



“The Niagara Catholic District School Board, through the charisms of faith, social justice, support and leadership, nurtures an enriching Catholic learning community for all to reach their full potential and become living witnesses of Christ.”

APPROVED MINUTES

St. Catharines Elementary and Secondary Family of Schools

Ad Hoc Attendance Area Review Committee Meeting

Michael J. Brennan Catholic, St. James Catholic, Assumption Catholic, St. Alfred Catholic, St. Ann Catholic, Canadian Martyrs Catholic and Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Elementary Schools

October 10, 2013

7:30 p.m.

ST. ALFRED CATHOLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Minutes of Ad Hoc Attendance Area Review Committee Meeting for the St. Catharines Elementary and Secondary Family of Schools of October 10, 2013 at 7:30 p.m. at St. Alfred Catholic Elementary School.

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Superintendent Baldasaro

A. ROUTINE MATTERS

1. Opening Prayer: Yolanda Baldasaro, Family of Schools Superintendent

The opening prayer was led by Yolanda Baldasaro, Family of Schools Superintendent

Committee Members		Present	Excused	Absent
Rhianon Burkholder	Trustee/Chair	✓		
Kathy Burtnik	Trustee	✓		
Maurice Charbonneau	Trustee	✓		

Resources to Committee		Present	Excused	Absent
John Crocco	Director of Education	✓		
Yolanda Baldasaro	Superintendent of Education/Secretary	✓		
Scott Whitwell	Controller of Facilities Services		✓	
Kathy Levinski	Manager of Facilities Services	✓		
Tina DiFrancesco	Recording Secretary	✓		

The following staff were in attendance:

Glenda Hillier, Principal, St. James Catholic; Victoria Wegelin, Principal, St. Ann Catholic; Branka Jones, Principal (Acting), Our Lady of Fatima Catholic; Susan Tromanhauser, Principal, St. Alfred Catholic; Sheri Bassett, Vice-Principal, St. Alfred Catholic; Alan Creelman, Principal, Canadian Martyrs Catholic; Maria Solomon, Vice-Principal, Canadian Martyrs Catholic.

Members of the public registered their attendance via sign in sheet.

2. Welcome: Rhianon Burkholder, Trustee – Chair of St. Catharines Ad Hoc Attendance Area Review Committee

Trustee Burkholder welcomed and thanked everyone for attending. The process of the Ad Hoc Attendance Review Committee was described whereby the Committee will bring forth recommendations to the Committee of the Whole. The Committee of the Whole will bring the recommendation to the December 17th Board meeting. The final recommendation will be determined by the Ad Hoc Attendance Area Review Committee at the November 18th Committee Meeting at Saint Francis Catholic Secondary School. All sessions are public and all information is posted on the Board website.

Trustee Burkholder stated that the Ad Hoc Attendance Area Review Committee is made up of two area trustees for St. Catharines, Kathy Burtnik, Maurice Charbonneau and Rhianon Burkholder, who is the Chair of the Ad Hoc Attendance Area Review Committee and Trustee for Thorold. Information and options come from staff who acts as resource to the Committee: Superintendent Baldasaro, Scott Whitwell, Controller of Facilities Services, Kathy Levinski, Manager of Facilities Services, Tina DiFrancesco, Administrative Assistant to Superintendent Baldasaro and John Crocco, Director of Education.

Trustee Burkholder stated that it is important to know that we are months away from making a decision. Public opinions and recommendations are much valued. Once the Board has made a decision all information will be communicated to parents/guardians.

3. Terms of Reference: Rhianon Burkholder

Trustee Burkholder presented the Terms of Reference for information.

4. Meeting Schedule: Rhianon Burkholder

Trustee Burkholder presented the meeting schedule and encouraged everyone to attend all meetings to bring forth their ideas.

5. Background: Kathy Burtnik, Trustee – Chair of the Niagara Catholic District School Board

Realities

- *St. James Catholic Elementary School*
- *Early Learning Kindergarten Program*
- *French Immersion*
- *Grandfathering*
- *Attendance Area Policy 301.3*
- *Committee Considerations*

Trustee Burtnik informed the audience that certain realities brought the Board to this decision, the primary driver being the closing of Michael J. Brennan. The Board is charged at looking to this Committee to try and maximize facility use and the potential for learning at each of our school sites. A commitment was made whereby those students and their siblings affected by the closing of Michael J. Brennan who were registered as of

February 1st, 2012 were grandfathered and had the right of attendance at St. James. However, if through this attendance area review that boundaries are adjusted, students fall outside of boundary, there would be no right of transportation for these students.

Next year is the final phase for the Early Learning Kindergarten Program (ELKP) therefore every school in Niagara Catholic and in Ontario will have ELKP. This is the first year that Niagara Catholic has offered the French Immersion Program. As we rollout and project this program, it will have an impact. Currently it is located at Our Lady of Fatima in St. Catharines.

