



**Accommodation Review Committee
Wembley Public School
Public Meeting No. 4
Monday, June 16, 2008
6:30 pm to 8:30 pm**

MINUTES

Present:

Board Trustees: Judy Hunda, Chair; **Tyler Campbell**, Vice-Chair; **Larry Killens**, Trustee; **Doreen Dewar**, Trustee; **Dena Morrison**, Trustee; **Gord Santala**, Trustee; **Ruth Ward**, Trustee; **Jeanna Miller**, Trustee.

ARC Members - Fred Law, Superintendent of Schools; **Colleen McDonald**, Principal; **Renee McCormick**, School Council Chair; **Adria Wereszczynsky**, School Council member; **Joan Cass**, Teacher; **Erik Jokinen**, General Manager, Northridge Savings, Business Representative.

Regrets: **Paul Baskcomb**, Manager of Community and Strategic Planning, City of Greater Sudbury

Administrative Council - Diane Cayen-Arnold, Superintendent of Business; **Norm Blaseg**, Superintendent; **Lesleigh Dye**, Superintendent; **Dr. Sharon Speir**, Superintendent.

Board Office - Rae Tolonen, Recording Secretary; **Nicole Charette**, Senior Advisor, Corporate Communications and Strategic Planning.

1. Welcome

Superintendent Law welcomed everyone to the fourth public meeting of the Accommodation Review Committee for Wembley Public School. Superintendent Law indicated that the following documents were available at the door: tonight's agenda, a four-page overview "It Begins With You", Superintendent Cayen-Arnold's Data Report from March 5th, the School Valuation Framework and the Options to-date package which was presented on May 7th.

Superintendent Law indicated that Rainbow District School Board established an Accommodation Review Committee to oversee the review of Wembley Public School and is seeking public input on the accommodation review of Wembley PS.

Superintendent Law introduced the Accommodation Review Committee members.

Superintendent Law indicated that the mandate for this Committee can be found on page 2 of "It Begins With you". (Slide #1)

Superintendent Law referred to Slide #2 re: the Guiding Principle:

1. To ensure that all students continue to have access to the best programming possible in quality school facilities.

The members of the Board's Administrative Council were introduced.

Superintendent Law introduced Board Trustees. Trustees will consider public input and review the reports from the Accommodation Review Committee and the Administrative Council with respect to Wembley Public School.

Superintendent Law introduced Rae Tolonen, Recording Secretary, and Nicole Charette, Senior Advisor, Corporate Communications and Strategic Planning.

Superintendent Law informed the audience that the purpose of the fourth public meeting is to receive Public Input on the ARC's options and that a brief Q & A period will be offered after agenda items have been addressed.

Background

As stated at the first public meeting, Wembley Public School is an aging facility. Today, it is the Board's most needy school in terms of repairs.

In the 2003-2004 school year, the Ministry of Education identified Wembley Public School as Prohibitive To Repair (PTR), yet the school did not qualify for Ministry funding because the Board had excess pupil places in schools within an 8 km radius. This criterion is no longer applicable. At the annual Accommodation meeting held on December 10th, 2007, the Board established an Accommodation Review Committee for Wembley Public School. Information has been provided to the public through news releases, letters from the school, and public meetings.

In looking at the options for Wembley Public School, a number of factors were considered as part of the review process, including the quality of the learning environment at the school, the range of program offerings, the adequacy of the school's physical space to support student learning, and the proximity of the school to students. Other factors, such as enrolment, operating costs, and capital needs, were also considered.

The ARC will make recommendations to the Board's Administrative Council regarding options for the facility. The goal is to maximize student learning within the resources available to the Board.

Board Policy P.3.09 reflects the new guidelines set out by the Ministry of Education. There has been a change of approach in the accommodation review process. The Board is looking for options as opposed to taking decisions to the community. It is a more invitational process.

2. Overview of the process and timelines

Superintendent Law reminded the audience that page 4 of the handout, "It Begins With You", outlines the timelines and schedule of public meetings.

Superintendent Law indicated that parents/guardians and the community at large have had the opportunity to receive updates on the committee's work and provide input at four public meetings as the consultative process unfolded.

Superintendent Law pointed out that the Accommodation Review Committee has done some work developing priorities for an ideal option. (PRIORITIES SLIDE #1) The committee shared the process and priorities at Public Meeting No. 2. (PRIORITIES SLIDE #2) These priorities were used to help the committee determine the preferred option.

