



**Accommodation Review Committee
Public Meeting no. 1 – Sharing the Data
Warren Central Public School
Tuesday, May 29, 2007
6:00 pm to 8:00 pm**

MINUTES

Present:

Norm Blaseg, Superintendent, Rainbow District School Board; **Kathy Wachnuk**, Principal, Warren Central Public School; **Maureen Andersen**, Teacher, Warren Central Public School; **Pamela Munro**, Chair, School Council, Warren Central Public School; **Janet Johnson**, School Council, Warren Central Public School; **Jocelyn Guenette**, business representative, Caisse Populaire de Verner-Warren; **Jean-Marc Chayer**, Mayor, Municipality of Markstay-Warren; **Heather Thirkill**, Recording Secretary, Rainbow District School Board, **Diane Cayen-Arnold**, Superintendent of Business, **Fred Law**, Superintendent, **Dr. Sharon Speir**, Superintendent, **Lesleigh Dye**, Superintendent, **Dena Morrison**, Chair, **Judy Hunda**, Vice-Chair, **Doreen Dewar**, Trustee, **Larry Killens**, Trustee, **Grace Fox**, Trustee, **Ruth Ward**, Trustee.

1. Welcome

Superintendent Norm Blaseg welcomed all to the first public meeting at Warren Central Public School. The Administrative Council, Trustees and members of the Accommodation Review Committee were introduced. Superintendent Blaseg reviewed the procedures for questions for this meeting.

2. Overview of Accommodation Review Process

Superintendent Blaseg asked if there were any questions from the audience. There were none.

Superintendent Blaseg began with the first PowerPoint presentation, which outlined the process of the accommodation review and outlined the dates of interest to the community. Superintendent Blaseg asked again if there were any questions. There were none.

Superintendent Blaseg noted that chart paper had been posted at the back of the classroom where people could write questions if they did not want to address the audience. Superintendent Blaseg said the answers would be part of the minutes of the meeting.

3. Overview of Board Data - Diane Cayen-Arnold, Superintendent of Business

Diane Cayen-Arnold used a PowerPoint presentation and hand-outs to provide an Overview of Board Data. Superintendent Cayen-Arnold mentioned that all boards must adhere to the Ministry of Education benchmarks. She then discussed how enrolment is calculated for all schools in the province for grants and funding. Another important benchmark is the number of students that a school can accommodate. All boards in the province must follow the same guidelines as legislated by the Ministry.

Warren Central Public School was built in 1953. Superintendent Cayen-Arnold reviewed the list of projects that need to be completed at the school in the next five years at a total cost of \$1.4 million. The following projects must be carried out to bring the school to today's standards:

- Change flooring, carpeting
- Mill work
- Electrical work
- Interior lighting
- Plumbing and heating
- Playing fields
- Walkways
- Site improvements
- Handicap accessibility (including washrooms)

Superintendent Cayen-Arnold indicated that there is excess space at Warren Central Public School. There is a need to downsize as operating costs can no longer be sustained. She raised the cost of \$1.4 million to update Warren Central Public School. She added that the Accommodation Review Committee must find solutions. The utilization rate of the school is 22% and there is no growth predicted.

Superintendent Cayen-Arnold asked if there were any questions

Question – Janet Johnson, ARC Member, mother
Why are kindergarten students counted as .5?

Superintendent Cayen-Arnold – The Ministry of Education does not fund full-day senior kindergarten. Although funding is not provided, the Board has chosen to offer senior kindergarten on a full-time basis and cover the costs. JK students attend on a half-time basis only.

Question – Angela Lavallee – daughter will be starting JK in September 2007
Do the costs outlined include labour and material?

Superintendent Cayen-Arnold – Yes. Labour, materials and taxes are included in the costs that have been provided. Rainbow District School Board hired a third party to validate the Ministry of Education's estimates.

Question – Helen Munro

How can we ever fill the school to capacity when the school is only for students from JK to Grade 3?

Superintendent Blaseg – There is some history behind this school offering JK to Grade 3. In the past, there were only one or two students in each grade. This makes the delivery of programs very difficult. At the request of parents, a decision was made a few years ago that students from Grades 4 to 8 would attend Markstay Public School where a full program could be offered to students.

