



REPORT TO BOARD OF TRUSTEES June 16, 2009

Paul Wubben, Director of Education

SUBJECT: Accommodation Review Committee – Sarnia-Lambton Catholic Secondary Schools

PREPARED BY: Ann Sutton, Superintendent of Education

BACKGROUND:

On June 10, 2008 the St. Clair Catholic District School Board approved the establishment of an Accommodation Review Committee (ARC) for the Catholic secondary schools in the city of Sarnia.

The members of the ARC as follows:

Chair:

Ms. Ann Sutton, Superintendent of Education

Voting Members:

Ms. Maureen Beauregard, St. Patrick's Catholic High School
Ms. Elaine Hayter, St. Patrick's Catholic High School
Ms. Jane Spanton, St. Patrick's Catholic High School
Ms. Janet Chynces, St. Christopher Catholic Secondary School
Ms. Caroline Brant, St. Christopher Catholic Secondary School
Ms. Candice Etienne, St. Christopher Catholic Secondary School
Reverend Matthew Bedard, Associate Pastor, St. Benedict Parish
Mr. Robert Kardas, Associate Dean School of Business & Sports Administration School of Liberal Studies, Lambton College

Non Voting Members:

Mr. Jack Evers, Prime Minister, St. Christopher Catholic Secondary School
Mr. Cian Poore, Prime Minister, St. Patrick's Catholic High School

Resource:

Ms. Bernadette Gray, Principal, St. Patrick's Catholic High School
Mr. Brendan Deery, Principal, St. Christopher Catholic Secondary School
Mr. Fred Galloway, F.J. Galloway Associates

The ARC met on five occasions with the following topics for discussion:

November 18, 2008 at St. Patrick's Catholic High School – Understanding the Problem
January 20, 2009 at St. Christopher Catholic Secondary School – Discussing the Options
March 10, 2009 at St. Patrick's Catholic High School – Making the Decisions
May 5, 2009 at St. Christopher Catholic Secondary School – Forming Consensus
May 19, 2009 at St. Patrick's Catholic High School – Confirming the Recommendation

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STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

An examination of the Catholic secondary schools in Sarnia, St. Patrick's Catholic High School and St. Christopher Catholic Secondary School indicates that in aggregate, enrolment has declined. As outlined in Policy 7.4 – *Student Accommodation and Boundary Review*, a review is recommended because the schools will experience program changes because of declining enrolment. Consolidation of the school or schools is in the best interest of the overall system.

SUMMARY OF KEY INFORMATION:

- The On the Ground Capacity (OTG – a ministry measure of the occupancy of a school building) of the two secondary schools in Sarnia for the 2008-09 school year is 82.7% for St. Patrick's Catholic High School and 89.5% for St. Christopher Catholic Secondary School. In 2013, the OTG capacity is projected to be 60.4% for St. Patrick's and 75.1% for St. Christopher.
- The current year enrolments of the two secondary schools in Sarnia are 840.8 FTE for St. Patrick's Catholic High School and 799.97 FTE for St. Christopher Catholic Secondary School. In 2013 the projected enrolments are 475 FTE for St. Patrick's and 807 FTE for St. Christopher.
- St. Patrick's Catholic High School was established in 1935. In 1984, St. Patrick's was moved to its current location.
- St. Christopher Catholic Secondary School was opened on its current site in 1996.
- In 1996 the combined Catholic secondary school enrolment in Sarnia-Lambton was 2,118 students. Currently there are 1,699 students attending a Catholic secondary school in Sarnia-Lambton, with a steady decline projected.
- As enrolments are declining program constraints are emerging. As the decline continues, course offerings will become more limited. Particular difficulties are predicted in optional courses and the technologies.
- The expansion of technology programs has been identified as a need for Catholic secondary students in Sarnia-Lambton.
- The PEOPEL Program is not tied to any site. It could be offered at either secondary school.

Further information can be found in the various reports and meeting notes for the five meetings.

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SCHOOL VALUATION:

The ARC toured St. Patrick’s Catholic High School on November 18, 2008 and St. Christopher Catholic Secondary School on January 20, 2009. During the tours, the members used the School Valuation Instrument to make an assessment of each of the schools.

At the ARC meeting of March 10, 2009, the ARC confirmed the following values for each school:

Valuation Category	Points	St. Patrick's	St. Christopher
Value to the Students	45	38	43
Value to the Board	25	16	23
Value to the Community	20	19	17
Value to the Local Economy	10	9	9
Total	100	82	92

The comparison of the two schools using the instrument showed a higher value attributed to St. Christopher Catholic Secondary School.

CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVES:

The ARC considered the following alternatives:

- Consolidation at St. Patrick’s Catholic High School site
- Consolidation at St. Christopher Catholic Secondary School site
- Sustain current two schools with upgrades
- Develop a smaller school facility on the St. Patrick’s site; sustain St. Christopher site
- Build a new smaller St. Patrick’s on a new site in South Sarnia; sustain St. Christopher site
- One School at St. Christopher site with a satellite campus

The ARC concluded that consolidation at the St. Christopher Catholic Secondary School site was the best alternative.

SUMMARY:

The ARC recommends that the two school communities of St. Christopher Catholic Secondary School and St. Patrick’s Catholic High School be consolidated at the current site of St. Christopher Catholic Secondary School.

IMPLEMENTATION SUGGESTIONS:

The ARC asks that due consideration be given to the following matters, as part of the implementation of the consolidation of schools:

- Sustain the PEOPEL Program
- Expansion of technology programs
- Name of school on the St. Christopher site will require careful consideration
- Utilization of the St. Patrick’s track

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- Upgrading of the St. Christopher track
- Consideration of St. Patrick’s Catholic High School traditions and legacy
- Ride times to and from school be as short as possible
- Consideration of grandfathering of both school uniforms
- New school should provide unique curriculum offerings, which would attract students
- Public relations and marketing should showcase Catholic education and attract students

RECOMMENDATION:

That the St. Clair Catholic District School Board consolidate the two secondary school communities of St. Christopher and St. Patrick’s at the St. