

KAWARTHA PINE RIDGE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

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

Tuesday, November 24, 2015 at 6:30 pm
Armour Heights Public School – Room 11
245 McFarlane Street, Peterborough, Ontario

MINUTES

PRESENT: Superintendent Peter Mangold (Co-Chairperson), Superintendent Joe Tompkins (Co-Chairperson), Trustee Wayne Bonner, Trustee Sarah Bobka, Trustee Rose Kitney, Marguerite Masterson (Principal, Armour Heights Public School), 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), Ziyah Von Bieberstein (School Council, King George Public School), Mary-Ann Meagher (Community Member), Dean MacDonald (Senior Manager, Planning and Pupil Accommodation), and Pat Bjorndahl (Administrative Assistant)

REGRETS: Gary Baldwin (Ashburnham Ward Councillor, City of Peterborough) and Keith Riel (Ashburnham Ward Councillor, City of Peterborough)

1. Welcome

Co-chairperson Peter Mangold called the meeting to order at 6:35 pm and welcomed everyone to the first working meeting. Videoconferencing is provided in Room 11 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 was provided by Peter Mangold. There were no additional agenda items. Discussion and questions are encouraged from the committee members throughout this working meeting.

3. Adoption of Minutes – Thursday, November 12, 2015

The minutes from the Armour Heights Public School and King George Public School Accommodation Review Committee's meeting held on November 12, 2015 were approved with additional information added "Members of the public may ask questions at public meetings through an announced delegation, an unannounced delegation, or completing and submitting a question slip."

The Accommodation Review Committee's mandate was reviewed. The committee's role 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.

4. Responses to Questions from Previous Meeting

The questions and responses from the Armour Heights Public School and King George Public School Accommodation Review Committee's meeting held on November 12, 2015 were distributed and discussed. This document will be posted on the KPR website along with all documents shared with the committee this evening.

If a decision is made to consolidate students from Armour Heights Public School and King George Public School, a transition committee will be formed. This committee will have membership from Trustees, Superintendent, Principals, Teachers, Municipal representative(s) from the City of Peterborough, and School Council members. These are not public meetings. The committee will assist in deciding what types of activities would best create an environment which supports the transition of students.

Transparency concerns were raised. Peter Mangold clarified that there is ample opportunity for input and to have questions answered. Notes on every conversation leading up to an accommodation review are not available. These discussions with administration are informal. The Long Term Accommodation Plan on the KPR website discussed considerations for the accommodation review i.e. French Immersion.

5. Decision Making Regarding Choice of School

An anonymous survey of parents of kindergarten students 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, support 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 (e.g. small or large number of students) – 56.83%

A complete list of the factors is available on the KPR website. The recommendation is to create the best possible learning environment and facility.

The survey factors were discussed including market value of housing, socio-economic issues, physical space, proximity of schools in neighbourhood, staff turnover rates at schools, and the importance of choosing housing and a neighbourhood/community.

Peter Mangold and Joe Tompkins visited C.R. Gummow Public School in Cobourg last Friday. This is a very new and modern school with huge windows, sky lights, natural light, and wide hallways. The newest schools in Peterborough are Roger Neilson Public School, James Strath Public School, and North Shore Public School. A bus trip could be arranged for the committee if there is an interest in touring a new school.

Praise was shared for the KPR Facilities Department and the great additions that have been built onto schools i.e. Otonabee Valley Public School. This school has lots of playgrounds and space for children to play.

A request was made to invest in researching why students are not attending KPR schools i.e. attending the Peterborough Victoria Northumberland and Clarington Catholic District School Board or private schools. What can we do to attract more students?

Peter Mangold explained that the numbers are not decreasing for Armour Heights Public School or King George Public School. We are trying to provide the opportunity for a better learning environment. There are more Catholic families living in East City and often neighbourhood schools are more convenient and the closest school is chosen. This information does not help in making a decision about the consolidation of Armour Heights Public School or King George Public School.

We need to enhance what we already have and determine what is going to work. Establish a focus for attraction on what the school has to offer. Focussing on people and having a great transition process will engage community members.

Joe Tompkins shared transition committee information from the consolidation of Cobourg District Collegiate Institute East and Cobourg District Collegiate Institute West to Cobourg Collegiate Institute. The new identity of the school honoured the past of both former schools.

A question about an option of closing Armour Heights Public School was raised as well as status quo for the two schools. Administration feel that a new school or an addition on one location is the best option.

6. French Immersion

Co-chairperson Joe Tompkins provided an overview on French Immersion. French Immersion is an optional program in which parents can chose to enrol their children. The Early French Immersion program begins in Senior Kindergarten. Core French starts in Grade 4.

The goal of French Immersion from Board policy states “By the end of the program, students will participate easily in conversations and discussions, will be able to take courses at the college or university level in which French is the language of instruction, and will be able to accept employment in which French is the working language.”

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. Adam Scott Collegiate Vocational Institute is the secondary school offering French Immersion. Kenner Collegiate Vocational Institute accommodated French Immersion in the past but secondary enrolments did not support two secondary schools for French Immersion. Enrolment data was shared for the past three years for the French Immersion schools.

