

KAWARTHA PINE RIDGE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

**ARMOUR HEIGHTS PUBLIC SCHOOL AND KING GEORGE PUBLIC SCHOOL
ACCOMMODATION REVIEW COMMITTEE
WORKING MEETING**

Tuesday, January 26, 2016 at 6:30 pm
King George Public School – Gymnasium
220 Hunter Street East, Peterborough, Ontario

MINUTES

PRESENT: Superintendent Peter Mangold (Co-Chairperson), Superintendent Joe Tompkins (Co-Chairperson), Trustee Wayne Bonner, Trustee Sarah Bobka, Trustee Rose Kitney, Jodi Whetung (Principal, King George Public School), Jaime Muldoon (Teacher, Armour Heights Public School), Nicola Jennings (Teacher, King George Public School), Chantelle Clarke (School Council, Armour Heights Public School), Geoff Barnes (School Council, King George Public School), Ziysah Von Bieberstein (School Council, King George Public School), Mary-Ann Meagher (Community Member), Gary Baldwin (Ashburnham Ward Councillor, City of Peterborough) and Keith Riel (Ashburnham Ward Councillor, City of Peterborough), Dean MacDonald (Senior Manager, Planning and Pupil Accommodation), and Pat Bjorndahl (Administrative Assistant)

REGRETS: Marguerite Masterson (Principal, Armour Heights Public School)

1. Welcome

Co-chairperson Peter Mangold called the meeting to order at 6:40 pm and welcomed everyone to the second public meeting. The committee members identified themselves. There have also been two working committee meetings and video conferencing was provided for any members of the public wishing to hear discussions and view the presentations.

2. Overview and Adoption of Agenda

An overview of the agenda for tonight's working meeting and the meeting procedures were reviewed by Co-chairperson Peter Mangold. There are four announced delegations this evening and presenters will be provided up to 10 minutes for their presentation. Unannounced delegations will be provided with three minutes to present this evening. There is a clip board provided on the back table to register for a presentation.

There were no additional agenda items. Feedback from the public will assist the Board of Trustees to make their final decision. Questions from the audience will be answered at the end of this meeting.

The Orientation meeting for committee members was held on Wednesday, November 4, 2015 followed by the first Accommodation Review Committee meeting for public input on Thursday, November 12, 2015. Working meetings for the committee were held on Monday, November 24, 2015 and Wednesday, December 15, 2015. Tonight's meeting is the second and final Accommodation Review Committee meeting for public input.

The accommodation report will be placed on the KPR website by Wednesday, February 10, 2016. There is a public delegation opportunity at the Board meeting on Thursday, February 25, 2016. The final staff report will include feedback compiled from public delegations. The report will be presented at the Board meeting on Tuesday, March 29, 2016 for decision by the Board of Trustees.

3. Adoption of Minutes – Tuesday, December 15, 2015

The minutes from the Armour Heights Public School and King George Public School Accommodation Review Committee's working meeting held on December 15, 2015 were approved with no revisions or additions.

4. Review of Committee Work to Date

Co-chairperson Peter Mangold reviewed the history of the accommodation review process. The Board's policy Public Accommodation Review: School Closure/Consolidation governs the process by which schools are to be identified and recommended for study and review. The following criteria from the policy were examined for Armour Heights Public School and King George Public School in identifying an accommodation review: program viability, overcrowded, operating/maintenance costs, underutilized, and extenuating circumstances (i.e. school is destroyed by fire or another catastrophe, school is unusable due to Environmental or health hazard).

Two factors were identified with the schools being slightly underutilized, however, the situation with Armour Heights Public School and King George Public School are the operating and maintenance costs which are expected to be significant in the future.

These factors present an opportunity to provide a special opportunity for students in East City by consolidating students from both schools at the King George site. The schools are two aging buildings 750 meters apart. One K-8 facility would best support the students in the area.

Co-chairperson Joe Tompkins reviewed the staff recommendation to provide the optimal learning environment for the students attending King George Public School and Armour Heights Public School. The recommendation is to consolidate students from both schools at the King George site. Refurbishing and building an environmentally friendly addition at the King George site while maintaining the historical integrity of the building would provide an improved facility for students within the area. Alternatively, building a new school at the King George site could be considered for this consolidation.

The mandate of the committee is to ensure that the Board of Trustees is provided with all of the appropriate and necessary information to make a decision in the best interest of students regarding staff accommodation recommendations. The information will inform the final staff report and the subsequent decision by the Board of Trustees.

Peter Mangold shared information from an anonymous survey of parents of kindergarten students that was completed in the Fall of 2014 with the goal of finding out how parents decided which school their children would attend. A total of 557 parents responded to the survey. The following question was asked: “Which factors were most important to you when considering school registration? Parents were asked to consider the following factors as either “Thought about this seriously”, “Thought about this somewhat” or “Did not think about this”. Religion was not included in this survey.

