

## Quality Programing and Education

Of the four proposals presented to the trustees, two suggest that Long Lake Public School should close.

I would like to dispute the rationale that allegedly supported the Board Administration and ARC proposals to convince the trustees and public that it is in the best interest of our students to close LLPS.

The Board Administrative Council and ARC suggest the following advantages to the students by closing Long Lake Public School:

- 1) Eliminate Triple Grading
- 2) Larger Library
- 3) More computer time
- 4) Wider variety of extracurricular activities/team sports
- 5) Larger Gym

These contrast statements are based on the current population at Algonquin Public School. Things **WILL** change when you add 150 + kids to Algonquin School which is already at a 95% utilization rate.

I will start by addressing the issue of triple grading which I know everyone feels is a big concern with Long Lake Public School

### Triple Grading

This specific year of 2010/2011, Long Lake has one triple grade class – 1/2/3.

This is due to 3 reasons

- 1) 2 back to back years of higher than usual enrollment (11 students in grade 3 and 14 students in grade 4)
- 2) The imposed class size cap for primary grades

- 3) **Our principal's decision to follow the Provincial Government's Education Act advising *average* class size cap numbers.** He had decided to share student numbers, rather than push the Rainbow Board's acceptance of a 10% threshold on class size caps.

**We see no merit to the rationale presented on this issue.**

## **Library**

The children of Long Lake benefit from the use of a ***well-stocked*** library. There are many types of books, including: Easy Read, Fiction, non-Fiction texts and Reference Material. There are Big Books, hand puppets, books on tape, and Book Room books available to the children and teachers. Several parent volunteers keep the library neat and tidy, check in books, shelve the books and repair them when needed. They are valuable members to our support community. Our library is superior for our school and class sizes. In addition to this, many of our teachers have their own in-class libraries which include extensive poetry collections. ***New books are continually selected with particular readers in mind. This doesn't happen at larger schools without a librarian who knows each individual student.*** Long Lake is fortunate enough to have a few self-proclaimed reading-junkies as teachers and these individuals personally hand select books for each child based on their interests. Students consistently say that the availability of great books, time for independent reading and being read to is one of the best parts of being at Long Lake. Many parents have stated that the great reading selection and the opportunity to read have made bookworms out of their reluctant readers.

**Closing this argument, we all understand the trend in over-populated schools to replace library-rooms with much needed class rooms to compensate for the larger masses of students. A few examples of this include: Westmount Public, R.L. Beattie and MacLeod. This is a foreseeable possibility for Algonquin Public School if Long Lake Public closes, thereby doing a disservice, with respect to**

**Library and reading material accessibility, to both the children of Long Lake and Algonquin Schools.**

**We see no merit to the rationale presented on this issue.**

## **Computer Lab**

Our Computer/Media Lab boasts 20 computers – ***one for each child in a class.*** **Students at Long Lake do not have to share computers** (Algonquin currently has 18 computers). Our LAB was upgraded last year when enough computers were purchased for a class set. Also in this room is a Smart Board. The classes use this tool frequently as part of their learning in math, language and Science. Plans are underway to purchase another Smart Board. Again, **our computer lab is very well suited for our school and class sizes.**

**We see no merit to the rationale presented on this issue.**

## **Extracurricular Activities/Team Sports**

There is a wider range of extracurricular inter-school sports offered at Algonquin Public School. But who are these Activities offered to? I understand the students in grade 7 and 8 are able to TRYOUT for these teams. **The argument for the advantage of offering Team sports is weak. The students leaving grade 6 at Long Lake will have this opportunity when they transfer to Grade 7 at Algonquin. This has historically been the process.**

I understand that Grade 6 students are able to try-out for Teams, but it is highly unlikely that they will make the team. With the possibility of Long Lake and Wanup closing, and the addition of 150 + students, Algonquin's wide range of extracurricular inter-school sport teams will not benefit our students. This only benefits the few students in grades 7 and 8 who make the team.

What sports are offered to students at Algonquin in the younger grades? The school website indicates there is a running club offered to kids in grade 4. **In comparison, Long Lake offers a running club to all students twice a week.**

Many families in our area do not rely on the school for extracurricular activities and our children are involved in many community sports.

**There is no advantage to move these children to a larger school for more extracurricular sports, when these Activities are not offered to students in this age group.**

**We see no merit to the rationale presented on this issue.**

## **Gymnasium**

In the School Profile, under the heading - “does each class have access to the gym for daily physical activity?” Algonquin indicated NO and Long Lake, YES.

**I must ask the question, how will our students benefit by moving to a larger school if this statement is true?**

Each class and every student at Long Lake has the opportunity to have gym access daily.

Admittedly, some schools have larger gymnasiums; however the Long Lake teaching staff takes advantage of the wonderful opportunity that our outside green space provides. With respect to fitness and Leisure, Long Lake has an advantage many schools do not have. The location is situated immediately next to a city tended Soccer field, baseball field, skating rink and playground. It also boast 100's of acres of green space accessible for future outdoor recreation ideas. Physical activity is not a concern for students at Long Lake.

**There is no advantage to move these children to a larger school with less gymnasium accessibility and less outdoor opportunities for physical activity.**

**We see no merit to the rationale presented on this issue.**

We have been questioned on the extent of support we have from our parents and council and we can happily say our council has increased this year by 4 dads and 1 mom proving growing support for the interest in the future of our school.

**In closing**, I would like to bring attention to the error made at the 4<sup>th</sup> public meeting where the Board Administrative Council displayed a slide showing the projected utilization rate for Long Lake. The projection of 51 students in 2013/2014, showing a utilization rate of 57% was previously challenged and accepted by the board to amend this figure. **In actuality the projected utilization rate should be 69% (or 61 students). Please note a reading of 70% is considered "fair". Please keep this in perspective. We would like to remind the trustees and the public that our school capacity is 89 students. We currently have 69 students showing a capacity of 81%.**

**Our Full Time Equivalent enrollment numbers for 2001 were 75 students and in 2009 we were only down by 3 students. This shows that our enrollment is not declining as rapidly as it has been claimed by stats. We do know that the city as a whole is losing space to expand but the South End is just beginning. It has been stated during this process that 50% of permits issued in Sudbury were in the South End. If we do nothing we remain at a fair standing. If we can use any space, we can move that rating to a good standing of 88% (Carol Woodliff will speak further on utilizing the surplus space at Long Lake).**

Respectfully,

Erin Kitchen-Price

LLPS Parent Council Member