Discussions took place around the decline in French Immersion enrolment and moving English students to other schools. The trend in French Immersion indicates strong participation in the beginning with an enrolment decline leading to Grade 6. A decline in enrolment is problematic for staffing. Combined grades will occur.

The French Immersion program at Adam Scott Collegiate Vocational Institute has course options based on staff qualifications and expertise. Courses offered in French Immersion secondary schools are school specific throughout KPR.

A minimum of 25 students in a grade is needed for a viable program. The secondary program presents challenges: course offerings, qualified staff, and resources (human and print).

Senior Administration's position:

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

There is a new revised French curriculum for three French programs: Core French, French Immersion, and Extended French. The new curriculum focusses on speaking and understanding i.e. moving to speaking in real life situations.

7. Financial Considerations for Accommodation Review

Dean MacDonald, Senior Manager, Planning and Pupil Accommodation, provided a financial analysis overview. The Grants for Student Needs (GSN) are predominately enrolment driven, based on the overall board enrolment. There are two major components of the GSN that will change as their calculation is based on school specific enrolment – School Operations and School Foundation Grant. In 2015-2016, the Ministry of Education

announced changes to the funding model that have a significant impact on the School Operations Grant in future years. The Top-up component of the School Operations Grant provides additional school operations funding based on the specific circumstances of individual schools. Boards may be eligible for Top-up funding, which recognizes schools that are operating at less than full capacity. Top-up funding for School Operations provides funding to address the extra costs i.e. cleaning and maintaining some of the excess capacity of school facilities operating at less than full capacity.

The School Foundation Grant supports the cost of in-school administration (salaries and benefits for principals, vice-principals, and office support staff). A school of approximately 500 students would possibly have one Principal, one part-time teaching Vice-principal, one + secretaries and custodians. The number of administration is balanced with the needs of the school.

The information provided on the 2015-2016 operations budget are estimates. There will not be additional costs for transportation if the schools are consolidated.

In 2014-2015, the Ministry of Education introduced the School Board Efficiencies and Modernization (SBEM) strategy to provide incentives and supports for boards to make more efficient use of school space. School Consolidation Capital (SCC) program funding will support consolidations and right-sizing of school facilities (\$750 M over four years beginning 2014-2015).

The Ministry of Education is redirecting funds with the new formula. Dean will provide a link for the Ministry of Education's website to access additional information.

8. Accommodation Options

Dean MacDonald presented architectural drawings for four possible options for consolidation of the two schools on the King George Public School site. There is not enough acreage at Armour Heights Public School for building a new school. These options are for either building an addition on King George Public School or building a new school on the King George Public School Site. The slope of land at the King George Public School site does provide construction obstacles. The largest challenge would be with building a new school while operating a present school (i.e. noise, traffic, water, and power interruptions). Construction of a new school will take a minimum of 16 months.

Options 1, 2 and 3 are not feasible while school is in operation. Option 4 is the most feasible. These options are based on a school with 550 students and includes a day care centre. For preliminary costs, 20% has been added to the estimates for expenses such as design, equipment, and taxes. Site restrictions were examined as well as challenges associated with the King George Public School site.

Option 1:

- existing school would be repurposed
- may not be feasible with entrance on Armour Hill
- three levels, bus drop off on Armour Road
- school would need to be empty for 16 months
- students would be moved outside of school area
- \$13.8 M estimate

Option 2:

- offers an addition to King George Public School
- school would need to be empty for 16 months
- \$12.9 M estimate

Option 3:

- remove existing school and construct a new school at same location
- school would need to be empty for 16 months
- Larger footprint
- \$14.8 M estimate

Option 4:

- Students would attend school in the existing King George Public School
- Existing school building would eventually be removed for play space
- Construct new school at top of the hill
- Longer building
- More efficient construction and use of space
- Slope of land will incur additional site costs
- \$12.9 M estimate

These are preliminary plans that would need to be approved by the City of Peterborough. Traffic studies would be conducted.

The committee was asked to consider all pros and cons to every option. These options are initial concepts from the architect. Options 1, 2 and 3 remove students from King George Public School for 16 months to portables on another site. The pros and cons will be discussed at the next working meeting on December 15, 2015.

Option 5:

- Status quo

Option 6:

- purchase another site
- possibly cheaper to build on flat site

The feasibility of moving students to Armour Heights Public School was discussed. Students from King George Public School would be housed in ten portables leaving no playground.

9. Preparation for Next Meeting

For the working meeting on December 15, 2015, the pros and cons for each option presented including any new options will be discussed.

Property opportunities for alternative sites have been examined. Some locations would ensure that most students will require transportation. The environmental impact would be studied for levelling of land at the King George Public School site. Financial impacts are contingent on Ministry funding.

Videoconferencing will be available in the Gymnasium at King George Public School on December 15, 2015 during the working meeting for any members of the public. The working meeting will be held in the Library.

10. Future Meetings:

Tuesday, December 15, 2015, 6:30 pm – Working Meeting

Tuesday, January 26, 2016, 6:30 pm – 2nd Accommodation Review Committee Meeting

11. Adjournment – 9:45 pm