



REPORT TO BOARD OF TRUSTEES

February 28, 2012

Paul Wubben, Director of Education

SUBJECT: **Boundary Review Committee Report – Monsignor Uyen and Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Schools**

PREPARED BY: Deb Crawford, Superintendent of Education

BACKGROUND:

On Tuesday, September 27, 2011, a report by the Director of Education was brought to the Board of Trustees regarding a boundary review for the Monsignor Uyen and Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School communities. The Board approved the Director's request for a boundary review and directed that a Boundary Review Committee (BRC) be established.

The members of the Boundary Review Committee are as follows:

Chair: Deb Crawford, Superintendent of Education

Voting Members:

Monsignor Uyen Catholic School:

Deanna Bullard
Chauntelle Dziver
Wanita Gebal

Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School:

Bridget Blonde
Laura Comiskey
Megan Lemak

Non-Voting Members:

Carmen Gagnier, Principal of Monsignor Uyen Catholic School
Tom Baker, Principal of Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School

The BRC met on three occasions:

Tuesday, November 8, 2011 at Monsignor Uyen Catholic School
Tuesday, January 10, 2012 at Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School
Tuesday, February 14, 2012 at Monsignor Uyen Catholic School

Declining enrolment in the English stream at Monsignor Uyen Catholic School has historically been a problem. The current boundary was put in place ten years ago in an attempt to address the small English class sizes by broadening the boundary to include a greater number of English stream students. This action did not solve the problem and class size has continued to shrink. It should also be noted that it was not possible at that time to create a single-track French

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Immersion school at Monsignor Uyen Catholic School, as student enrolment was too great for accommodation of the English program at Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School.

The current situation at Monsignor Uyen Catholic School is one in which class sizes in the English program have become so small that implementation of triple grades is imminent. The small class sizes will also place pressure on the rest of the system, due to the class average required by the Ministry of Education and the Provincial Discussion Table (PDT) agreements.

Currently, Monsignor Uyen Catholic School houses Grades 3 through 8 in the French Immersion Program in order to make use of surplus classroom space. This measure was taken to make use of the vacant student spaces at Monsignor Uyen Catholic School so that the school would not face closure. Thus, the St. Clair Catholic District School Board operates two neighbouring elementary schools that offer French Immersion and English programs, creating a situation in which a family could have students attending two different schools concurrently.

Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School has continued to maintain a significant student population and is located in an area of ongoing housing construction. Additional student accommodation will also be required due to the implementation of Full Day Kindergarten (FDK) in September 2014. Planning projections indicate that the student population at Monsignor Uyen Catholic School will continue to decline.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

An examination of the English program enrolment at Monsignor Uyen Catholic School as of September 2011 demonstrates significant declining enrolment. As outlined in Policy 7.4 *Student Accommodation and Boundary Review*, a review was recommended because the Board acknowledges that a revision of boundaries may be required in order to operate in an efficient and effective manner and to provide effective educational programs for all students through the efficient management of the Board's resources. The Board is committed to the provision of adequate and appropriate accommodation for the students attending its schools pursuant to ministry guidelines and regulations. The chart below summarizes current enrolment in the English program at Monsignor Uyen Catholic School.

**Monsignor Uyen Catholic School English Enrolment
(2011 – 2014)**

	JK	SK	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	TOTAL (FTE)
2011	5	8	12	10	10	12	11	23	17	18	126 (119.5)
2012	6	5	8	13	11	10	12	12	24	16	117 (111.5)
2013	4	6	5	8	15	11	10	13	12	23	107 (102)
2014	5	4	6	5	9	15	11	11	13	12	91 (91)

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SUMMARY OF BRC MEETINGS:

The BRC met on three occasions in order to provide an opportunity for representatives from the school communities of Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School and Monsignor Uyen Catholic School to listen to information provided by staff, ask questions, discuss, and provide input on behalf of parents. At the end of each BRC meeting, questions were also accepted from members of the audience.

On November 8, 2011 at Monsignor Uyen Catholic School, the BRC considered the issues created by declining English stream enrolment at Monsignor Uyen Catholic School and identified a single viable option, that being the establishment of boundaries to facilitate two single track schools: one English program and one French Immersion program. After considering the On the Ground (OTG) capacities – Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School having 425 fulltime equivalent student spaces and Monsignor Uyen Catholic School having 342 fulltime equivalent student spaces – the BRC acknowledged that the French Immersion single stream should be established at Monsignor Uyen Catholic School as only Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School could accommodate the English stream student population. Shifting boundaries to increase the English population at Monsignor Uyen Catholic School by moving students from Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School or from any other school was deemed inadvisable as it would have a negative impact on other Chatham Catholic schools and would not, as can be seen from the action taken 10 years ago, solve the problem over the long term.