3. Preferred Options

The committee discussed and considered many options and at Public Meeting No. 3 shared the strengths and weaknesses of the various options considered.

Superintendent Law reviewed the Wembley Public School Accommodation Review Committee's preferred options. (Slides 7, 8 and 9)

4. Questions Received and Responses

Since Public Meeting No. 3 some questions have been received. These are answers to the questions.

Q: Where is the excess space in the schools in the surrounding 8 km from Wembley?

This criterion to obtain capital funding is no longer applicable.

Q: What specific repairs need to be done to Wembley?

The most critical repairs are the exterior wall system and windows.

Q: Could we have a breakdown as to details and as to materials and labour

costs?

As we proceed we will break down the cost of labour and materials. The general rule is that 1/2 is labour and 1/2 is material.

Q: What are the timelines for the repairs?

We would not invest in repairs until a decision is made regarding the future of the school.

Q: What is the condition of Princess Anne P.S.?

Princess Anne P.S. has high capital needs. The current plan for Princess Anne P.S. is to update the facility, at the same time as the addition is built to address the primary class size space pressures. What the Accommodation Review Committee is recommending is to build a bigger addition.

Q: Does the board have plans of placing Princess Anne P.S. under an accommodation review, similar to Wembley P.S.?

No. The plan is to build the addition and to revitalize the rest of the building, subject to available funds, for the long-term.

Q: Can the Princess Anne site accommodate an addition to house the entire student population (JK to 8) of Wembley P.S.?

Preliminary reviews indicate that the Princess Anne site can accommodate an addition for all Wembley P.S. students, i.e. JK to Grade 8 including the three Intensive Support Programs.

Q: What is the cost to build a new school?

Currently, the average cost to build a new school is approximately \$210 per sq. foot. To accommodate the students from Wembley P.S. at the Princess Anne site, approximately 14 additional classrooms are needed at a cost of approximately \$4.6 million. To accommodate the JK to Grade 6 students from Wembley P.S. at the Princess Anne site, approximately 10 additional classrooms are needed at a cost of \$2.9 million.

5. Presentations from the public

At the first, second and third public meetings Superintendent Law spoke about the opportunity for the public to make presentations. Superintendent Law asked the audience to refer to page 3 of "It Begins With You" to review the guidelines. He added that parents/guardians of students at Wembley

Public School would have received this information in each of the four letters sent home.

The agenda was designed to allow for presentations. This has been a standing item on each agenda. Superintendent Law indicated that two requests were received to make presentations at Public Meeting No. 4.

Presentations were made by:

- Doug Nadorozny
- John Hamalainen assisted by Edward Chiesa

These presentations are posted online at rainbowschools.ca

For clarification, Superintendent Law pointed out that in Mr. Hamalainen's reference to board numbers in his presentation, the numbers were generated for the board by two different engineering firms.

Superintendent Law thanked Doug Nadorozny, John Hamalainen and Edward Chiesa for their presentations. He indicated that the presenters who had not provided a copy of their presentation to Rae Tolonen, the recording secretary, were to do so. He also indicated that the presentations would be brought forward to the next Accommodation Review Committee meeting.

6. Questions and Answers (from the floor)

Like the other public meetings, Superintendent Law reminded the audience that a specific email address has been set up for public input and general enquiries: accommodation@rainbowschools.ca

He invited questions from the floor.

Q – Leona Redden - parent

I went to Princess Anne and I am not sure how it can accommodate an addition. There is insufficient space for parking/busses. There is no soccer field.

A – Superintendent Law

There is room at the Princess Anne site. Princess Anne has a Balanced Day program as does Wembley Public School. There are different ways to schedule the activities during the nutrition breaks.

Q – Kirk Dopson - parent

Is Princess Anne Prohibitive To Repair?

A – Superintendent Cayen-Arnold

Princess Anne Public School has high capital needs and the FCI (Facility Condition Index) is projected to go above 65% in the next 5 years. Currently, the plan is to

build an addition to Princess Anne Public School using Primary Class Size Capital funds. The Board will be spending money on the existing building.

Q – Kirk Dopson - parent

\$4.6 million is the cost to build the addition to Princess Anne Public School. How much would it cost to repair Princess Anne Public School?

A – Superintendent Cayen-Arnold

The amount is not with me at this time but will be posted on the Board's website.

Q – Kirk Dopson - parent

Comment – It's the same cost to add an addition to Princess Anne Public School as to keep Wembley Public School up and running.

