

## REPORT TO BOARD OF TRUSTEES March 28, 2017

Dan Parr, Director of Education

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**SUBJECT:** Chatham Elementary Schools Pupil Accommodation Review – Report for Approval

**PREPARED BY:** Deb Crawford, Superintendent of Education

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### BACKGROUND:

On February 14, 2017 I presented the *Chatham Elementary Schools Pupil Accommodation Review Final Report* (attached). It is a comprehensive account of the accommodation review process, which began in September 2016.

Below is a summary of the highlights:

- September 27, 2016 – *Initial Staff Report* presented to Board of Trustees; and approval of Pupil Accommodation Review – Chatham elementary schools
- October 4, 2016 – Pupil Accommodation Review Committee (PARC) Meeting #1
- October 11, 2016 – Tour of Chatham elementary schools
- October 26, 2016 – Tour of Holy Trinity Catholic School, Sarnia
- November 9, 2016 – Public Meeting #1
- November 29, 2016 – PARC Meeting #2
- January 19, 2017 – PARC Meeting #3
- January 25, 2017 – Public Meeting #2
- February 14, 2017 – Presentation of *Chatham Elementary Schools Pupil Accommodation Review Final Report* to Board of Trustees
- February 28, 2017 – Opportunity for public delegation presentations to Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees – no delegations
- March 28, 2017 – Final decision – Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees

Throughout the process, communication with parents and guardians has been frequent. It has included direct communication, through letters sent home with students and also forwarded by direct email to all parents/guardians for whom the Board has email addresses. Each letter was also posted to the Board website and social media sites, including Facebook and Twitter.

The Pupil Accommodation Review page of the Board website has been the official record at each step throughout the process, and has included all Board reports and the notes of all PARC and public meetings. It also provided an opportunity for parents/guardians to submit questions, the answers for which were shared with PARC members and posted to the website.

There has also been regular on-going consultation with our partners in the Municipality of Chatham-Kent, which is described in detail on page 13 of the February 14, 2017 report. Notification regarding the accommodation review process was also shared in the form of a letter from the Director of Education to 13 community, education, provincial and federal partner agencies, as required under provincial regulation.

**REPORT:  
Chatham Elementary Schools Pupil Accommodation Review – Report for Approval**

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I have made one minor change to the recommendations, which I presented in my February 14, 2017 report. In Recommendation #4 of that report (page 3), I asked that Trustees consider that all current students and future siblings for both new schools be “grandfathered” and be given the choice to attend either the newly constructed schools, as directed under current boundaries; or, be redirected to Good Shepherd (Thamesville), St. Anne (Blenheim) or St. Joseph (Tilbury) under the newly-drawn boundaries, as described in the *Initial Staff Report*.

However, on reflection, I believe it was the intention of the PARC that the current St. Vincent boundary be exempted from any changes to school catchment areas. That is, rather than being “grandfathered” there should instead be no changes to the St. Vincent boundary, so that all current and future students in the St. Vincent catchment area, would be directed to the new school. This revision is captured in Motion #4 below.

As I indicated in my February 14, 2017 final report, I believe the process for the Chatham Catholic elementary schools pupil accommodation review has been thorough and complete. Again, I wish to offer my gratitude to the members of the PARC for their willingness to serve and for their great commitment to this process. I also extend my special thanks to our parish representatives, who served so faithfully on this committee, and finally, to our Chatham Catholic elementary school principals for their guidance and support.

I now present the following recommendations for approval by the Board of Trustees.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 1. That the St. Clair Catholic District School Board receive the report: *Chatham Elementary Schools Pupil Accommodation Review – Report for Approval*, for information.**
- 2. That, subject to funding approval from the Ontario Ministry of Education, the St. Clair Catholic District School Board approve the construction of two 564 pupil place schools – one in north Chatham for the students of Our Lady of Fatima, St. Agnes and St. Vincent Catholic schools with an anticipated opening of September 2019; and one in south Chatham for the students of Georges P. Vanier, St. Joseph and St. Ursula Catholic schools with an anticipated opening of September 2019.**
- 3. That, subject to funding approval from the Ontario Ministry of Education, the St. Clair Catholic District School Board approve the relocation of the French Immersion program from Monsignor Uyen Catholic School to a newly refurbished Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School, with an anticipated opening date of September 2019.**

- 4. That the St. Clair Catholic District School Board approve the boundaries of the new south Chatham school to be redrawn as set out in Option A of the Initial Staff Report (September 2016); however, all current students and future siblings will be “grandfathered” and given the choice to attend either the newly constructed school, as directed under current boundaries, or be directed to St. Anne (Blenheim) or St. Joseph (Tilbury) as directed under the newly-drawn boundaries; and further that the current boundary for St. Vincent Catholic School not be changed, so that all current and future students in the existing St. Vincent boundary will be directed to the new north Chatham school.**
- 5. That the St. Clair Catholic District School Board direct staff to incorporate in the design of the new schools and the refurbished Our Lady of Fatima, wherever possible within the funding parameters set by the Ministry of Education, the special considerations with respect to facilities as outlined by the Pupil Accommodation Review Committee in the recommendations section of the February 14, 2017 Final Report.**
- 6. That the St. Clair Catholic District School Board direct staff to incorporate in the transition plan for students, wherever possible within funding parameters, the special considerations with respect to transition matters as outlined by the Pupil Accommodation Review Committee in the recommendations section of the February 14, 2017 Final Report.**
- 7. That effective September 2019, following the opening of the new schools and the relocation of the French Immersion program to Our Lady of Fatima, the school buildings for St. Agnes, St. Vincent, Monsignor Uyen, Georges P. Vanier, St. Joseph and St. Ursula be closed and declared surplus according to the terms of Ontario Regulation 444/98.**