



Our Task:

At the January 15, 2013, regular meeting of the Board, Trustees approved the following recommendation regarding the Tecumseh Family of Schools:

1. THAT THE SUPERINTENDENT RESPONSIBLE FOR ACCOMMODATIONS FACILITATES AN ACCOMMODATION REVIEW OF THE TECUMSEH FAMILY OF SCHOOLS TO ADDRESS CAPACITY ISSUES AND THE MODELS OF PROGRAM DELIVERY.;

Present: Tecumseh Vista Academy, Joan Rankin, Simona Baggio, Helen Papanastassiou, Paul Bisson, Heather Emery, Diana Fratarcangeli; DM Eagle School, Arlene Bryce Hanson, Natalie Hatch, Rachel Bulmer; Victoria School, Dave Simone, Jody Lamb, Marsha Tterlikkis; and AV Graham School, Amanda Dibbs, Wayne Samwell, Brenda Fletcher; Community representatives, Daniel Hofgartner, Eileen Fournier

Regrets: Sharon Pyke, Doug Marshall, Bill Murray, Shelly Hodare

Chairperson: Terry Lyons, Superintendent of Education

Recorder: Lynne Hornby

1. Call to Order and Welcome

The meeting was called to order by Terry Lyons at 4:40 p.m. Superintendent Terry Lyons introduced Shelley Hudson and Gail Kiss, of Information Technology who are joining the committee this evening to provide instant illustrations of possible boundary scenarios and enrolment projections.

2. Review of minutes of committee and community meeting

The minutes of the May 15 meeting have been circulated to the committee via e-mail. They have been posted to the Board website and copies will be filed to be shared with Trustees at a later date. Copies were provided to the committee.

The Committee was provided time to review the minutes of the Community meeting.

3. Review Community input to date

The committee was afforded time to review community input received via the e-mail box to date.

4. Discussion on above items 2 and 3

The Superintendent opened the discussion. He asked the committee what they felt were the prevailing messages taken from input provided at the community meeting of May 27 and from the e-mail box.

He reiterated that status quo is not an option and if something is not done to assist Tecumseh Vista, the elementary panel will be at 1200 within 3 years; the school was built for 800 students. The number of students in the Tecumseh family will fit into the four schools but just not in the current configuration.

The committee then discussed some of the prevailing messages from the third community meeting.

- Some speakers felt that the recommendations won't solve Tecumseh Vista's problem, it will alleviate it but won't solve it.

The English track students are not creating the pressures. A committee member added that parents are choosing Tecumseh Vista for the school, the technology, EQAO results. Several speakers at the meeting were putting down Forest Glade. It was felt that many parents are choosing French Immersion to access a new building rather than being invested in the program.

- Concerns were raised about some students undergoing multiple moves

In Discussions it was noted that 111 McCallum students have transitioned to Tecumseh Vista. It is very difficult to move those students again but there are few options available to us.

- There were no complaints voiced about Victoria school's possible closure
- Residents in the Banwell area seemed upset about transitioning to another school
- Many raised the topics of grandfathering/limited exceptions
- Many negative opinions about Forest Glade School and its open concept
- Adjust Belle River DHS boundary so that DM Eagle and AV Graham become feeders to that school
- Concerns about portables – parents don't want them at Vista and don't want to go to Forest Glade and be in portables
- There were a lot of emotional responses

Superintendent Lyons shared that the Board has purchased a software program that assists us exploring scenarios that will be used this evening. The company's data is based on birth registry data; something we cannot access.

In an effort to ensure that the committee had explored every possible option available, lengthy discussion took place. A long term solution was noted, which would involve grade and program restructuring:

Tecumseh Vista becomes English track only; Victoria and AV Graham become French Immersion sites with a grade restructuring that sees Victoria as the Early Years French Immersion site.

It is not ideal solution as it transitions a large number a lot of students; and could see a move to a French Immersion vs. English dispute. This option does not close a school but it appears there is no other long term solution. It would be necessary for new boundaries to take effect immediately. Any new siblings would adhere to the new boundary.

Tecumseh Vista Academy cannot survive as is; there is room to accommodate students in other schools. Forest Glade is able to absorb French Immersion students residing west of Banwell.

In discussion, it appeared more logical to relocate French Immersion as the schools are in close proximity to each other.

Some parents, who have students in each stream would likely oppose the idea but the principal noted this it is not commonplace for a family to have students in each track.

There are advantages and challenges for single and dual track immersion programming; there is no empirical evidence to support one over the other, only personal opinions. Academically, both systems are the equal but it is noted that in single track French Immersion, proficiency is improved. A lot of questions were raised at the community meeting about dual track; both for and against it. Some even said that if there was to be one English school and one French school they would pull students out because they see advantages to dual track. It was felt that the majority of parents don't want their children in two different schools. In reply to concerns that were heard about combined classrooms, a principal said that there are opportunities to be experienced in combined classrooms. Superintendent Lyons added that his experience to date has been that French Immersion programs increase; it has been many years since we saw a decrease in French Immersion.

A committee member pointed out that this scenario addresses capacity issues only; the committee would not be addressing renewal concerns, nor will any schools be closed. Essentially, a new French Immersion program will open at Forest Glade. Should there not be enough kindergarten students for a viable program, consideration may have to be given to not offering early years French Immersion.

