

BRC MEETING NOTES

Tuesday, November 8, 2011
Monsignor Uyen Catholic School, Chatham

TIME	ITEM
7:05 p.m.	<p>Welcome/Opening Remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deb Crawford, Superintendent of Education, introduced herself as Chair of the Boundary Review Committee (BRC) and welcomed everyone to the committee's first meeting.
7:06 p.m.	<p>Opening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mrs. Crawford led the opening prayer.
7:07 p.m.	<p>Introductions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mrs. Crawford introduced the members of the BRC, Board staff and Trustees in attendance and reviewed the following information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trustees are present as observers only, and will not comment or ask questions. • Voting and non-voting roles of the BRC members were clarified. • Non-voting members are: Carmen Gagnier, Principal, Monsignor Uyen Catholic School; Tom Baker, Principal, Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School; and Mrs. Crawford.
7:10 p.m.	<p>Rules of Order</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All meetings will begin at 7:00 p.m. and will alternate between Monsignor Uyen and Our Lady of Fatima schools. • An agenda will be provided for each meeting. • The Chair's role is to ensure that the agenda is followed, Rules of Order are met and all questions are answered. • The role of the BRC is to consider the facts and to make recommendation(s) to the Board of Trustees. • All meetings, deliberations and recommendations of the BRC will be in public. • All meeting notes will be posted on the board website within ten working days. There are to be a minimum of two meetings and a maximum of 4 meetings. • There will be a question period after the business portion of the meeting, when questions from the floor will be heard. Questioners will be asked to identify themselves and their relationship to the process. There will be a limit of two questions per person. If a question cannot be answered it will be researched and the question and the response will be posted on the Board website. • The final decision regarding boundary changes rests with the elected Trustees of the Board, who will consider the recommendations of the BRC and recommendations from the Director of Education.

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	<p>Notes of the Meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notes will be taken during the meeting and will be placed on the Board website within 10 working days of the meeting. <p>Protocols</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The meeting falls under the direction of the Chair and the Chair shall maintain order during the meetings. Anyone who is hearing impaired should please notify the Chair two weeks in advance of the meeting and accommodations will be made.
7:13 p.m.	<p>Policy 7.4 Student Accommodation & Boundary Review – Section 2.4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The St. Clair Catholic District School Board is committed to provide student accommodation in a responsible and organized manner, and to consult with the community. Mrs. Crawford reviewed the policy goals as outlined in Policy 7.4. Mrs. Crawford reviewed Section 2.4 of Policy 7.4 outlining conditions for reviewing and revising school boundaries.
7:14 p.m.	<p>Committee Mandate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boundary Review Committee (BRC) is appointed by the Board and is authorized to make recommendations, 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. Trustees will give the BRC’s recommendations and recommendations from the Director of Education due consideration and will decide on a course of action that best serves the needs of the Board.

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7:15 p.m.	<p>Defining the Issue</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On September 27, 2011 a motion was presented to the Board of Trustees by the Director of Education that the Board establish a Boundary Review Committee (BRC) for the school communities of Monsignor Uyen, Chatham, and Our Lady of Fatima, Chatham. The question before the BRC, “How do we best address the problem of changing enrolments at both Monsignor Uyen and Our Lady of Fatima in the French Immersion and English programs?”
7:20 p.m.	<p>Background Information</p> <p>The Committee was asked to consider the current school situations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently there are two elementary schools in Chatham with French Immersion and English programs; Currently families could have children in two different schools; Our Lady of Fatima has continued to maintain a significant English student population; Lower class sizes and the addition of full day kindergarten means that space may become a concern at Our Lady of Fatima; Housing continues to be constructed in Our Lady of Fatima catchment area; English program at Monsignor Uyen continues to decline.
7:22 p.m.	<p>Present Boundaries, Demographics – See PowerPoint Presentation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Karen Dolson, Manager – Planning Services presented her report, which can be viewed by clicking on report. <p>Questions from BRC Members:</p> <p>Chauntelle Dziver (Representing the Monsignor Uyen Catholic School Community Council)</p> <p>Question: How are the numbers for the projections calculated?</p> <p>Answer: Future JK enrolment is calculated using the 2-year average participation rate based on the projected number of children who will be living in the catchment area (participation rate is the proportion of children attending the school who actually live in the catchment area). Projected enrolment in SK to grade 8 is calculated based on the 3-year average student progression rate for each school (progression rate is the ratio of students enrolled in the current grade to enrolment in the previous grade).</p>

