

## ARC MEETING NOTES

Tuesday, January 20, 2009  
St. Christopher Catholic Secondary School, Sarnia

**Chair: Ms. Sutton, Superintendent of Education**

**Recording Secretaries: Cathy Calvert & Tonia Barr**

TIME	ITEM
5:00 p.m.	Accommodation Review Committee (ARC) members toured the inside of St. Christopher Catholic Secondary School.
7:04 p.m.	<p><b>Welcome/Opening Remarks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ann Sutton, Superintendent of Education, introduced herself as Chair and thanked everyone for attending.</li> </ul>
7:05 p.m.	<p><b>Opening Prayer</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ms. Sutton opened the meeting with <a href="#">prayer</a>.</li> <li>▪ Housekeeping issues were addressed: tripping hazards, beverages, washrooms, emergency exits, etc.</li> </ul>
7:07 p.m.	<p><b>Introductions – Ms. Sutton</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Pauline Berkvens, a member of the ARC representing the St. Patrick’s Catholic High School council has resigned, due to personal reasons.</li> <li>▪ Jane Spanton has agreed to replace Ms. Berkvens as a representative to the ARC for the St. Patrick’s Catholic High School council.</li> <li>▪ Regrets from Caroline Brant, St. Christopher Catholic Secondary School council, who is absent this evening.</li> <li>▪ The members of the ARC introduced themselves. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Maureen Beauregard, ARC member representing St. Patrick’s Catholic High School</li> <li>○ Elaine Hayter, ARC member representing St. Patrick’s Catholic High School</li> <li>○ Jane Spanton, ARC member representing St. Patrick’s Catholic High School</li> <li>○ Janet Chynces, ARC member representing St. Christopher Catholic Secondary School</li> <li>○ Candice Etienne, ARC member representing St. Christopher Catholic Secondary School</li> <li>○ Fr. Matthew Bedard, ARC member representing the parishes</li> <li>○ Robert Kardas, Dean of Business and Sports Administration at Lambton College, community representative</li> <li>○ Jack Evers, Prime Minister of St. Christopher Catholic Secondary School student council, representing students (non-voting member)</li> <li>○ Cian Poore, Prime Minister of St. Patrick’s Catholic High School student council, representing students (non-voting member)</li> <li>○ Fred Galloway, F.J. Galloway Associates, board consultant, facilitator and resource to the committee</li> <li>○ Bernadette Gray, Principal, St. Patrick’s Catholic High School, resource to the committee</li> <li>○ Brendan Deery, Principal, St. Christopher Catholic Secondary School, resource to the committee</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Ms. Sutton welcomed the Student Prime Ministers of St. Christopher and St. Patrick’s schools and explained that they are non-voting members of the ARC.</li> <li>▪ The roles of voting and non-voting ARC members were explained.</li> <li>▪ Trustees and board staff were introduced.</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ms. Sutton provided a brief overview of the accommodation review process relative to Ministry of Education guidelines and board policy.</li> </ul>
<p><b>7:10 p.m.</b></p>	<p><b>Rules of Order</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ All audience members should register their attendance on forms outside of the gym.</li> <li>▪ The rules of order, as outlined in the agenda, will be followed.</li> </ul> <p><b>Notes of the meetings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Notes will be taken by two recording secretaries and will be placed on the board website within 10 working days after the meeting. The notes are not a verbatim transcript of the meeting.</li> </ul> <p><b>Protocols</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Meeting protocols, as outlined in the agenda, will be followed.</li> </ul> <p><b>Focus Groups</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Focus groups have been conducted by Mr. Galloway, who is also acting as facilitator for the Accommodation Review Committee meetings.</li> <li>▪ Focus groups were conducted to ensure representatives of various stakeholder groups for each school had an opportunity to provide input and ask questions for the benefit of ARC members. The focus groups for each school included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Students – Grades 11 &amp;12</li> <li>➢ Students – Grades 9 &amp;10</li> <li>➢ Students – Grades 7 &amp; 8 from the Catholic elementary partner schools</li> <li>➢ Teachers – Grades 7 &amp; 8</li> <li>➢ Teachers – Grades 9 – 12</li> <li>➢ School Administrators</li> <li>➢ Parents – Grades 11 &amp; 12 students</li> <li>➢ Parents – Grades 9 &amp; 10 students</li> <li>➢ Parents – Grades 7 &amp; 8 students from the Catholic elementary partner schools</li> <li>➢ School Alumni</li> <li>➢ Mixed Community Group – shop owners, co-op placement employers, partnering service providers etc.</li> <li>➢ Unions and Federations</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Results were shared with the ARC for information and consideration.</li> </ul>
<p><b>7:15 p.m.</b></p>	<p><b>Presentation of the November 18, 2008 notes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ These were posted on the board website within 10 days of the last meeting and the ARC members have hard copies of these in their packages.</li> </ul>

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	<p><b>Questions from ARC members arising from previous meeting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ There were no questions from ARC members arising from the previous meeting.</li> <li>▪ ARC members may ask questions at the end of each presentation.</li> <li>▪ One hour at the end of the meeting will be allotted for questions from the audience. Each person who wishes to ask a question will be allotted two minutes to do so.</li> </ul>
<p>7:30 p.m.</p>	<p><b>Defining the Issues</b></p> <p><b>Demographics &amp; Facilities – Jim McKenzie, Associate Director – Corporate Services and Treasurer</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Sarnia Secondary ARC: A Review of Key Points from the November 18<sup>th</sup> Presentation</i> – available on the website <a href="#">Report</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Questions from ARC members</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Question</b> – Ms. Hayter – Was the St. Patrick’s property purchased from LKDSB or leased?</li> <li>• <b>Response</b> – Mr. McKenzie – The former Lambton County Roman Catholic Separate School Board purchased the property under the terms of the day, which meant title was transferred for one dollar. Today, when we wish to sell property, we are permitted to ask full market value.</li> <li>• <b>Question</b> – Mr. Kardas – Is the government top up funding guaranteed?</li> <li>• <b>Response</b> – Mr. McKenzie – Yes, but we have to remove unused classroom space from the calculations, which results in changes to school capacity and, in turn, affects the funding received.</li> <li>• <b>Question</b> – Ms. Beauregard – Why is there a discrepancy in the cost of the water between St. Christopher and St. Patrick’s?</li> <li>• <b>Response</b> – Mr. McKenzie – The discrepancy may be due to the use of the fields at St. Christopher in the summer. I will have to investigate this further and will post the answer to the website. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Follow-up Response – Mr. McKenzie</i></li> <li><i>There is a substantial variance in water usage and cost during the months of July, August and September between the two schools, which can be attributed to field watering at St. Christopher. The area being watered at St. Christopher is approximately twice the size of that at St. Patrick’s. St. Christopher has both a football field and a soccer field (inside the track), while St. Patrick’s only has a football field. In addition, St. Christopher put in a new natural garden this past year, which was heavily watered during the summer. With the exception of the three months noted above, water usage and the related costs at St. Patrick’s exceed those of St. Christopher during every other month of the year.</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Program – Brenda Courey, Assistant to the Superintendent</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Secondary Programming</i> - available on the website <a href="#">Report</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Questions from ARC members</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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- **Question** – Ms. Etienne – Is it correct that if we cannot meet the needs of students with an IEP in our high schools it would be suggested that they should attend a public high school to have their needs better met?
- **Response** – Ms. Courey - We can accommodate every student in every one of our secondary schools.
  - Mrs. Gray – We make a place for every student from grade 9 to 12, considering all needs. This is done on an individual basis. We would never recommend that any student attend a public school.
  - Mr. Deery – When a parent comes with a student who has an IEP we make every effort to ensure that the needs of the student are met from grade 9 to 12. We have a very inclusive system and we make every effort to accommodate every student within our schools and to develop a pathway for them from grade 9 to 12.
  - Ms. Sutton – The model for our Catholic schools is one of inclusion and not segregation, as we are all valued members of the Body of Christ.
- **Question** - Fr. Bedard – Who makes the decision as to which courses are offered?
- **Response** – Ms. Courey - The school the administration, in consultation with board administration, based on student and community needs.
- **Question** – Mr. Kardas – When there is a larger school, such as UCC, are there any issues regarding class size?
- **Response** – Ms. Courey – No, classes are no larger than at any other school. In addition, when there is low enrolment for a course, it would not be viable to offer it; however, this is less likely to happen in a larger school.
  - Karen Dolson, Coordinator of Planning Services – Average class size is mandated by the Ministry of Education regardless of the size of the school. The average class size is the same at all of our schools.
- **Question** – Mr. Kardas – What is the average class size?
- **Response** – Ms. Dolson – It may be 21 or 22 but this will have to be confirmed and will be posted on our website.
  - Follow-up Response – Ms. Dolson*
  - Maximum average class size for secondary schools is 22. In a larger school, where more sections of the same course are offered, there is more flexibility to divide the students amongst several classes to lower class sizes.*
- **Question** – Fr. Bedard – If there is a course which is important for the student’s education and is not offered at the student’s home school and not offered as a magnet course, can a student change schools to take the course?
- **Response** – Ms. Courey – It may be handled by an e-Learning course.
  - Mr. Deery – Beginning next semester, we have two students who are going to be taking courses in both schools, as there is a course being offered at one Catholic high school, but not the other. When the course is offered as part of the magnet school program, transportation is provided. If the course is not a magnet school program course, it is up to the student to provide their own transportation between schools.

