

Pamela Munro
ARC Parent Representative
Concerned Parent/Community Member

Good evening to all the trustees and all parties involved.

I am both saddened and appalled to be before you. I feel this review should not be occurring in the first place.

Warren Central Public School, built in 1953 has been the foundation for learning for many graduates, including myself. I graduated Grade 8 in 1986 at W.P.S. Even then, there was talk of closing the school. After residing down south for the last decade, I returned for a couple of reasons. My first and foremost priority, a son who was 3 and half years old. I had worked in many school settings in the behavioural/section Programs and regular classes when integrating students for success. I wanted desperately for my son to attend school and receive strong rural roots and an opportunity to attend a small school where he could receive the necessary assistance and learn honest values.

When inquiring about the status of the school, the same rumors or should I say facts were evident, the school may possibly close. I went ahead and enrolled Jared and he thankfully received the care he needed as a shy young 4 year old. During that first year, 2004/05 the Grade 4/5/6 was at W.P.S. February of 2005, some meetings took place in Markstay Public School and involved only the Parents who had children in 4/5/6. Why was I not part of this or anyone else for that matter? The quick decision to pull 4/5/6 was made and I wondered, how could a school for only JK – 3 survive? However, I was optimistic in speaking to one of the Parents who was involved in the relatively few meetings and he explained it was stated that Warren would continue as a satellite school and the young students aged 4 – 8 would not have to travel on the busy and dangerous highway.

As a member of the ARC committee, I am unsure if any of my time and efforts were heard or helped. I was shocked to hear and read the recommendation made by the Administrative Council. We offered many alternatives that would address to the guiding principles. We put forth boundary changes, French immersion, bringing back 4/5/6 and lastly if the building was in such a prohibitive state to repair, we could co-locate with St.Thomas. Obviously, closing the school completely would be far less work than making changes to benefit the students. As for best programming, Warren is “limited in the educational opportunities it can provide”, that is garbage. If you feel otherwise, then you need to be prepared to tell me the teachers are not qualified and the students who have moved on are ill adjusted. We hear there are “enhanced literacy programs, the foundation for all learning” available at Markstay. My son would never be at the increased reading level if he were at M.P.S. or any other larger setting. He has excelled because of the time his teacher was able to spend with him. It’s funny how when I wanted stats to show EQAO results from Warren to compare to Markstay, it is just not possible as we are “twin schools”. I can tell you why those stats are not available, because Warren has always scored higher. The majority of Warren graduates have gone on to be honor students and intelligent individuals. The foundation of learning at a young age is not all about a full-size gymnasium and resources, it is about having manageable class sizes and teachers with hearts who are not run down and can still give what is

necessary. We have the resources in our community, a full size arena available to us at anytime for recreational purposes. The board is “not predicting increased enrollment”. I wonder why??? That is all people in the community and area have heard, I have people calling me and saying, “I heard the school is closed”. This year, 5 out of 7 junior kindergarten students were English and in an English family but all went to St.Thomas because they are sure the school is closing. A school JK-3, you cannot expect high numbers, it will fluctuate year to year. It disturbs me that the board attached Warren Public to Markstay Public as a twin school. If this were never done, Warren would be open, because we fit into the category of being more than 8 k.m. away from Markstay. The Ministry clearly states that Markstay’s empty spaces cannot be used to accommodate Warren’s over or under runs, and that Markstay cannot be used to accommodate Warren’s under runs. (www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/funding/e0203pupilacc.pdf)

The McGinty government defines a rural school (www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/funding0506/technical.pdf) and being a rural school.

Attendance numbers would be topped up, which would mean 80% at Warren is **not** a real target. However, due to another poor decision to be a twin school, everything that would normally apply to Warren does not.

I also find it of interest of all the nice information packages that always have attached showing the Facility Condition Index (FCI) costs and the pupil space. Rarely do I see the Financial Analysis of Warren Central Public School for 2007 – 08?! This shows expenditures of \$302, 491.000 and revenues of \$309, 984.00, a profit, perhaps not enough.

So it would just be easier to ship the students out of their home community on a bus with many transfers, having 4 years old getting wonderful education from the older students. Closing schools in Sudbury and sending them to another newer one, while none of this is desirable, you need to keep in mind; these students are leaving their community. Many parents have no intentions on sending their child to Markstay, myself being one of them. I ask you, the trustees to please reread over all of your information presented by all parties. If you are truly making a decision to value the student, community and local economy, I trust you will vote to keep our school open. As for the value to the school board, they claim to maximize potential and fulfill student aspirations. If this is the case, vote to keep Warren open. If you feel otherwise, you need to take the time to sit in a classroom in Warren and then Markstay. You have the power to make the right decision!

Thank you kindly for your time,

Pamela Munro