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7:45 p.m.	<p>Consideration of Options</p> <p>Mrs. Crawford outlined that Monsignor Uyen has a current total enrolment of 265 students comprised of 125 English program and 140 French Immersion students. Due to declining enrolment, by 2014 there will be total of 218 students comprised of 91 English program and 127 French Immersion students. With only 91 students in the English program school organization for the English program will be very difficult and the possibility would exist for the necessity of triple grade classes.</p> <p>The entire English program of Monsignor Uyen and Our Lady of Fatima cannot be accommodated at Monsignor Uyen.</p> <p>There is the possibility of having two viable single-track schools, one school being English JK to Grade 8 and one school being French Immersion JK to Grade 8, with full time JK in both schools.</p> <p>There is value in having single-track schools but there will be some change required by both school communities.</p>
7:55 p.m.	<p>Discussion</p> <p>Question to BRC from Mrs. Crawford: What do you see and what are your thoughts?</p> <p>Deanna Bullard (Representing the Monsignor Uyen Catholic School Community Council) Comment: Considering that there is a French Catholic elementary school in the area the bilingual aspect of our French Immersion program could be a bonus.</p> <p>Megan Lemak (Representing the Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School Community Council) Comment: Having single-track schools would mean some short term changes but French Immersion parents have experienced repeated changes and there are lots of difficulties with having students from one family in two different schools. Having all the students from one family all at one school would be a bonus.</p> <p>Mrs. Crawford Comment: The projected enrolment number for single-track English program at Monsignor Uyen for 2012 is 402.5 F.T.E. for 2013 it would be 383 FTE and in 2014 it would be 391 F.T.E. The numbers will remain fairly steady. In the Board's past experience single-track French Immersion schools have increased enrolment in the French Immersion program. The projections show that in the English program at Monsignor Uyen the intermediate grade class sizes will decline over time. If we went to two single-track schools what are some of the</p>

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	<p>concerns you would want to look at? What would we need to address?</p> <p>Ms. Lemak Question: We will need to discuss how this will be rolled out.</p> <p>Ms. Dziver Question: Are we dismissing changing boundaries to bring more English students into Monsignor Uyen school? Could boundaries be moved to have more English students at Monsignor Uyen and fewer at Our Lady of Fatima?</p> <p>Ms. Dolson Answer: When looking at total English enrolment there 400 students. If we divide the English program in half, we end up with two schools of 200. Although schools of 200 and fewer can be viable, they most often exist in rural settings where there are no other options. Given the proximity of these two schools, the best option would be to have the English program in one school, which would allow for more flexibility in classroom organization.</p> <p>Ms. Dziver Question: Could we not change boundaries to marginally increase Monsignor Uyen’s English population from Our Lady of Fatima’s population?</p> <p>Ms. Dolson Answer: That was done in 2002, but we now know that it was only a temporary solution. Moving students who reside in the former Dover Township from Our Lady of Fatima to Monsignor Uyen worked for 10 years, but now we need a permanent solution.</p> <p>Mrs. Crawford Answer: We need to look at what is happening now and think of the pros and cons of different options. What would work best for this community? We will need to consider how our recommendations are to be implemented.</p> <p>At this point we have identified two possible options:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Two single track schools: one English program and one French Immersion program. ii. Shifting boundaries to increase the English population at Monsignor Uyen by moving students from Our Lady of Fatima.

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	<p>Wanita Gebal (Representing the Monsignor Uyen Catholic School Community Council) Question: Monsignor Uyen students are used to having small classes. Does Our Lady of Fatima have the same options available for class size? How is it determined which students go into straight grades and which go into split grade classes?</p> <p>Mrs. Crawford Answer: The principal in consultation with teachers makes those decisions. School organization becomes more challenging if enrolment drops and triple grades happen.</p> <p>Mr. Baker Answer: Our Lady of Fatima school currently has straight grade and split grade classes.</p> <p>Ms. Dolson Answer: Class sizes are 20:1 in 90 per cent of our Primary Division classes with a hard cap of 23:1; and a Board average of 24.7:1 in the Junior/Intermediate Division. Class sizes are mandated by the Ministry of Education. There are many more options in larger a school for straight and split grade classes.</p> <p>Ms. Lemak Comment: There are benefits to having different classes of same grade available rather than having just one class of one grade.</p> <p>Ms. Dziver Question: Can we be provided with projections for classroom organization within single-track schools?</p> <p>Ms. Dolson Answer: Using current ministry guidelines I can provide that for the next meeting.</p> <p>Ms. Lemak Comment: It was mentioned that the Board has another school which has become single-track French Immersion. Would it be possible to see how that was done and what the programming aspect is?</p> <p>Mrs. Crawford Answer: The BRC could visit Gregory A. Hogan or have someone from Gregory A. Hogan come and speak with this committee.</p>