The most seriously considered factors are:

- Caring, supportive school environment – 76.38%
- School location (e.g. close to work or home, etc.) – 74.91%
- Perceived safety of the school community/surrounding neighbourhood – 71.59%
- Perceived academic reputation of the school (good programs and staff) – 60.15%
- School size (i.e. small or large number of students) – 56.83%
- Language programs offered at the school (e.g. French Immersion, Extended French, Native Language) – 47.97%
- Availability of transportation – 45.67%

A complete list of the factors is available on the KPR website.

Joe Tompkins shared data on French Immersion program viability and sustainability. The number of students (cohort) in the program changes at transition times: primary to junior, junior to intermediate, intermediate to senior and tends to decline. A minimum of 25 students in a grade is needed for a viable program (collective agreements class size). Availability of qualified staff and access to resources (human and print) are also factors. The secondary school program presents challenges: courses offerings, qualified staff, resources.

A robust and thriving French Immersion program is currently offered in Peterborough City and County. The current sites meet the demand for French Immersion in the City and County. The consolidation of Armour Heights Public School (229 students) and King George Public School (245 students) without French Immersion will create a school size for a full range of programming, activities and optimal learning environment.

The following criteria were used when defining optimal learning environment: environment and physical structure; safety; teaching and learning; relationship building – value to students and value to Board guided the discussions when examining the pros and cons of options, and conditions for maximizing student learning and well-being inform recommendations by staff.

5. Presentation of Options

The following are summaries of six options that were discussed at great length with the whole committee on December 15, 2015.

Option 5 – Status Quo	
Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Historical building - Least disruptive for students - Cheapest short term - Give parents some choice of school - Closer proximity for people - Any increase in enrolment can be addressed in both schools - Least environmental impact - Distinct character of both schools honoured - Maximum green space for King George PS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - State of current facilities require large investments - Missed opportunity for funding and to do something new and innovative - Accessibility - Parking - Storage - Transition from Grades 6 to 7 - Delaying a tough decision - Opportunities for students with more staff, new spaces - Combined grades - Loss of opportunity to consolidate the schools to one community school - Operating costs for maintaining two buildings - Not attracting new students/families to the area - No day care
Points to consider	
<p>Funds for school condition improvement are provided to the Board from the Ministry of Education and the amount is based on urgent needs for the whole system.</p> <p>Leverage number of volunteers to support one community school.</p>	

Option 6 – Purchase land to build a new school (6 acres of flat land, zoned for education)	
Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Potentially cost effective – flat building site - Selling two properties - No moving of students during the build except for moving in - Possibility for greater innovation (blank slate – not limited due to slope of land) - Can plant - Possibility of improved access and parking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Location? - Cost of land? - More busing - Not located in heart of community - Small trees - Moving everyone
Points to consider	
<p>Across from Thomas A. Stewart Secondary School? Lake property? Television Road?</p>	

Option 3 – Remove existing school and construct new school in same location	
Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New building - Modern and up-to-date - Take something from the old school to include in the new building - accessible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Must relocate students - Larger footprint - Lose historical building - More costly - Drainage concerns - Increased traffic on Armour Road and safety - Carbon emissions
Points to consider	
<p>Curb lane into Hunter Streets for buses only (less grade, less busy).</p> <p>Move younger students to Armour Heights PS and Junior/Intermediate students to another location i.e. Lakefield District SS, Kenner CVI, Thomas A. Stewart SS.</p>	

Option 1 – Construct new school and repurpose the existing school	
Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Repurpose building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Green space will be lost - Students need to relocate - Building compromised as it is not used as intended - Two sets of traffic for school and repurposed building - More costly - Over time, need to bring it up to code (by 2024) - Not accessible - Likely won't get funding as we aren't closing a building to consolidate - The board isn't in the leasing business or real estate - What would it be repurposed for? - Carbon emissions
Points to consider	
Nil.	

Option 2 – Integrate existing school with new building (an addition to King George PS)	
Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintain historical structure - Accessible after renovations - May be cost effective but will need major costly repairs in the future 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This building still has to be brought up to code - Busing during renovation - Entrance and exit from two busy roads - Relocate students – may lose some students - Lots of concrete (access to playground) and less green space - Renovations cost more - Drainage issues - Carbon emissions
Points to consider	
<p>Lots of discussion about the cons of the option in terms of moving students for 16 months. Consider keeping students on site from Junior Kindergarten to Grade 3 with Grades 4 to 8 attending Armour Heights Public School.</p>	