Q – Kirk Dopson - parent

John Hamalainen offered his services at no cost and provided possible alternatives for Wembley Public School. Is the Board prepared to accept this help or close doors?

A – Superintendent Cayen-Arnold

The purpose of the meeting is for input. The ARC will consider what is received as they prepare their recommendations.

Q – Kirk Dopson - parent

Why not vote or have consensus on options?

A – Superintendent Cayen-Arnold

Superintendent Cayen-Arnold reviewed the process with the audience. Public input will be considered by the Accommodation Review Committee to come up with a final report by August 25th. She pointed out that at the Board meeting on October 20th there is further opportunity for public input. A final decision will be made on November 17, 2008.

Q – Kirk Dopson - parent

If we are uncomfortable with the options, then we need to speak to the Accommodation Review Committee.

A – Superintendent Cayen-Arnold

Superintendent Cayen-Arnold indicated that there have been four opportunities to make presentations. After tonight's meeting, more input can be provided through email and questions will be answered and considered by the Accommodation Review Committee.

A – Superintendent Law also mentioned that, if needed, anyone could certainly give more input via email at accommodation@rainbowschools.ca and that if anyone had other questions they were more than welcome to leave them with Rae Tolonen, the recording secretary.

Q – Margaret Sun

Will my presentation that was made at the third public meeting be considered?

Margaret Sun said she was not a member of the Wembley Public School community, but the community at large. She is concerned about how we can support all students. She suggested getting repairs completed using apprentices (OYAP). She indicated that it was important to have a major school in the centre of town.

A – Superintendent Law

He assured Margaret Sun that he made copies of her presentation and distributed it to ARC where it was reviewed. All input will be gathered and reviewed again before the ARC report goes to Admin Council. He also indicated to Margaret Sun that her presentation has been posted on the Board's website.

Q – John Reynolds - parent

The vacancy rate is poor, our population is increasing and the economy is booming. How did the Board come up with the number of students in the catchment area in the coming years?

A – Superintendent Fred Law

Superintendent Law explained that projections come from the principals and from past trends (5 year projections). The Ministry of Education is now asking school boards to develop 10-year enrolment projections. He also mentioned that Rainbow District School Board, like most boards in Ontario, is experiencing declining enrolment. Based on past experience, the Board is not meeting its projections. Enrolment in Rainbow Schools is currently down 300 students across the system from last year's numbers. A decline of an additional 300 students is predicted for next year.

Q – Allison Bujold - parent

Comment – How does Princess Anne Public School feel about this? I am not happy that we are losing a small inclusive school that will turn into a 500 plus population school.

A – Superintendent Cayen-Arnold

The course of action will depend on the final recommendation and the funding that the Board is able to secure. If an addition is built to Princess Anne PS, we will obtain input from the Princess Anne community. The Board will pursue this once all questions are answered. The intent of this recommendation is to take the \$1.3 million for an addition at Princess Anne Public School, add prohibitive to repair (PTR) money and funds from the sale of Wembley Public School. The rationale is to maximize the resources of the Board, meet the needs of the student, and reduce the overall operating costs over the years.

Q – Parent

When and where does the Princess Anne Public School community get input?

Already there are complaints re: bussing. There are no crossing guards and no side walks. Parents don't want the school to grow. Does Wembley Public School now qualify for PTR funding?

A – Superintendent Cayen-Arnold

Consultation with the Princess Anne community will be determined once we have the final accommodation plans. A business case will be put forward to the Ministry of Education to try to obtain PTR funding. If there is opposition from the community, we would need to take this into consideration if and when we get there.

Q – Leona Redden

The question was not answered. What if Princess Anne Public School parents say no?

A – Superintendent Cayen-Arnold

Once we see where we are at, depending on the recommendations, this will be taken into consideration.

Q – Janice Liedl-Myatt

Comment – Any change is very stressful and disruptive for children with autism. The value of having a JK-8 stream cannot be overstated.

A – Superintendent Law

Superintendent Law indicated that social inclusion is a priority of the ARC and that every effort would be made to minimize any disruption to the children.

Q – Doug Nadorozny

There was no PTR funds in 2004 from the Ministry of Education because there was excess space within 8 kms.

A - Superintendent Cayen-Arnold

That is right.

