

## BRC MEETING NOTES

Tuesday, November 15, 2011  
St. Michael Catholic School, Bright's Grove  
and St. Anne Catholic School, Sarnia

TIME	ITEM
7:05 p.m.	<p><b>Welcome</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Dr. Frank Leddy, Superintendent of Education, introduced himself as Chair of the Boundary Review Committee and welcomed everyone to the first meeting.</li> </ul>
7:06 p.m.	<p><b>Opening Prayer</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Dr. Leddy opened the meeting with prayer.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Opening Remarks and Introductions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Maureen Cecile, Principal at St. Anne Catholic School Sarnia, and Anna Giuliani, Principal at St. Michael Catholic School Bright's Grove introduced the members of 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.</li> <li>▪ Dr. Leddy introduced Board Trustees in attendance: Carol Bryden, Chair of the Board; John Fontaine; Michelle Parks; Brenda Rumble; and John Van Heck.</li> <li>▪ Dr. Leddy introduced Board staff in attendance. Paul Wubben, Director of Education; Jim McKenzie, Associate Director and Treasurer; Karen Dolson, Manager of Planning Services; Todd Lozon, Supervisor of Communications and Community Relations.</li> </ul>
7:09 p.m.	<p><b>Policy 7.4 – Accommodation and Boundary Review</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Dr. Leddy reviewed Policy 7.4 – Student Accommodation and Boundary Review. He highlighted the policy goals and reviewed Section 2.4 – School Boundaries.</li> </ul>
7:13 p.m.	<p><b>Motion to the Board</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Dr. Leddy reviewed the motions presented at the September 27, 2011 Board Meeting.</li> </ul> <p><b>Committee Mandate</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The BRC is appointed by the Board and is authorized to make recommendations as per board policy.</li> <li>▪ 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.</li> <li>▪ 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.</li> <li>▪ The BRC is encouraged, but not required, to come to consensus with respect to its recommendation(s).</li> <li>▪ At all times the BRC should maintain its focus on the issue at hand and not allow itself to become distracted by side issues.</li> <li>▪ The BRC will meet a minimum of two times.</li> <li>▪ The Trustees will give the BRC's recommendations due consideration and they will decide on a course of action that best serves the needs of the Board.</li> </ul>

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<b>7:16 p.m.</b>	<p><b>Protocols</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ All BRC meetings will be held in public unless the Chair deems it necessary for good order to move the committee into private session.</li> <li>▪ No banners, placards, posters, photos, memorabilia, etc. will be displayed in an attempt to influence the committee.</li> <li>▪ 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.</li> </ul> <p><b>Questions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Microphones are available for those who wish to ask questions at appropriate times during the meeting.</li> <li>▪ 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.</li> <li>▪ Questions or comments will not extend beyond two minutes, at which point the question will be called.</li> <li>▪ 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.</li> <li>▪ Students will not be permitted to address the BRC or ask questions.</li> <li>▪ 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.</li> </ul>
<b>7:19 p.m.</b>	<p><b>Background Information</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 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.</li> <li>▪ Implementation of full-day kindergarten (FDK) in 2014 will also increase the classroom requirements at St. Anne Catholic School.</li> <li>▪ Due to declining enrolment and decreased participation rates, there has been a significant enrolment decline at St. Michael Catholic School.</li> </ul>
<b>7:24 p.m.</b>	<p><b>Demographics</b> (<i>Presentation by Karen Dolson, Manager of Planning Services</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mrs. Dolson presented her report, which can be viewed by clicking on <a href="#">report</a>.</li> <li>▪ Boundary maps distributed with the agenda were reviewed.</li> <li>▪ Definitions that will be used throughout the Boundary Review Meetings were explained.</li> <li>▪ Historical and projected enrolment was presented to the committee.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Discussion from BRC Members</b></p> <p><i>Name:</i> Sarah McCann (Representing the St. Anne Catholic School Community Council)  <b>Question:</b> Does the number of classrooms at St. Anne include the daycare spaces?  <b>Answer by Karen Dolson:</b> No, as they cannot be considered classroom space.</p>

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*Name:* Deb Hoek (Representing the St. Michael Catholic School Community Council)

**Question:** The participation rate for French Immersion, is that Catholic French Immersion?

**Answer by Karen Dolson:** Yes, however the numbers for population of 4 year olds include all children.

*Name:* Crystal Adamo (Representing the St. Michael Catholic School Community Council)

**Question:** At what point does the board look at a school and consider closing it?

**Answer by Dr. Leddy:** There is no exact answer. A general rule is when schools reach 100-120 students it becomes hard to offer programs to the students. If there are schools nearby with available space, that also plays a factor.

*Name:* Ms. McCann

**Question:** When you look at enrolment, is there any investigation as to why there are only 8 JK students at St. Michael and 31 JK students at St. Anne?