At the January 10, 2012 meeting at Our Lady of Fatima, the BRC analyzed additional information as requested by the committee on November 8, 2011, which included projected enrolment information and current transportation data. The BRC heard that 1.6 km is the walk distance for all students in the Board. Current transportation data shows some inconsistencies, in that the 1.6 km distance has not always been enforced in the Monsignor Uyen and Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School boundaries. It was noted that at some time in the future, the 1.6 km regulation will be enforced and students who may currently be riding the bus will be required to walk. The BRC listened to a report on French Immersion curriculum information and were given information pertaining to the transition of Special Education students to new schools. The BRC agreed to consider two options for September 2012:

Option 1

- All French Immersion program students will attend Monsignor Uyen Catholic School, effective September 1, 2012.
- All English program students from Monsignor Uyen Catholic School will transfer to Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School, effective September 1, 2012.

Option 2

- All French Immersion program students will attend Monsignor Uyen Catholic School, effective September 1, 2012.
- English program students from Monsignor Uyen Catholic School will transfer to Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School, effective September 1, 2012 with the exception of the current Grade 7 students, who will be grandfathered to complete Grade 8 at Monsignor Uyen Catholic School. It was agreed that a minimum of 12 students must be enrolled in September 2012 in order to

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make the class viable. If fewer than 12 students are registered, the entire class would be transferred to Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School, effective September 1, 2012.

It was agreed that a final determination between options would be based upon the commitment of parents to register students in Grade 7 for Grade 8 at Monsignor Uyen Catholic School for September 2012.

BRC RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Boundary Review Committee makes the following final recommendations:

1. That the transportation boundary for Monsignor Uyen Catholic School as of July 1, 2012 be as follows:

Boundary for Monsignor Uyen Immersion

There is no regular attendance boundary for the French Immersion Program at Monsignor Uyen Catholic School. To be eligible for transportation to Monsignor Uyen; the student's primary residence address must be no more than 20 km from the school as measured along a road from school property to home property, and outside of the school walk zone as designated by Board policy. Student Transportation Services, using transportation software with the appropriate municipal maps, will make all measurements.

2. That the attendance boundary for Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School as of July 1, 2012 be as follows:

Boundary for Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School

The boundary for Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School is from the junction of the Thames River and Lake St. Clair, north along Lake St. Clair to Marsh Line; north-east along Marsh Line (split) to Bear Line Road; south-east along Bear Line Road (split) to Dover Centre Line; north-east along Dover Centre Line (inclusive) to St. Clair Road; south-east along St. Clair Road (split) following on to St. Clair Street until Pioneer Line; north-east along Pioneer Line (exclusive) to a point where Given Road would meet Pioneer Line if extended; southwest to include St. Clair Estates to a point along Gregory Drive East where Taylor Trail would meet if extended; south on Taylor Trail (exclusive) to McNaughton Avenue East; southwest along McNaughton Avenue East (split) to McNaughton Avenue West and Craven Drive; southeast exclusive of Craven Drive to the Thames River; southwest along the Thames River until meeting Lake St. Clair.

3. That, effective September 2012, Monsignor Uyen Catholic School become a single-track French Immersion school for JK to Grade 8.

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4. That all English program students from Monsignor Uyen Catholic School transfer to Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School, effective September 1, 2012, with the exception of the current Grade 7 students, who will be grandfathered to complete Grade 8 at Monsignor Uyen Catholic School. Only current Grade 7 students who have siblings currently in lower grades at Monsignor Uyen Catholic School may opt to register at Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School for September 1, 2012. A minimum of 12 students must be enrolled in the English program at Monsignor Uyen Catholic School in order to make the class viable. If fewer than 12 students are registered, the entire class would be transferred to Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School, effective September 1, 2012.
5. That transition plans be put in place by spring 2012 so that students transferring to either Monsignor Uyen Catholic School or Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School will feel welcomed. School principals will co-plan an information evening, school tour and transition plans. Efforts will be made to ensure that students moving to new schools will be placed in classrooms with familiar peers.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the St. Clair Catholic District School Board receive the report: *Boundary Review Committee Report – Monsignor Uyen and Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Schools*, for information.

That the St. Clair Catholic District School Board approve the recommendations of the Boundary Review Committee contained in the report: *Boundary Review Committee Report – Monsignor Uyen and Our Lady of Fatima Catholic schools*.