A – Superintendent Law

Superintendent Law explained that in 2003-2004 that was a criterion. Now the rules have changed. The Board has to present a business case to the Ministry of Education to receive funding. The ARC has to gather information and will give its recommendations to the Board's Administrative Council. Administrative Council will present both the ARC and Administrative Council reports to Trustees in September. October is for public input on the recommendations. In November, the Trustees will decide if what is being recommended will go forward or not. If yes, then the Board will put together a case study for the Ministry for monetary consideration. The Accommodation Review Committee wants something better than status quo for Wembley Public School.

Q – Doug Nadorozny

If we approached the Ministry now, what would they do?

He continued with a comment – It's not in the best interest to involve other schools, yet the preferred option is to double the size Princess Anne Public School. Why not have an accommodation review with both Wembley and Princess Anne?

A – Superintendent Law
Trustees could redirect it that way.

Q – John Reynolds
What has changed since 2004 that is now allowing us to get money?

A – Superintendent Cayen-Arnold
PTR (prohibitive to repair) is still based on an FCI (facility condition index) over 65%. In 2003-2004, Wembley Public School was deemed prohibitive to repair. The rules at that time included the following - that if a board had excess space within 8 kms, there was no money. That was the situation, so the Board did not qualify for funding. The excess space criteria is now gone. The Board now has a better chance of getting PTR money.

The Ministry hired a company to audit all facilities across the province. Ministry standards are the same standards across the province. These standards are used for school boards to qualify for money.

The asset value was updated to 2007-2008 values set by the Ministry of Education. \$210 is a cost to build a new school, not to fix a school. These two costs cannot be compared.

Comment – Adria Wereszczynsky (ARC member)
Adria Wereszczynsky indicated that she is on School Council and that she is also a parent. She understands everyone's frustration. She indicated that ARC shares this frustration. She informed the audience that this is a "process" and that all options were discussed at length. Everyone wants to hear what the audience has to say on the options, including the committee. The ARC members did not say the preferred option was to close the school. Adria assured the audience that the committee is here to represent the community and that the committee has their best interests at heart.

Q – Kirk Dopson - parent
Comments – Kirk Dopson indicated that he understands that this is a frustrating process. He thanked Superintendent Cayen-Arnold for going above and beyond the call of duty. He also mentioned that his wife/sister sit on the School Council and he hears nothing but complaints re: very little flow through at meetings. When they tried to approach the School Council re: a presentation from John Hamalainen, they were told the School Council is not a political body and not the venue. If we can't approach the School Council, what good is it to us when we are told that we need permission from the Board first? It was indicated that clearance was needed. Kirk Dopson was expecting more opportunities to flow ideas up through School Council.

A – Adria Wereszczynsky

The School Council and the Accommodation Review Committee are two very different committees. The purpose of public meetings is to go over the options and gather input. She noted that no input was given at previous public meetings. How can the School Council have two people on the Accommodation Review Committee and not provide input?

Q - Sharon Nadorozny - parent

Comment – We don't want the school to close. Wembley Public School is my community school not Princess Anne Public School.

Q – Kevin Ayer

Will there be a public meeting with the Princess Anne Public School community? Kevin continued with a comment. The preferred option is not to close Wembley Public School. The preferred option is to add to Wembley Public School.

A – Superintendent Cayen-Arnold

The course of action will depend on the final recommendation and the funding that we are able to secure. If we build an addition to Princess Anne Public School, we will obtain input from the Princess Anne community, but until all questions are answered, we are not going there yet.

Q – John Hamalainen

Why is it so hard to obtain a copy of the reports? If this is an open and transparent process, why was the report not available? I found irregularities in the report and it needs to be looked at again. We only had a short time to view the report.

Q - Doug Nadorozny

Why were reports not available?

A – Superintendent Law

They were allowed to view the information.

A – Superintendent Cayen-Arnold

Superintendent Cayen-Arnold indicated that she would be happy to give Doug Nadorozny a copy of the report. It is a thick report and it was completed by engineers for the Ministry of Education. The Ministry's report was validated by another engineering firm.

Q – Doug Nadorozny

Why is John Hamalainen not getting an answer to his question?

Why were we only allowed to view the reports and not have a copy?

A – Superintendent Cayen-Arnold

Superintendent Cayen-Arnold indicated that John Hamalainen can get a copy, if he wishes.

7. Important Dates

Superintendent Law reminded the audience once again about page 4 of “It Begins With You”. It outlines the dates for the Board meetings in the fall. Public input at Board meetings must be in accordance with Board by-laws which are available online at rainbowschools.ca

8. Superintendent Law thanked everyone for attending the fourth public meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm