

BRC MEETING NOTES

Tuesday, January 17, 2012
St. Michael Catholic School, Bright's Grove
and St. Anne Catholic School, Sarnia

TIME	ITEM
7:03 p.m.	<p>Welcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dr. Frank Leddy, Superintendent of Education, introduced himself as Chair of the Boundary Review Committee and welcomed everyone to the second meeting.
7:03 p.m.	<p>Opening Prayer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dr. Leddy opened the meeting with prayer.
7:04 p.m.	<p>Opening Remarks and Introductions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dr. Leddy introduced parents representing the schools in the additional study areas. Margarita Weaver, member of School Council, represents St. John Fisher Catholic School and Marian Dunn, School Chair, represents Sacred Heart Catholic School. ▪ The school principals Maureen Cecile, Principal at St. Anne Catholic School Sarnia, and Anna Giuliani, Principal at St. Michael Catholic School Bright's Grove introduced the parents on the Boundary Review Committee. Stacey Sandrin, Sarah McCann, and Heather Bell represent St. Anne Catholic School. Crystal Adamo, Diana Suglio, and Deb Hoek represent St. Michael Catholic School. ▪ Dr. Leddy introduced Board Trustees in attendance. Carol Bryden, Chair of the Board, John Fontaine, Michelle Parks, and Anita Labadie. ▪ Dr. Leddy introduced Board staff in attendance. Jim McKenzie, Associate Director and Treasurer, Karen Dolson, Manager of Planning Services, Todd Lozon, Supervisor of Communications and Community Relations.
7:07 p.m.	<p>Review of Mandate and Process and Procedures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dr. Leddy reviewed <i>Policy 7.4 – Student Accommodation and Boundary Review</i>. <p>Committee Mandate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The BRC is appointed by the Board and is authorized to make recommendations as per board policy. ▪ The written recommendations of the BRC will be delivered to the Director of Education who will make them known to the Board of Trustees at a public meeting. ▪ While the BRC's establishment was triggered by the present circumstances, the future must be a primary component in considering the actions the BRC will recommend. ▪ The BRC is encouraged, but not required, to come to consensus with respect to its recommendation(s). ▪ At all times the BRC should maintain its focus on the issue at hand and not allow itself to become distracted by side issues. ▪ The BRC will meet a minimum of two times. ▪ The Trustees will give the BRC's recommendations due consideration, as well as recommendations by the Director of Education, and they will decide on a course of action that best serves the needs of the Board.

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	<p>Protocols</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All BRC meetings will be held in public unless the Chair deems it necessary for good order to move the committee into private session. ▪ No banners, placards, posters, photos, memorabilia, etc. will be displayed in an attempt to influence the committee. ▪ The meeting falls under the direction of the Chair and the Chair shall exercise such discipline as necessary to maintain order. This may include curtailing questions, censuring a speaker, declaring an individual out of order, and expelling such a person from the meeting. <p>Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Microphones are available to those who wish to ask questions at appropriate times during the meeting. ▪ Individuals from the general public or school community will only be permitted two occasions to address the committee or ask questions in any one evening. ▪ Questions or comments will not extend beyond two minutes, at which point the question will be called. ▪ A maximum of one hour will be devoted to the question period. If questions remain at the conclusion of the meeting, the Chair will close the meeting and invite those with questions to submit their question(s) in writing. The question(s) along with the answer(s) will be posted on the Board website. ▪ Students will not be permitted to address the BRC or ask questions. ▪ Should a person who is hearing impaired require an interpreter, they are to notify the Chair two weeks in advance of the meeting and arrangements will be made. <p>Background Information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ St. Anne Sarnia is currently operating at capacity with classes that are larger than the average class sizes for the Board. Growth in the area may further exaggerate this problem. ▪ Implementation of full-day kindergarten (FDK) in 2014 will also increase the classroom requirements at St. Anne Catholic School. ▪ Due to declining enrolment and decreased participation rates at St. Michael Bright's Grove, there has been a significant enrolment decline at St. Michael Catholic School.
7:13 p.m.	<p>Review of Notes of November 15, 2011 Meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dr. Leddy reviewed the issues that arose at the November meeting including day care, early St. Michael start, and the declining participation rate at St. Michael Catholic School, Bright's Grove. ▪ With respect to day care, both public and Catholic schools offer a before and after program; in addition, St. Michael offers a pre-school early learning program. ▪ With respect to the early start, Bright's Grove Public School starts at 8:55 a.m. while St. Michael starts at 8:10 a.m. The school council has some information to report on the earlier start issue. Transportation is hooked into a network; one decision affects another; sometimes buses are integrated with the Lambton-Kent Board; sometimes they are tiered within our own Board. These decisions are made to optimize resources. Changes are possible and transportation has been alerted that this may be an issue.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School council also addressed the question of the declining participation rate in their survey. <p><i>Name: Ms. Hoek</i> Question: With regards to day care, my son attends the after school program. The quitting time is 6:00 p.m. and there are limited spaces which are both concerns. Answer by Dr. Leddy: When I inquired, I was informed the quitting time was 6:30 p.m. I will inquire further about the end time, and also as to why there is a wait list. Mrs. Karen Dolson made note of these items.</p>
<p>7:25 p.m.</p>	<p>Questions Arising from the Notes Mrs. Giuliani, Principal at St. Michael reviewed the results of the parent survey that was conducted. Three questions were on the survey:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Are you aware of possible reasons why families whose children are eligible to attend St. Michael are not attending our school? Various reasons were given representing a range of suggestions. ▪ Do you have any concerns regarding the 8:10 a.m. start for school? Most parents surveyed were happy with the start time and if it were changed did not want it changed too much. ▪ Would you be supportive of Balanced Day timetable? 2/3 of parents indicated support. <p><i>Name: Ms. Hoek</i> Question: These results are from parents whose children are attending St. Michael. Perhaps we need to check with parents whose children are not attending St. Michael? Answer by Dr. Leddy: Yes, perhaps we should be reaching out to others in the community to get other responses.</p>
<p>7:33 p.m.</p>	<p>Review Impact of Study Areas 2 and 3 (<i>Presentation by Karen Dolson, Manager of Planning Services</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mrs. Dolson presented her report, which can be viewed by clicking on report. ▪ The transfer of students and the impact on enrolment at each school was explained in detail.
<p>7:46 p.m.</p>	<p>Discussion</p> <p><i>Name: Ms. McCann</i> Question: What is the percentage of growth for St. Anne? Answer by Mrs. Dolson: We do not have an exact figure as it is hard to predict. The boundaries have changed over the past couple years, therefore we cannot use the previous years to help predict future growth rates.</p> <p>Dr. Leddy commented St. Anne is at capacity. Even though we do not have growth projections, we realize that there is growth in this area and there will be more students coming to St. Anne in the future.</p> <p><i>Name: Ms. Sandrin</i> Question: Looking at study area 2, were the students in the area South of the 402 moved before?</p>

