any new recommendations:

Each community maintains a JK-12 school – all new buildings

WSS closes and students return to home schools

AB programs implemented at two locations

Possible boundary changes

Close all 3 high schools; build a mega school equidistant from each community.

Transition all students to the new mega school.

Or

JK-12 in each community

Leave WSS as is; expand the programming - ASD

Consolidation of HDHS and KDHS - close Harrow

Consolidation of WSS and GAHS - both schools close with a new facility; staus quo until new facility built

Incorporate WSS into KDHS; keep special programming

KDHS as JK-12

Harrow JK-12 right size school at either location

GAHS adds 7 and 8s from over population in Amherstburg family

Amherst adds 7 and 8s from Anderdon; add FI

GNPS or MCB as FI

Change board policy not to have a school involved in a PARC in less than 5 yrs

Change boundary – close Malden they go to Amherst and Harrow

Close CNPS they go to Essex and Harrow

Amherst becomes a 7-12 school – until a new school can be built

Harrow is JK-12 at Harrow site

Kingsville is JK-12

WSS closes and transitions to BRDHS and KDHS

Kingsville as JK-12

Close Harrow and adjust boundary between KDHS and GAHS

Western closes; AB split between GAHS and KDHS or maybe BRDHS

LDC to home schools

The committee will rank these recommendations before the next meeting.

7. Discussion - Ranking of recommendations

Deferred to next meeting

8. Questions

Why do we not have any student representation on this committee?

Principals spoke to their student representatives but the interest to participate was not there. On reflection, it was felt that it is not the right environment for students. It's a huge commitment for students. Several committee members voiced similar concerns and mentioned they would not want their children as part of the committee.

Principals thought they could ask their students for input using other methods. Students are aware that they can provide it and can also speak at community meetings. Principal will reinforce this.

School Information Profiles are still incomplete, all the questions need to be answered.

We have asked several times that the recorder is advised of any concerns around the completion of these documents. Any changes have been noted. The Superintendent asked that committee members contact the relevant principal with any errors or omissions. It was noted that they will remain as "draft" on the website as we have found they continue to be under revision.

A committee member felt that Western SS is more than an AB program and asked that the committee recognize there are LD classes at other schools. She felt that some students need to stay in a small community and could not be integrated into a community school and that the committee should make these considerations when ranking the draft recommendations.

9. Additional committee meeting dates

It was confirmed that there is a committee meeting on April 8 at General Amherst HS

10. Adjournment at 9:35 p.m.