Question – Pam Munro, Chair, School Council

Enrolment on October 31, 2006 was 14.5. There are now 25 students in the school. There are 23 students registered for September 2007. The October 2006 figure does not reflect the true enrolment.

Superintendent Cayen-Arnold – JK and SK students are counted as .5 for funding purposes. (Pam indicated that she counted all JK and SK students as 1.0). The Ministry of Education provides grants based on enrolment on October 31st and March 31st. The other enrolment number in the data is a 5-year projection, not a projection for 2007-2008.

4. Overview of Demographics – Superintendent Blaseg

Superintendent Blaseg used a PowerPoint presentation to review data gathered from the Municipality of Markstay/Warren. He noted that the data from Markstay/Warren is combined so it is difficult to get a true picture of data for the Warren area only.

Statistics showed a 5.8% decline in population in Markstay/Warren from 2001 to 2006. The area being serviced by Rainbow District School Board is facing some challenges.

Pam Munro questioned the data.

The Warren Community Development Corporation provided the number of new homes built between 1999 and 2002.

1999	2 new homes
2000	7 new homes
2001	5 new homes
2002	4 new homes

46% of the community speaks French; 52% of the community speaks English; 2% of the community listed “other” as their language.

Pam Munro questioned some of the data.

A population report shows there are a total of 323 students in the Warren/Markstay area between the ages of 0 and 15. This population of students is divided between four school boards – English Public, English Catholic, French Public, French Catholic.

Superintendent Blaseg asked if there were any questions. There were none.

Superintendent Blaseg spoke about boundaries and showed five maps to the audience.

First map – Markstay/Warren catchment area

Second map – bus stops in Markstay

Third map – Warren Central Public School boundaries and bus stops

Fourth map – Warren and Markstay – all bus stops

Fifth map – Warren attendance with student location

It was noted that Hagar is considered in the Markstay area. Rainbow District School Board inherited these boundaries years ago.

Question – Janet Johnson, School Council

Will we see maps of students outside our district who are coming to Warren Central Public School and Markstay Public School?

Superintendent Blaseg – No. These students live in the other school board’s area.

Question – Randy Young

I moved into town so that my daughter could walk to school. Will she now be bused to Markstay?

Superintendent Blaseg – I hear your concern. You would want to make a recommendation to ARC to keep this school open or to develop other options that would enable your daughter to continue walking to school.

Question – Caroline Steele, lifelong resident and municipal councillor

Who would have decided on the boundaries that we have just seen on those maps?

Superintendent Blaseg – Boundaries were pre-determined years ago. Perhaps you could bring a recommendation to the ARC suggesting that boundaries be changed to include Hagar.

Question - Caroline Steele – How can the Student Services Consortium and the Board make these decisions when they do not even know where we live?

Superintendent Blaseg – Time on the bus is considered. The Consortium is very conscious of the age of children and the length of time they are on the bus. The Consortium must consider all factors before a decision is made. Historically, changes were made at the request of the public.

Superintendent Cayen-Arnold – The consortium does have the distances, they do have the maps and they do have the length of time on the bus.

Question – Pam Munro, Chair, School Council

Does the Consortium have information about the ages of students on the bus?

Superintendent Cayen-Arnold – Yes. The Consortium has all of this information. It is their job to transport students to and from school.

Question – Mayor Jean-Marc Chayer

Many years ago, I bought a bus company, then met with the school board and was guaranteed that I would be providing bus runs. There was a very quick decision to move the students to Markstay. How do we get buses now?

Superintendent Cayen-Arnold – We now have tendering process that is issued to the public. Anyone can bid on the runs.

Question – Mayor Jean-Marc Chayer

Can you go to a school closer to your own home?

Superintendent Cayen-Arnold – You will qualify to attend a school based on language, religion, where you live, and the catchment area of the school.

Superintendent Blaseg reminded members of the audience that they are welcome to post questions on the chart paper at the back of the room.

4. School Valuation Framework

Superintendent Blaseg invited Pam Munro to speak.