**Answer by Dr. Leddy:** It is a surprising statistic that the participation rate is so low at St. Michael. That is something we will need to discuss. How we can address this concern and in what ways can we promote our school and increase the participation rate?

*Name:* Diana Suglio (Representing the St. Michael Catholic School Community Council)

**Comment:** The school hours, the early start time in particular, is a concern for parents and those in the surrounding neighbourhoods. The 8 a.m. start is hard for little ones, whereas the public school in same area has much later start time.

**Answer by Dr. Leddy:** The early start time has been in place for quite a few years, perhaps this is a factor in the participation rate; however, there must be other factors as well since this is not something new in place. Historically the participation rate was higher even with the 8 a.m. start time.

*Name:* Ms. McCann

**Comment:** Smaller class sizes could be a good factor for parents when looking at school enrolment. Having lower enrolment at St. Michael might be a positive factor for parents when choosing a school.

**Answer by Dr. Leddy:** It doesn't always work that way as the class sizes are determined by the ministry and need to fall within a certain range. Therefore, lower enrolment does not mean the class sizes are smaller, but rather it may mean fewer classes with more students to keep within ministry guidelines.

*Name:* Ms. McCann

**Question:** Is the Bright's Grove population expanding like it is in the St. Anne area?

**Answers & Comments:**

Ms. Hoek – There is a new neighbourhood developing in the area with younger children. These children are going to the public school.

Ms. Suglio – Some of the new housing developments are catering to the aging population. They are suited for retirement lifestyles, promoting nearby activities such as golfing. Not all the new developments are housing young families.

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	<p>Dr. Leddy – We did try and examine subdivisions. Sometimes we hear of plans to develop, but it's hard to predict if and when it will happen.</p> <p>Ms. Suglio – There is lots of space for development in the St. Anne's area as well. It seems to be attracting many new and young families.</p> <p><b>Summary of discussion from Dr. Leddy:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Appears to be no classroom space at St. Anne, numerous classrooms are available at St. Michael.</li> <li>2. St. Anne has a good to excellent participation rate. In the last year, there has been a much lower participation rate at St. Michael.</li> <li>3. St. Anne is in a growing area of Sarnia. St. Michael is located in a highly desirable area, yet not a lot of real estate turnover in this area.</li> <li>4. At St. Anne the enrolment is stable or growing. At St. Michael the enrolment is declining.</li> </ol> <p><i>Name:</i> Stacey Sandrin (Representing the St. Anne Catholic School Community Council)</p> <p><b>Question:</b> I strongly agree with earlier comments regarding such an early start. Is it a possibility to examine a later start time?</p> <p><b>Response by Dr. Leddy:</b> It has been noted as part of our discussion and it is something we can look at. It is also important to realize that it is not entirely affecting the participation rate as it has been in place for a long time, and the participation rate has only dropped recently.</p> <p><i>Name:</i> Ms. McCann</p> <p><b>Comment:</b> I agree with Stacey and feel that the new generation since 2008 has decided more against the early start. In my neighbourhood there is a Catholic family choosing to attend the public school with a later start. I also feel that others may not return even if the start time is later as their children have already blended in their current school environment, and a change in the start time may not draw them back.</p>
<p><b>8:00 p.m.</b></p>	<p><b>Consideration of Options</b> (<i>Presentation by Karen Dolson, Manager of Planning Services</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mrs. Dolson presented her report, which can be viewed by clicking on <a href="#">report</a>.</li> <li>▪ 3 Study Areas were considered as possible options.</li> </ul> <p><i>Name:</i> Ms. Sandrin</p> <p><b>Question:</b> Does the total number of classrooms that would be made available include full day kindergarten?</p> <p><b>Answer by Karen Dolson:</b> Full Day Kindergarten is not until 2014. However we do need to look long term to consider the full day kindergarten classes that will be upcoming.</p> <p><i>Name:</i> Ms. McCann</p> <p><b>Comment:</b> It seems that in the first two study areas, we are taking out students, but in the end that number of students is only bringing our enrolment back down to capacity. Therefore we are no further ahead. So we are going to all this trouble and affecting all these families but not really solving anything?</p>

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*Name:* Ms. Suglio

**Comment:** For St. Anne it appears for the benefit of the school we need to do both options, send students to St. Michael's and also examine study 3 by sending students to Sacred Heart. We need both for the benefit of the school.

*Name:* Ms. Sandrin

**Question:** Are we limited to just making one move, or can we do more than one move? What do we know about Sacred Heart?

**Answer by Dr. Leddy:** Yes, you may recommend more than one of the study area options. There is space available at Sacred Heart.

*Name:* Ms. McCann

**Question:** The families that are affected, do you contact them to find out their thoughts? What is the process? Do you find out if they are willing to move to another school?

