

Dear Trustee:

On behalf of the students – past, present and future – of Wanup Public School, please be advised that the supporters of Wanup Public School DO NOT want you to CLOSE our school! The enclosed signed petitions (including the online petition at www.savewanup.com) represent the “grass roots” community support for this motion. We are appealing to you as elected representatives of our Board because the Accommodation Review process of the Sudbury South schools failed our school! The process failed to identify the true value of our school to the students, the communities, the Board and the Economy. Students already exceed the Consortium policy on travel times, and sending them into Sudbury will only negatively affect their education experience. Give us a moment of your time, and we’ll show you how we were steered away from consideration and we’ll confirm the education value of Wanup PS!



RURAL COMMUNITY

- Wanup, Ontario is a community. It has its own place on the map. Wanup has a General Store, a Community Hall, a Church, and a School. The community is what defines its people. Wanup's attraction is Rural country living close to the Southend of Sudbury, and a school where our kids can live and grow up in a rural setting. It's a lifestyle choice.

- The Wanup PS was built by the community for the community many years ago, and was not part of the Rainbow District School Board, nor did we want to be.

- The city of Greater Sudbury was expanded and swallowed up Wanup, this included the board 'inheriting' our school ten years ago. Within the first five years of oversight, the board had already had designs to close our school or downsize it (see Board's capitol report from 2005).

- Why after inheriting a school that another community built, does the board get to close the school, against the wishes of the community?

PUBLIC SMUBLIC - The public was invited to present options at one of the ARC public meetings. Several members of the public did so. The very next night, ARC convened to discuss those options. – I attended that meeting, so I and the ARC members present can vouch for what was said that night.

- One public option brought forward was 'status quo', leaving things alone as per the Sudbury Catholic School Board trustees voted to do. Ada Della Penta instructed the ARC members that one person, Jean Hanson had vetoed that option, and that it was not on the table for discussion. How is that a fair and open process, where one person can veto an option brought forward for discussion by the ARC. How can the ARC function if it is clearly being steered by one person. That option was viable for another school board, why not this one? We won't know, because the ARC was not allowed to discuss that option.

- Another option brought forward was that recognizing overcrowding in some schools and underutilization in others and with the goal of reducing surplus space, 'catchment zone boundary adjustments' was presented as an option. Not just a vague notion, but specific ideas were presented to ARC. Again Ada Della Penta instructed the ARC that **boundary zone adjustments were like 'robbing Peter to pay Paul, it's not a very good idea'**, she then instructed Michelle to strike that from the meeting minutes. We would like to disagree with Ada Della Penta's statement. Boundary adjustment would move students from over utilized space to underutilized space resolving both schools problems without the need to rely on funding from the Ministry to build a new school., but that would go against the Board's agenda of presenting overcrowded schools in the South End as a case for funding a new school. Some discussion was brought forward about taking some areas back from Monettville that they gained in a previous ARC process. An ARC community member' banged her fists on the table, and exclaimed, 'NO! we got Alban, and Noellville!, we're keeping them! Wanup can't have them!'. And that ended the serious discussion of boundary adjustment. 10minutes was spent discussing boundary adjustments, and not even the specific ones presented by the public. Again we can demonstrate that one staff Board member clearly directed the ARC away from alternate viable options and towards the Boards agenda. Instructing the ARC that the public option of School Catchment boundary zones was like robbing Peter to pay Paul, and it's not a very good idea, is a gross indication of a deeply flawed process and clearly shows the Boards attempt to steer and direct the ARC toward their own agenda. – Again, this stuff is not made up! I attended the meeting as did another member of the public, and the Arc members who were present can vouch for the validity of this statement.

- The public who attended that meeting also had made public presentations the night before and had presented some options. At one point in the meeting, a member of the ARC had questions about the option being presented. As the presenter was at the meeting, she asked the presenter a question for clarification. Ada Della Penta stood up and exclaimed, "No! They are members of the public, and are not allowed to speak here tonight!" thus the question went unanswered even though the presenter was available to provide clarification. So what we can take away is that there was no avenue for the ARC to request clarification or ask questions about the public options, even though the presenter was available and willing to provide clarification that night.

- In a process that prides itself on spending over 400 man hours on coming up with options for you, the trustees, to consider, only 45minutes was spent discussing options brought forward by the public with no avenue for questioning or clarification. Do you see the pattern emerging? We call it railroading.

- Wait a minute. Why can one person steer the ARC process? How is that a fair and open and transparent process? The Board, via Ada Della Penta is clearly directing the ARC toward its own goals and agenda, and not letting ARC explore any other options, all the while attempting to provide an air of being open and transparent so that they can tell the Ministry, 'Oh yes, we had public consultation'.

- The ARC process was a pawn in the board's game. You don't have to be either.