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8:15 p.m.

### Discussing the Options

Facilitated by Mr. Galloway

- *Focus Group Summary Presentation* – available on the website [Report](#)
- **Questions from ARC members**
  - **Question** – Ms. Etienne - How were focus groups selected?
  - **Response** – Mr. Galloway – An open invitation to students, parents, and teachers was issued and then a request for volunteers was issued. If more people were still required, individual invitations were made to ensure a good mix of gender and age was achieved.
  - **Question** – Ms. Chynces – What was the purpose of the focus groups?
  - **Response** - Ms. Sutton – Focus groups were to gather information and perception from a very large group of constituents in our community and to help inform the ARC about possible alternatives.
  - **Question** - Fr. Bedard – Are there actually two unique cultures which, when integrated, would cause great anxiety?
  - **Response** – Mr. Galloway – St. Christopher is seen as a “preppy school” with fewer socio-economic issues. It has a more homogenous culture. The St. Patrick’s community is perceived as having more socio-economic and family challenges and greater cultural diversity.
  - **Question** - Fr. Bedard – Do the principals see the same diversity within the students of their schools?
  - **Response** – Mr. Deery – The key aspect is one of perception. Students compete between the schools but they also do things together. Students do integrate with each other outside of the school.
    - Ms. Gray – The perception is there, but the magnet program has solidified the knowledge that students of both schools can come together and it has also shown that the students feel at home regardless of which school they attend.
  - **Question** – Ms. Hayter – Would we consider polling our students in grades 7 and 8 concerning bussing?
  - **Response** - Ms. Sutton – Surveys have been done in the past. As this process continues, the ARC may ask for specific reports from the board, which may help you to make your final decision.
  - **Question** – Ms. Hayter – Are the boundaries for Sacred Heart, Port Lambton and St. Joseph, Corunna open meaning that students are able to choose which Sarnia Catholic secondary school they wish to attend and is this a reason for the decline in enrollment at St. Patrick’s?
  - **Response** – Ms. Dolson - Students from St. Joseph, Corunna may choose which Sarnia Catholic secondary school they wish to attend. Students from Sacred Heart, Port Lambton are within the boundary area for St. Patrick’s. There is a process within our board where a parent may make application for a student to attend a school outside of their boundary area. This application goes to both school principals and finally to the superintendent. Decisions are made on an individual basis. If granted, the parents must provide transportation.
  - **Question** – Ms. Hayter – Why and when was the boundary changed for St. Joseph, Corunna?
  - **Response:** Ms. Dolson - The date when this changed occurred will have to be checked into and will be posted on the website. It may possibly have happened in about 2002.

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*Follow-up Response – Ms. Dolson*

*At the Regular Board Meeting of Tuesday, February 11, 2003 the following motion was made with regard to St. Joseph Catholic School, Corunna, to address the declining enrolment of north secondary schools:*

*Motion: O-042-2003 (Linda Ward and Bill Sparks) That the St. Clair Catholic District School Board designate St. Joseph School, Corunna as a feeder school for St. Christopher Catholic Secondary School, with proviso that parents may select St. Patrick High School if that is preferable for their family.*

- **Question** – Ms. Hayter – There has been a report of aggressive recruiting of elementary students from high school coaches from outside our board and from St. Christopher, to get students to attend a school outside of their boundary area.
- **Response** – Mr. Deery – The expectation we have is that elementary students attend the high school to which they are partnered and that there is no recruiting of students by coaches from St. Christopher.  
- Ms. Sutton – Recruiting from outside of our school board is not supposed to happen; however, we do hear from time to time that it has occurred. On these occasions, our Superintendent would contact a Superintendent from our co-terminus board to inform them of this issue, and vice versa.
- **Question** – Mr. Kardas – One of the draw backs to the consolidated school model seems to be the loss of students to another board. Is it possible to contact another board which has already gone through this process to see if this was the case and how it was addressed?
- **Response** – Mr. Galloway – In two cases in Kitchener it made no difference in the student enrolment. We may want to contact the Guelph board to see what happened there.