Thank you to all of those in attendance. As you have heard, Warren Central Public School has been around since 1953. It is a landmark in our community and we do not want to see it close. English students in our community should not have to go out of town to attend school. It is of value to our kids who live here to attend Warren Central Public School and maintain their rural roots. The library is a big asset. In the past year, pre-school children have come here to get ready to enter school in September 2007. New families are moving to the area and we need to have the option of an English school in our community. There is less than 1% occupancy in Sudbury, so people are coming to Warren to live. Yes, in October 2006 there were 14.5 students attending Warren Central Public School, but now there are 25. Unfortunately, this is not reflected in the enrolment numbers for the Ministry.

Having the option of French or English education is positive. English public is the most popular. Our tax dollars should be used to update and maintain this building. 52% of the population is English in this community. We need an English school. We need to ask the public: “Is there value in maintaining two schools in one community?”

Superintendent Blaseg mentioned that the three key areas of focus from the School Valuation Framework were transportation, the community and English education.

Superintendent Blaseg reminded the audience of the two guiding principles in the accommodation review process. There is a need to reduce excess space and provide quality programming for students. The committee is looking at options.

Question – Mayor Jean-Marc Chayer

Right now the cost for this extra space is \$1.4 million. Would it not be cheaper to build a new school that is the proper size for the students of Warren? Why not? This would save money.

Superintendent Cayen-Arnold – Yes. However, there is no capital money available. The Ministry of Education is not coming forward with money because of declining enrolment. We need to look at programs for students. We also need to look at the value of the school to students.

Question – Donna Smith, Librarian

When students were moved to Markstay Public School a few years ago, only one student needed to move (one Grade 4 student). Why were the Grade 4, 5 and 6 students moved to accommodate one student?

Superintendent Blaseg – This decision was made in response to public concern expressed in the past. Trustees listened and responded. Superintendent Blaseg indicated that he will try to gather data regarding this decision before the next meeting.

Question – Angela Lavallee

What is the number of students being bused to Markstay Public School from the Warren area?

Superintendent Blaseg – We will try to obtain data about this.

If we look at the statistics provided by the municipality, we can see that the number of students in each age group is small. The small population presents challenges for programming.

Question – Yohonna Hodgins, teacher at Warren Central Public School

Are home instruction students included in any of these numbers?

Superintendent Blaseg – No.

Question – Donna Smith, Librarian

There are 23 students coming to Warren Central Public School in the fall. How does this go with the chart for students aged 0 to 15 for the Warren/Markstay area?

Superintendent Blaseg – It's important to remember that JK students are only counted as .5 for enrolment purposes.

Question – Jocelyn Guenette, business representative, Caisse Populaire de Verner-Warren, ARC member

Does the Ministry look at the effects on the community of closing a school?

(People may move out of town, declining population, etc.)

Superintendent Blaseg – No. The Ministry considers enrolment data for purposes of funding.

Jocelyn Guenette – Maybe the municipality could send a letter (through ARC) to the Minister of Education voicing this concern.

Question – Janet Johnson, School Council

How does the Ministry come to a value of the school?

Superintendent Cayen-Arnold – The Ministry used the data on sales in the area to come up with a replacement value.

Question - Caroline Steele

How long has the Ministry been using .5 for JK and SK?

Superintendent Blaseg – For at least 20 years.

Question - Caroline Steele

Could the municipality send a letter to the Ministry asking for funding for full-day JK and SK?

Superintendent Blaseg – Yes and we would certainly encourage you to do that. However, it is not likely to have any impact.

Question – Pam Munro, Chair, School Council

Please clarify the procedure for presentation at the next public meeting?

Superintendent Blaseg – We would like written proposals.

Pam – Why?

Superintendent Blaseg – To have written presentations for the minutes.

Question – Janet Johnson, School Council

Do you want the complete presentation written out, or just the idea?

Superintendent Blaseg – The parameters will be discussed at next week's ARC meeting.

Superintendent Blaseg – Now that we have provided the data, think about how we can move forward. ARC will consider community recommendations, which will be brought forward to the board. We need to use a public forum for this.

Nicole Charette – After each public meeting, the minutes will be posted on the board's website. Hard copies will also be available in the library of the school. Written input will become part of the minutes.

The meeting adjourned at 7:25 pm.

The second public meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, June 13th, 2007 at 6:00 pm at Warren Central Public School.