Option 4 – Remove existing school and construct new school at top of site	
Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compete with other systems - Students stay on site - Green space available - Enticing - Increase student enrolment - New and modern - One transition for students - One community school - Safe entrance and exit - Day care - Great view of the City - Best supervision of students - Most cost effective option 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Playground accessibility - Winter safety with hill - Carbon emissions
Points to consider	
<p>Parking entrance and exit via from the Peterborough Museum and Archives?</p> <p>Potential to purchase some land from the Museum or from the City?</p> <p>Options for replication of some features of the old building into the new school.</p> <p>Option 2 and 4 are the original two options.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How can we take elements of King George PS and work into a new building? - Student input? - Innovative/creative architecture designs. - Might the concerns about Option 2 be addressed through creative design? - Incorporate community input into new building. - 	

The Ministry of Education has confirmed in writing that the recommendation submission from the Board of Trustees following the March 29, 2016 Board meeting will be considered for this year. The Ministry of Education’s deadline for submissions is March 28, 2016.

Dean MacDonald, Senior Manager, Planning and Pupil Accommodation investigated possible sites in the optimum area for a new school in East City. There were no suitable sites with six acres of property available. The optimum area is from the river to the canal and Maria Street to Parkhill Road.

The area from the river to Television Road and from Lansdowne Street to Thomas A. Stewart Secondary School was investigated in the broader area. There are some appropriate size lots in this area but these properties are not currently for sale or may not be appropriately zoned.

6. Announced Delegations

6.1 Julie Mycyk, Parent, King George Public School

The King George Public School song written in 2013 for the 100th anniversary of the school was performed by a choir of 11 students from King George Public School under the direction of Julie Mycyk. The song demonstrates the King George Public School community and school spirit, and acknowledges the historical building built to natural surroundings.

6.2 Tina Barnes, Parent, King George Public School

Tina Barnes shared thoughts on behalf of community members about the possible building of a new school in East City. If King George Public School and Armour Heights Public School are consolidated into a new building the community members would like the building to be “green”. A handout listing links and websites was distributed. Reference was made to these documents and websites were mentioned in the presentation. Highlights from this presentation are listed below.

More than 100 schools have qualified under Natural Resources Canada’s Commercial Building Incentive Program (CBIP), achieving an average 30% energy savings and 11 schools have surpassed the 50% energy saving mark. Ontario Schools have also been recognized under the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) program.

A green school saves energy, resources and money and it does much more. Green schools are healthy, high-performance learning environments for both students and staff that feature:

- abundant fresh air, natural light and good indoor air quality
- sustainable and low toxic materials
- good acoustics
- programs and encourage environmental literacy
- school yards that provide opportunities for students to be outdoors, study nature and develop a deep respect for nature

Building a green school can add about 5 to 10% to the initial building costs. These costs can be quickly recovered from lower operating costs that will continue for the life of the building. Ontario school boards typically design school buildings to last over 50 years. Over that time, operational and maintenance costs can outstrip the entire original construction cost. In most cases, green schools not only cost less to operate, but they have been shown to recoup their extra building costs several times over the operational life of the building.

Information was also shared regarding pilot projects and available grants. A school and its systems can engage student through active energy management and waste reduction programs.

A green school is an opportunity for the board to set a good example by building a higher performing school that is energy efficient, environmentally beneficial, economical to build and operate, while offering an improved healthy learning environment. The Ontario government is supportive of these projects. A green school in our neighbourhood with an outdoor education curriculum will certainly bring the students back to Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board.

A discussion took place around the Ontario Ministry funding, capital investments, natural resources, and possible funds from the new government.

The commitment from the Board for a new building was questioned. Dean MacDonald replied that this is dependent on what Board decides. Incorporating this information will be considered for the application to the Ministry of Education for funds and additional grants. This application happens before the design for a new school is determined. The Ministry of Education provides funding on pupil places. The Board would have to approve the shortfall and possibly obtain funds through potential for grants. If two options are presented to the Ministry of Education, the amount received might not be as successful. The report to the Board will recommend an addition to King George Public School or build a new school on the King George site.

The culture of the two schools are presently respective of the environment, recycling, and conservation.

6.3 Nancy Thomson, Teacher, Outdoor Educator, Owner of Think Outside

Nancy Thomson's business brings outdoor education programming to schools using local green space for the programs. Her connection to King George Public School is through her work teaching outdoor education to many children at the school in the fields and forest adjacent to the school.

One strength is the connection that this school community has with environmental education and the beautiful physical site at King George. KPR has the opportunity to highlight and support environmental education with decisions that are being made from the Armour Heights Public School and King George Public School communities – decisions made for the land, the building, enriched curriculum opportunities, and the community.

For example, if the decision is made to create a new building then consider the school as a classroom itself where sustainable building practices and energy conservation is the main lesson. We teach these concepts within the curriculum and there is no better way to teach than through experiencing sustainability every day in their own schools. It becomes part of the school culture.