*Follow-up Response – Ms. Dolson*

*I have contacted the Wellington Catholic District School Board. Bishop McDonnell School was closed back in 1995 and enrolment statistics for the number of students who transferred to the public board at that time are not available.*

- **Question** – Ms. Hayter – In the focus groups, was a rebuild of St. Patrick’s high school discussed?
- **Response** – Mr. Galloway – It was the opinion of some focus group participants that to invest eight million dollars into the school was not a viable option due to the age of the building.
- **Question** – Ms. Etienne – What is maximum bus ride time allowable?
- **Response** – Ms. Sutton – The question will need to be answered by Kent Orr, Manager, Transportation Services and the response will be posted on the website.

*Follow-up Response – Mr. Orr*

*The Conditions of Service portion of the Transportation Policy (available on the [www.schoolbusinfo.com](http://www.schoolbusinfo.com) website under the Policy section) states the following, regarding maximum allowable ride times:*

*1. Riding Time*

- 1. Other than in exceptional circumstances, students in elementary school will not spend more than 60 minutes on the bus, one way, each day.*

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2. *Other than in exceptional circumstances, students in secondary school will not spend more than 75 minutes on the bus, one way, each day.*

*The longest rides currently are for two students, who each have 67 minute ride times at either the start or the end of the school day.*

- **Question** – Ms. Etienne – Can boundaries for high schools be changed?
- **Response** – Ms. Dolson – Boundaries for any of our schools can be reviewed and changed.
- **Question** – Ms. Etienne – Would the board consider a subsidized transit pass as a substitute to school bussing?
- **Response** – Ms. Sutton – This question will need to be directed to either Mr. McKenzie or Mr. Orr to respond to on the website.  
*Follow-up Response – Mr. Orr*  
*Currently, the transportation consortium does not utilize local transit as part of the home-to-school transportation of students. The transportation routing solution currently employed incorporates an intentional mix of contracted school buses and multi-tiered, integrated routes that are scheduled for maximum efficiencies and conditions of service as outlined in the transportation policy. Transit routes and cost effectiveness would need to be reviewed and compared to available school bus alternatives.*
- **Question** – Ms. Etienne – How much incidental use of St. Patrick’s school occurs due to use of the track facilities?
- **Response** – Bruce Hannah, Manager, Facility Services – I don’t have specific information about incidental use of our school facility as a result of track usage. However, I can tell you that there is a three party agreement for the track, which is managed by Mr. McKenzie and his counterpart at our co-terminus board.  
- Bernadette Gray – Whenever the track is used by anyone, the school is also used i.e. washroom facilities, cafeteria, etc.
- Ms. Sutton – This question will be directed to Mr. McKenzie and the answer will be posted on the website.  
*Follow-up Response – Mr. McKenzie*  
*I have no further information, as we are not required by the Ministry of Education to capture this type of data related to community use of our facilities.*
- **Question** – Ms. Chynces – What is our next step as members of the ARC?
- **Response** - Ms. Sutton – The next step will be to discuss the options.
- **Question** – Ms. Beauregard – How long were the focus group discussions and how many participants were there?
- **Response** – Mr. Galloway – The lengths of the discussions varied, usually from 50 minutes to an hour and ten minutes. The size of the groups varied from 4 to 18 participants.
- **Question** – Ms. Etienne – Can the ARC be provided with a summary of programs which are considered essential regardless of which option is chosen by the ARC?
- **Response** – Ms. Sutton – Ms. Courey will prepare such a report for next meeting.
- **Question** – Mr. Kardas – Is it this committee’s responsibility to recommend how the changes in our