**Answer by Dr. Leddy:** Our process involves the school principal working with parents to address any questions that they have. We certainly want to listen to our parents. Our role is to find the best solution for our system as a whole. Not all individuals may like the options, but we certainly do our best to assist our parents along the way.

*Name:* Ms. Hoek

**Comment:** It's interesting to note the changing demographics. In the past, there were families from here who had to move to the St. Anne area, now we are moving families back to the St. Michael area.

*Name:* Ms. Suglio

**Question:** Does St. Anne have numerous split classes?

**Answer by Maureen Cecile:** There is one JK, one SK, and one JK/SK split. Most classes are split. There are straight Grade 1, Grade 6 and Grade 8 classes. All the rest are split classes.

**Answer by Dr. Leddy:** This has occurred because of the caps and the regulations around class sizes. Larger schools also have many split classes now.

*Name:* Ms. Suglio

**Comment:** It's good to put the figures on the table. Looking at future numbers and taking away the numbers from the study area if students are moved, there are numbers where there may be an option to have straight grades rather than split grades. Although now we recognize that might not be an option either, due to the caps. Although we would hope that students would be able to have straight grades, it may not happen.

*Name:* Heather Bell (Representing the St. Anne Catholic School Community Council)

**Question:** Is there an option to build on at St. Anne's to accommodate more classrooms and the growing population?

**Answer by Dr. Leddy:** That is a good question; it would be a simple solution. However, going back to the stewardship of resources, the ministry will not fund building more classrooms when we have excess capacity at neighbouring schools.

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	It would be very costly when we already have the space available.
<b>8:24 p.m.</b>	<p><b>Questions from the floor</b></p> <p><i>Name:</i> Audience Member  <b>Question:</b> Can you please explain the boundary options for study number 3?  <b>Answer by Karen Dolson:</b> Karen referred to her presentation slide for Study #3. Students within the presented boundary lines would attend Sacred Heart Catholic School, Sarnia.</p> <p><i>Name:</i> Mrs. Iacobelli  <b>Question:</b> What is the capacity at St. John Fisher? Future housing growth is limited in this area, but growth is taking place in the area of St. John Fisher. What would happen regarding future growth in that area in terms of spill over? Our family is looking at moving, would we be moving to St. John Fisher, then possibly having to move back to St. Michael? We are very happy here at St. Michael's.  <b>Answer by Dr. Leddy:</b> We are taking one step at a time. St. John Fisher is at capacity. We could possibly look at that in the future.</p> <p><i>Name:</i> Ms. Suglio  <b>Comment:</b> Many in my neighbourhood are buying properties in the St. John Fisher area or are building new homes there. We have already lost one family from St. Michael to St. John Fisher.</p> <p><i>Name:</i> Mr. Ross  <b>Question:</b> What is the probability of taking either option 1 or 2, and also having a later start time? Would we see more families and an increase in our participation rate?  <b>Answer by Dr. Leddy:</b> This is a possibility. These are options that have been discussed and presented this evening. Ms. Giuliani and the school council can look at addressing the participation rate. We also need to note that the early start has been in place for over 10 years. We also need to address how we can promote St. Michael Catholic School in Bright's Grove.</p> <p><i>Name:</i> Anna Giuliani  <b>Comment:</b> Daycare is a huge concern here at the school and in Bright's Grove in general. We had 3 JK students enroll and then be pulled out due to daycare concerns.</p> <p><i>Name:</i> Mrs. McGinnis  <b>Question:</b> How will you make the decision regarding Grade 7 students? We are located right in the middle of the option zones.  <b>Answer by Dr. Leddy:</b> The committee will make decisions to present to the Board which certainly can include such considerations. The trustees will consider all the options, and historically they have worked with the senior students to accommodate them in their final years at elementary school.</p>

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	<p><i>Name:</i> Ms. Suglio  <b>Question:</b> How confusing is it for busing and for parents when there are 2 buses that go by? How would students distinguish between buses?  <b>Answer by Dr. Leddy:</b> The bus driver knows each home that it must stop at. The buses are also numbered for identification.</p> <p><i>Name:</i> Ms. McCann  <b>Comment:</b> As a parent who has had students in more than one school, it is confusing for families with students at more than one school to coordinate schedules and participate at the schools. For families that may be put in this position, as a committee we certainly need to take this into consideration, how best we can help these families so their lives are not disrupted.</p>
8:35 p.m.	<p><b>Closing Prayer</b></p> <p>The Chair thanked everyone for attending and led the closing prayer.  The meeting was adjourned at 8:37 p.m.</p>
	<p><b>Future BRC Meeting Dates</b></p> <p>Tuesday, January 17, 2012 – St. Anne Catholic School, Sarnia  Tuesday, March 6, 2012 – St. Michael Catholic School, Bright's Grove  Tuesday, April 10, 2012 – St. Anne Catholic School, Sarnia</p>