Trustee Burtnik stated that as a Committee many options have been reviewed and considered. Initially there were fifteen options and a decision was made to narrow it down to the three current options. Trustee Burtnik expressed that we need to hear public thoughts, opinions and the impact on the children. Feedback was encouraged on the three options. Trustee Burtnik assured that should your address be affected by a boundary change your children will be offered an absolutely equal Catholic Education in another Niagara Catholic school.

Trustee Burtnik introduced Yolanda Baldasaro to present the three options for consideration.

6. Options for Consideration: Yolanda Baldasaro
Scott Whitwell – Controller of Facilities Services
Kathy Levinski – Manager of Facilities Services

Superintendent Baldasaro acknowledged Scott Whitwell and Kathy Levinski who are resources to the Committee and were instrumental in coming up with the options, as well acknowledged Principals, Vice-Principals of the St. Catharines area identified schools and Rob Berketo of Niagara Student Transportation Services (NSTS) who has provided a lot of data relating to transportation.

Option 4: Current Boundaries

Option 8B: Revised boundaries between St. James, St. Ann, Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Elementary Schools plus revised boundaries with Our Lady of Fatima and Assumption Catholic Elementary School plus revised boundaries with St. Alfred and Canadian Martyrs Catholic Elementary Schools

Option 10: Revised boundaries between St. James, St. Ann and Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Elementary Schools plus revised boundaries with Our Lady of Fatima and Assumption Catholic Elementary School

Superintendent Baldasaro and Kathy Levinski presented the three potential attendance area options for consideration: Option 4, Option 8B and Option 10. Data included the current and revised boundaries, building utilization information and school areas of change for the St. Catharines Attendance Area Review identified schools

Option 11: Ideas: Comments/Input/Feedback

Trustee Burkholder encouraged members of the audience to offer ideas and suggestions for feedback.

7. Comments/Input/Feedback

Karen Handle:

The French Immersion Program is continuing to accelerate with time. Is that not going to dramatically increase your numbers in the French Immersion Program?

Kathy Levinski:

The progression of French Immersion to Our Lady of Fatima was taken into account in our projections. Instead of Our Lady of Fatima having a lower utilization and fewer students in the school it builds it up sufficiently so that it's well utilized without moving any other students.

Karen Handle:

You are not fearful that it's going to accelerate to the point where there is going to imbalance again ?

Kathy Levinski:

There is room for additional students using our projections for the French immersion rollout. Our demographer took the numbers registered from this year and projected them out.

Superintendent Baldasaro:

When we are looking at these projections, we are speaking about a dual track. The French Immersion Program is quite healthy at Our Lady of Fatima. We have classes of French Immersion in EKL and Grade 1. We can't predict the future but what we are doing is projecting out with the best information we have now. We hope that French Immersion will continue to expand and grow. Keep in mind that the French immersion students aren't just students that live in the Our Lady of Fatima catchment area.

Karen Handle:

What if suddenly you get a whole number in the city that wants to do French Immersion?

Superintendent Baldasaro:

When that time comes, we may need to take a look at other considerations.

Maurice Charbonneau:

Remember there were other sites that were proposed. Other sites may create open spaces in other schools that may be over capacity. That's the kind of wonderful problem we would like to see. If more people would like to get into the program, once that happens we'll come up with the best solution possible.

Neil Handle:

Looking at the boundaries, looking at St. Michael or St. Denis, St. Ann, Mother Teresa, are these schools being affected? Looking at the diagram, couldn't you draw more numbers to Assumption from St. James? Utilization of the school would increase. What about these boundaries on the west like Mother Teresa and St. Denis. It would make far better sense to adjust the boundaries.

Superintendent Baldasaro:

For this particular Attendance Area Review Committee, the schools we are speaking about are the identified schools in this presentation. Currently the Committee's focus is on this area of schools and not any other schools in the vicinity.

Kathy Burtnik:

We went through 15 options, one of them was exactly that a piece from St. James to Assumption. So if you go on to our maps from previous meetings you can look at it. At the committee level, not saying that we are not going back there to look at it again, but the impact was a cross boundary shift at our Secondary level. Assumption, Fatima, St. Alfred and Canadian Martyrs go to Holy Cross. Once we started looking at that we disturbed a lot more than what we currently have presented as options this evening. There was no real significant gain. So that's the rationale that the Committee decided to pursue at this time.

Trustee Burkholder invited any other questions and comments.

8. Future Action

Superintendent Baldasaro reminded everyone that the process is not over and a schedule of the Public Consultation and Committees Meetings are available. Any comments or questions can be sent to Tina DiFrancesco at the address posted on the Board website. Next public Committee Meeting to be held on October 23rd, 2013 at 5:30p.m. in the Father Kenneth Burns csc Boardroom at the Catholic Education Centre.

9. Adjournment

Moved by Trustee Charbonneau

THAT the Ad Hoc Attendance Area Review Committee Meeting for the St. Catharines Elementary and Secondary Family of Schools of October 10, 2013 be adjourned.

CARRIED

This meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.