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	<p>recommendation are to be implemented?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Response</b> – Ms. Sutton – That is not your responsibility; however, you may wish to make suggestions on how your recommendations are to be implemented. Your recommendations will be taken by the Director of Education to the Board of Trustees at a public board meeting. The trustees will also receive a recommendation from the Director of Education. It is the Board of Trustees who will make the final decision. They may decide to take either recommendation as originally drafted; or, they may make some amendments to the recommendations; or, they may settle on a decision that was not part of either recommendation. It is the responsibility of senior administration to implement the decision of the Board of Trustees.</li> </ul>
<p><b>9:30 p.m.</b></p>	<p>It was suggested by Mr. Galloway that due to the time, beginning a discussion of the options should be deferred to the next meeting.</p> <p>Ms. Sutton responded by reminding the ARC that if this is done, it could mean that a 5<sup>th</sup> meeting would be required to conclude the ARC process.</p> <p>A vote to defer to next meeting was taken. ARC members unanimously agreed to defer discussion of the options to the next meeting.</p>
<p><b>9:35 p.m.</b></p>	<p><b>Presentation of the proposed agenda – March 10, 2009 – St. Patrick’s Catholic High School</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Proposed agenda for the March 10, 2009 ARC meeting was presented by Ms. Sutton.</li> </ul>
<p><b>9:45 p.m.</b></p>	<p><b>Question Period</b></p> <p><b>Ms. Sutton designated one microphone for students in the audience.</b></p> <p><b>Ms. Sutton also reminded the ARC that the first 10 minutes of the question period will be given to the two student council Prime Ministers for any questions or comments which they have.</b></p> <p><b>Jack Evers – Prime Minister, St. Christopher Catholic Secondary School</b> - If a recommendation is made and St. Patrick’s Catholic High School was closed and the land sold would the board be able to maintain the use of the track for the use of the combined school?</p> <p><b>Response</b> – Ms. Sutton – This question will be directed to Mr. McKenzie, for a response to be posted on the website.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><i>Follow-up Response – Mr. McKenzie</i> <i>This will depend on the final recommendation approved by the Board. A number of options are available – sever the property and retain ownership of the track; sever the property and sell the track to the City of Sarnia; sever the property and sell the track to the Lambton Kent District School Board; sever the property and sell the track to a community organization such as the Sarnia Athletic Club; don’t sever the property and sell the entire parcel to the highest bidder.</i></p> <p><b>Cian Poore – Prime Minister, St. Patrick’s Catholic High School</b> – No questions or comments at this time.</p>



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### Questions from the floor

**Question** – Would it be financially feasible to build a smaller secondary school in the south end of Sarnia?

**Response** – Ms. Sutton – This question will be directed to Mr. McKenzie, for a response to be posted on the website.

*Follow-up Response – Mr. McKenzie*

*Unable to answer this question, as there are too many variables and decisions that would have to be made related to the size of the facility, programming requirements, etc. Generally speaking, if a decision was made to keep a secondary school in the south end of Sarnia, major renovations to the existing structure would be less costly than the demolition of the existing school and the building of a completely new secondary school to replace it.*

**Question** – In the St. Clair Catholic District School Board's history, when we have closed schools do we know how many students have left our board to attend schools of our co-terminus board i.e. St. Helen's closure?

**Response** – Ms. Dolson – The numbers are not available tonight. They will be posted on our website.

*Follow-up Response – Ms. Dolson*

*Transfers to and from Catholic schools and public schools:*

*2006-2007 – 144 students transferred from public schools to Catholic schools; 112 students transferred from Catholic to public schools*

*2007-2008 – 90 students transferred from public schools to Catholic schools; 37 students transferred from Catholic to public schools*

*Transfers from Catholic schools to public schools following school closures are as follows:*

*Our Lady of Help, Wallaceburg (July 1, 2000) – 4 students to public school*

*Our Lady of Mercy, Sarnia (July 1, 2001) – 5 students to home school; 3 students to public school*

*Fr. Gerald Labelle, Corunna (July 1, 2001) – 2 students to public school; 12 students moved out of Corunna*

*St. Ambrose, Chatham (July 1, 2001) – 2 students to Chatham Christian School; 2 students to public school*

*Blessed Sacrament, Chatham (July 1, 2002) – 2 students to public school*

*St. Joseph, Sarnia (July 1, 2002) – 22 students to public school (January 2002); 6 students transferred back to St. Therese in September.*

*St. Helen, Sarnia (July 1, 2003) – 63 students to public school; 3 families transferred back after 1 year*

*St. Ignatius, Bothwell (July 1, 2005) – 38 students to public school*

**Question** – What is the retention rate for Catholic students as they transition from elementary to secondary school?

**Response** – Ms. Dolson – Retention rates will be posted on our website.

*Follow-up Response – Ms. Dolson*

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	<i>Retention Rates are detailed in the attached <a href="#">Report</a>.</i>
<b>9:50 p.m.</b>	<p><b>Closing Prayer</b>  Ms. Sutton led the <a href="#">closing prayer</a>.</p>
	<p><b>Future ARC Meeting Dates</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Tuesday, March 10, 2009 - St. Patrick’s Catholic High School</b></li> <li>• <b>Tuesday, May 5, 2009 – St. Christopher Catholic Secondary School</b></li> </ul>