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	<p>Ms. Dolson Answer: Gregory Hogan has been phasing in single-track so that right now they have one class of English Grade 8 students, who will graduate at the end of this year.</p> <p>Ms. Lemak Question: Is phasing-in a single-track school an option? Would there be an opportunity to hear what our students would think of changing schools?</p> <p>Mrs. Crawford Answer: Yes phasing in would be a possibility. Perhaps the principals could talk to teachers and see what students would think of changing schools? Many of the younger students would not have an opinion which would be helpful. A decision such as this must be considered from a structural point of view. We would get student input on any transition plan.</p> <p>Ms. Dziver & Ms. Lemak Comment: I would like to hear from someone from Gregory A. Hogan as to how the transition has worked for them.</p> <p>Mrs. Crawford Answer: I will try to arrange for our next meeting for a parent and/or the principal of Gregory A. Hogan Catholic School to come and speak with.</p> <p>Bridget Blonde (Representing the Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School Community Council) Comment: We have some experience right here because every year there are staff and students who move to a new school.</p> <p>Mrs. Crawford Question: What are some issues which have been encountered with moving students between these two schools?</p> <p>Mr. Baker Answer: The students always have concerns with issues such as the new facility, friends, will friends be moving and will they be in the same class. We as teachers, parents and administrators look at opportunities to invite students to see the new school and meet their potential classmates. We do this through play days.</p>

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	<p>Ms. Gagnier Answer: We have already had a transition day for students to tour the school and a play day for them to meet new teachers. Students come as one class and they are able to stay as one class. We help them to see that they will be part of a new community.</p> <p>Ms. Dziver Comment: French Immersion students know from the time they enter JK that they will be moving to a new school in Grade 3, and so they are more willing to accept change. It will be more of a challenge for the English program students.</p> <p>Ms. Bullard Question: How will the Board market their French Immersion program for a single-track school? The public needs to know what the difference is between French Immersion and French school. The bilingual aspect of the French Immersion program is an important thing to know.</p> <p>Ms. Blonde Question: Where else is French Immersion offered in Chatham-Kent Catholic schools?</p> <p>Mrs. Crawford Answer: Only at St. Anne, Blenheim, Monsignor Uyen and Our Lady of Fatima schools.</p> <p>Ms. Lemak Comment: In having two single-track schools some students would gain air conditioning and some would lose air conditioning.</p>
8:20 p.m.	<p>The BRC has requested the following information for the next meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our Lady of Fatima English enrolment projections by grade • Immersion enrolment projections by grade • Projected enrolment by program • Sample school organizations for English and French Immersion single-track schools for 2012 • Current transportation data • Information on the experiences transitioning to single-track French Immersion at Gregory A. Hogan

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8:20 p.m.	<p>Questions from audience</p> <p>Name: Deb Buchannan Relation to the Process: English program parent at Monsignor Uyen & School Secretary, Monsignor Uyen Question #1: Should the Board be doing one big change now involving all the schools on this side of the river in Chatham? Can it be guaranteed that the JK students who would be moving would not be affected by any future boundary review or accommodation review?</p> <p>Mrs. Crawford Answer: We are not doing an accommodation review in the City of Chatham at this time.</p> <p>Question #2: In the event that the two schools are changed to single-track schools would it be possible for the students in grades 6, 7, and 8 to remain in their current school rather than having to transition to a new elementary school and then into secondary school within 2 years? Also, would it be possible to begin a program similar to Lancer Links at OLF to also assist in the transition process?</p> <p>Answer: Yes, we have discussed transitioning students in the older grades. That is something we can look at.</p> <p>Name: Sue O'Hara Relation to the Process: 2 children at Monsignor Uyen and 1 child at Our Lady of Fatima Question: With proposition of single-track schools can we also look at St. Vincent and St. Agnes schools and their capacity?</p> <p>As a French Immersion parent I think it would be great to have all my children in one school. I think as a Board it will make us more competitive as we would have something special to offer, having everyone in one school JK to Grade 8. Ecole Ste. Marie, the French elementary school only goes to grade 6, so this change could benefit our schools.</p> <p>Paul Wubben, Director of Education Answer: It is not our practice to take students from one school to solve problems at another school. We deliberately chose to leave St. Vincent and St. Agnes out of the equation; the problem really is an English program and French Immersion program issue. Secondly, I would suggest that the committee will need to discuss some of the following issues – program, transportation, special education needs, roll out and full day Kindergarten. The public board has also gone to single-track French Immersion school in Petrolia and it will be looked at for the</p>

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	<p>Sarnia-Lambton and Chatham-Kent areas as well, so we will be competing with them for single-track schools.</p> <p>Name: Amy Dumoulin-Jeromel Relation to the Process: 2 children at Our Lady of Fatima and 1 child at Monsignor Uyen Question: What would happen to French and English resources i.e., libraries and books in both languages if schools go to single-track schools?</p> <p>Mrs. Crawford Answer: Resource requirements would be decided by Curriculum Services and the school principals. Both schools would have the resources to run viable schools.</p>
8:50 p.m.	<p>Adjournment</p> <p>Future BRC Meeting Dates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Tuesday, January 10, 2012 – Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School, Chatham</i> • Tuesday, February 14, 2012 – Monsignor Uyen Catholic School, Chatham • Tuesday, March 20, 2012 – Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School, Chatham