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	<p>Answer by Mrs. Dolson: Yes, these students would have attended St. Peter Catholic School. When it was closed, the students were moved to St. Anne. This took place recently.</p>
<p>7:50 p.m.</p>	<p>Consideration of Study Area 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dr. Leddy presented the Consideration of Study Area 4, which can be viewed by clicking on report. This consideration came as a suggestion from committee members. <p>Dr. Leddy introduced Mrs. Weaver, member of School Council at St. John Fisher, who also lives in Study Area 4, to speak on behalf of the parents of St. John Fisher Catholic School.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mrs. Weaver commented that families in the Bluepoint area belong to St. Christopher's Parish in Forest. Students participate in sports and most parents work in the community of Forest. Although families are moving to Bluepoint, most of these families still associate with Forest. Regarding the trend for new housing, it is not necessarily targeted to young families, but also to retirement living. <p><i>Name: Ms. Dunn</i> Comment: It is our objective to keep Catholic schools open. Although we are only discussing boundaries, if we can take students and move them school to school, we are helping keep them open. We need to have the objective of keeping Catholic faith alive in our communities. It is not always just a busing issue, or one school that is closer than another. By keeping our faith in our community, we are helping our children, and encouraging them to continue their Catholic education when they reach secondary school.</p> <p><i>Name: Dr. Leddy</i> Comment: Yes, our goal is to have all Catholic families send their children to Catholic schools. Even if it's a bit further, we want them to feel it is worth it to send their children to our schools.</p> <p><i>Name: Ms. Suglio</i> Question: With regards to the Bluepoint area, it is a rural area. That is another reason why families are choosing to relocate there. This would mean there are families moving there who still work in Sarnia, rather than in Forest, such as my family. Can we keep the option open for students to attend St. Michael Catholic School? For our family, St. Michael is on the way, rather than have our students bused to St. John Fisher. It was mentioned that most families are associated with Forest and St. John Fisher, but there are also building lots targeted for new builds for young families. We would like our children to stay here at St. Michael, even if we move. Is this an option? Answer by Dr. Leddy: Currently we do not have accommodation issues at St. John Fisher, but there could be in the future. That is going beyond the scope of this committee. In the future if there are issues, then we would have to address it at that point. Current families are associating with Forest and St. John Fisher. If significant growth occurs in the area in the future, that may trigger a further boundary review.</p>