Another scenario explored was dual track at all four Tecumseh schools with a revision of all boundaries. DM Eagle would be closed and students move to Tecumseh Vista; this takes 200 English students out of Tecumseh Vista and dual track would be implemented at Victoria and AV Graham. Students would be relocating en masse.

Superintendent Lyons repeated that his responsibility is for the Board as a whole, while parents are looking at their own school communities. It was added that as communities continue to expand there will always be a need for portables on school sites.

Following discussion about the proposal for Banwell to be the boundary for Tecumseh Vista French Immersion, a vote was taken on keeping the recommendation:

Adjust Tecumseh Vista's French Immersion western boundary to west of Banwell Rd., North of E.C. Row; transition affected students to attend a dual track program at Forest Glade School for September 2014;

A vote by show of hands was taken

In favour 8; Against 1

Moving forward, this recommendation will remain.

The opposite scenario was discussed, that is: AV Graham and Victoria schools remain as single track English, Tecumseh Vista Elem becomes single track French Immersion (this is all based on existing boundaries). This would mean that 230 English students move from

Tecumseh Vista to either Victoria or AV Graham. Previous Maidstone students would be travelling a considerable distance to either of those schools.

The committee needs to think about the long term. What is the ultimate goal that the committee wants to achieve?

The committee looked at advantages and disadvantages of the new proposal; this has been the practice throughout the process.

Advantages

- provides larger population base
- students would be moving large groups and are familiar with peers
- provides long term relief at Tecumseh Vista

Challenges

- no financial benefit in terms of facility savings to the Board
- where do Maidstone students transition? Their original school is now closed
- transitioning of several high needs students
- creates capacity issues at DM Eagle
- a short term solution which creates piecemeal schools.
- doesn't address grade restructuring concerns so there are still several small adjustments over a number of times; Tecumseh area students continue to experience constant transitions

Following discussions, a vote by show of hands took place:

In favour: 4; Against 5

This recommendation will not move forward.

The subject of Tecumseh Vista's secondary boundary was revisited.

Some inaccurate facts that were presented by speakers at the Community meeting were rectified. The lowest point in Belle River DHS' enrolment will be in 2014, when it is approx. 746. As has been previously stated, the data shared with the committee is the most up to date available, but some of the data used at the Community meeting may have been from last year's annual report which is online and the only data available to the general public. The Patillo/Orchard Park area is difficult. It is approx. 9.5 km to either secondary school. 158 students live on the western side of DM Eagle.

Tecumseh Vista's current eastern boundary of Wallace line is consistent with the French Immersion boundary. It was noted that the Board allows for secondary out of district attendance at any high school except Tecumseh Vista and Massey but without transportation.

A suggestion was made that Tecumseh Vista's secondary French Immersion western boundary be adjusted to be in-line with the elementary boundary

There was a vote by show of hands to determine whether to explore the adjustment of the western boundary;

In favour 9 .

This was unanimous and a western boundary adjustment was supported.

The next discussion was surrounding an eastern boundary adjustment. Currently French Immersion and English boundaries are Wallace line. An adjustment would mean that boundaries wouldn't be consistent. Prior to the opening of Tecumseh Vista Academy,

students from those schools did feed into Belle River DHS but since the opening of Vista, the Board's retention rates from that area have improved significantly, from approx. 70% before Tecumseh Vista opened, to 116% and 120% respectively each year.

A vote by show of hands took place regarding the adjustment of Tecumseh Vista's eastern boundary:

In favour 1: Against 8

The committee will not explore the possibility of an eastern boundary adjustment.

In conclusion there are no changes to the draft recommendations except for an adjustment to Tecumseh Vista's secondary French Immersion boundary. The adjustment will bring the boundary in-line with the elementary French Immersion boundary. The Herman School community will be advised.

TECUMSEH VISTA SECONDARY FRENCH IMMERSION PROPOSED BOUNDARY

North: Lake St Clair from Banwell Rd east to Wallace Line Rd

East: A line east of Wallace Line Rd south to County Rd 42 to a line east of Lakeshore Rd 107 south to North Rear Rd, west to Pleasant Park Side Rd, south to County Rd 46, east to County rd 23, South to County Rd 8, along County Rd 23 (both sides included) to County Rd 12.

South: County Rd 12 from County Rd 23 to Walker Rd.

West: Walker Rd north to County Rd 8, east to ERCA Greenway (abandoned railway) north to the former Windsor municipal boundary, following this boundary north of the airport lands, to Jefferson north to EC Row Expwy. Head east along EC Row Expwy to Banwell Rd, north along Banwell Rd (both sides included) to Lake St Clair.

5. Discussion to determine final recommendations and presentation at community meeting
No change except for the addition of the above secondary boundary adjustment.
6. Presentation at final Community meeting June 17 and at Special Board meeting June 19
Principals Rankin and Dibbs; parents, B. Fletcher, J. Lamb, D. Fratacangeli and school personnel S. Baggio form the sub committee preparing the powerpoint presentation at the Community meeting and the Board meeting. Superintendent Lyons will present the data at the next community meeting.
7. Final Report – must be received by Thursday June 13 at noon
Principals Rankin and Dibbs; parents, B. Fletcher, J. Lamb, D. Fratacangeli and school personnel S. Baggio form the sub committee preparing the written report.
The Special Board meeting will be changed to start at 6:30 p.m.
8. Adjournment
The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.