King George Public School is a unique site that people do not want to see spoiled. If there is a build or renovation it is important to incorporate and integrate the natural environment as much as possible and not to spoil it. Consider this an opportunity to teach children about making sustainable and thoughtful decisions with regards to our community and our planet.

6.4 Sarah O’Sullivan, Community Member

Sarah O’Sullivan presented as a representative of the Peterborough Inspired Education Group. This group began in 2013 as a group of parents interested in alternative educational options for our children and for the whole community. This is an evolving group of parents, teachers, and others interested in the idea of alternative learning. An online survey was administered to find out the ideas and interests of the wider community. Over 90 families responded and 50% of children were in JK-8. 88% of families would consider a public, alternative school if one existed.

Education models are changing globally, shifting towards child-centred, logistic, community strengthening models that balance academics with art, nature, physical education, cultural awareness, social justice and equity.

Sarah O’Sullivan shared school and classroom alternatives from around the world including Canada. Some details specific to Peterborough include the green space, an enriching and diverse social and cultural network, and parents and educators who want to trail blaze.

Peter Mangold confirmed that community partners are always accessed. A discussion took place regarding programs and curriculum. Enrichments have been done at King George Public School over the past couple of years through environmental projects.

7. Unannounced Delegations

Nil

8. Preparation of the Final Report and Next Steps

Peter Mangold invited questions and comments from the audience and committee members. Any questions that cannot be answered now will be placed on the KPR website.

Question - If the school is remodeled where would students be housed?

One of the challenges with the option to build an addition on King George Public School is to relocate the students for 16 months. Principals and administration have been consulted and there are few viable options available. This is problematic for administration and this committee. Students could be bused to an alternative site but there is not room at Armour Heights Public School for all of the students. Possibly there is available space in a secondary school. We do not have a plan to relocate the students

Question - How many portables can a school have, e.g. Edmison Heights Public School and Westmount Public School? Bring French Immersion back to East City.

There are five elementary schools offering French Immersion in Peterborough City and County: Prince of Wales Public School, Westmount Public School, Edmison Heights Public

School, Ridpath Junior Public School, and Adam Scott intermediate School. Moving students from a French Immersion elementary school would decrease the minimum number of students needed for a viable and sustainable program at that school.

Comment – Offer a survey specific to the East City neighbourhood where French Immersion is not available.

Comment – Parents may chose to send children to their community school and not send children to a French Immersion school outside of the community.

With so many French Immersion sites offered a school needs enough students to avoid triple grading.

Question – Is Extended French offered in Peterborough?

The Early French Immersion program begins in Senior Kindergarten and is offered in the City and County of Peterborough. Program viability and sustainability allows for one program only to be offered. The Early French Immersion program in Peterborough has a long history of success and is firmly established.

Question – May Ojibwe be offered also?

Presently Ojibwe is not offered in the City of Peterborough but it could be considered.

Comment – Information is available on the KPR website regarding French Immersion. Research indicates when students choose French Immersion there is enhancement, more parent and community involvement.

Comment – moving French Immersion from Edmison Heights Public School if overcrowding might avoid an expansion at that school.

Peter Mangold thanked everyone for their input in providing feedback for the final staff report. The staff of the two schools and the volunteer committee members have made valuable contributions for this review. Their time and participation is sincerely appreciated.

The Accommodation Report will be placed on the Board's website by Wednesday, February 10, 2016. For a new build, the report will need to respect the traditions of both schools and include ways to incorporate physical components of King George Public School and Armour Heights Public School if possible.

There is a public delegation opportunity at the Board Meeting on Thursday, February 25, 2016. The final staff report including feedback compiled from public delegations will be presented to the Board of Trustees at the Tuesday, March 29, 2016 Board Meeting. Board decision will take place on March 29, 2016

A summary of comments made by committee members:

- people are supportive of a new building, a new opportunity and traditions
- an opportunity to bring two school communities together
- a new school keeps students in their present schools until transition
- consider well-being of students now and in the long term
- benefits of a new building integrating the environmental aspects and innovative environmental science
- community is not protesting a new building
- the Board of Trustees need to make a decision on the options before any programming decisions are made
- a new build will add to the superior features in East City, for example, the new splash pad, the Liftlocks, the Museum, relocation of the Canadian Canoe Museum, Thomas A. Stewart Secondary School, athletic fields
- environmental jobs for young people in the future
- students would be environmental stewards with courses in the new school for 21st century
- keeping the old building could be most environmentally friendly
- a special part of Peterborough is Armour Hill
- keeping option 2 offers challenges for students off site and at the same time that is a short term problem for a long term solution which might be better for everyone
- new building would be an attractive feature to bring students back to Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board
- consolidation is the best option
- support for a new building overlooking the City
- a preference for special and talented teachers in the staffing

10. Adjournment – 9:00 pm