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7:58 p.m.	<p>Discussion</p> <p>Dr. Leddy summarized the conclusions from the study areas. The following options will be recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Study area 2 – Students from St. Anne be moved to St. Michael Catholic School, Bright's Grove ▪ Study area 3 – Students from St. Anne be moved to Sacred Heart, Sarnia ▪ Study area 4 – This study area is not an option <p>Students in grades 7 and 8 next year (currently in grades 6 and 7) will have the option of being grandfathered.</p> <p>Dr. Leddy asked if there were any concerns with these recommendations. There were no concerns brought forward. Dr. Leddy said that at the March meeting, a draft report will be brought forward for the committee to review.</p> <p><i>Name: Ms. Sandrin</i></p> <p>Question: After the March 6 meeting, will something be given to each family regarding the changes?</p> <p>Answer by Dr. Leddy: Once the Board of Trustees makes their final decision in the Spring, then the schools will work with all affected families to facilitate a smooth transition.</p> <p><i>Name: Ms. Sandrin</i></p> <p>Question: Will students have the opportunity to visit their new school?</p> <p>Answer by Dr. Leddy: Yes, that is an excellent idea. That will help with the transition.</p> <p>Comment by Ms. Dunn: This is something we did in the past. Students came to the school for the day, we had a luncheon for the parents and it definitely helped the transition process.</p> <p>Comment by Mrs. Cecile: Yes, in the past we found this worked very well. Students had the opportunity to meet others in their own grade. It is an excellent idea.</p>
8:06 p.m.	<p>Questions from the floor</p> <p><i>Name: Mrs. Brady</i></p> <p>Question: Do you know the number of students integrated here from Gregory A. Hogan?</p> <p>Answer by Dr. Leddy: 15 students total over the past two years. Principal, Mrs. Cecile, confirmed this number.</p> <p><i>Name: Mrs. Blair</i></p> <p>Question: Of the current grade 6 and 7 students that will be grandfathered, how many have younger siblings? There are two different start times which could make things difficult for these families in the mornings.</p> <p>Answer by Mrs. Dolson: There are 4 families that would be transferring to Sacred Heart, and 4 families that would be transferring to St. Michael. In the past there has been an option for out of boundary requests to be completed for these families. Families have the option to not grandfather the grade 7 or 8 students, and both students would attend the new school. Or families can apply to keep both students at the old school, in which case if approved, transportation would be provided for the younger student for the length of the grandfathering.</p>

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Name: Mrs. Grasse

Question: Is the boundary line straight down Modeland Road? Does this include families on either side of the road?

Answer by Mrs. Dolson: Yes.

Name: Mrs. Grasse

Comment: It should be a concern that families may not choose to stay in a Catholic School. We moved to this area specifically for this school, it is only two minutes for the children to walk or bike, now we are asked to go 15 minutes away to another school. Not all families may stay with a Catholic School.

Name: Ms. Suglio

Question: Can we request our children attend a school out of boundary if we drove them and it does not involve transportation?

Answer by Dr. Leddy: Yes, you can request on a year to year basis and you provide transportation. We cannot guarantee year to year, but if there is space, the requests are usually approved.

Name: Mrs. Blair

Question: Would there be consideration given to grandfathering the siblings of the 8 families at both schools? Is that even available for consideration?

Answer by Dr. Leddy: Grandfathering is mostly for transportation. We cannot agree to transport students for more than 2 years. If parents choose to apply for an out of boundary request, and they provide transportation, then there is a chance students could still attend. Transportation would be provided for the first two years, and then parents would provide their own transportation. However it still remains a year by year basis.

Name: Mrs. Graham

Question: Do we know how many students are out of bounds and currently attending St. Anne?

Answer by Karen Dolson: There are 7 students that we are aware of. The numbers are mainly in the upper grades. These are not the Gregory A. Hogan students, as they are now considered inside the boundaries.

Name: Ms. Adamo

Question: Because the participation rate is a growing concern for our school, is it possible to consider offering full day kindergarten in 2013 rather than waiting until 2014?

Answer by Dr. Leddy: There are a certain number of schools that are set for each year. We have worked to match closely with the public board, to offer it at our schools at the same time. These have already been chosen and announced by the Ministry. We understand the suggestion, but this is something that is set. The government chose to implement and fund it over a 5 year span, so we have to follow that as well.

Name: Mrs. Blair

Question: 7 students are out of bounds, and yet we are asking 4 families to send their children to two different schools?

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	<p>Answer by Mrs. Dolson: Each of these families applies each year, and they are mostly only for half a year. Families move during a school year and ask to stay for the rest of the year. That is usually the case for out of boundary students. We look closely at each request, especially here as we have such a full school.</p> <p>Comment by Mrs. Cecile: There are also students who should be attending here but are at a school elsewhere. Therefore, it evens out in the end.</p> <p><i>Name: Mrs. Grasse</i></p> <p>Question: How final is this decision?</p> <p>Answer by Dr. Leddy: We have discussed study areas and the committee has agreed that we need to move students to make room at St. Anne. We will have a draft report to review at the next meeting. It will be presented to the Board of Trustees in the spring, and then the trustees will make the final decision once our report is reviewed.</p>
<p>8: 26 p.m.</p>	<p>Closing Prayer</p> <p>The Chair thanked everyone for attending. The meeting was adjourned at 8:26 p.m.</p>
	<p>Future BRC Meeting Dates</p> <p>Tuesday, March 6, 2012 – St. Michael Catholic School, Bright's Grove Tuesday, April 10, 2012 – St. Anne Catholic School, Sarnia</p>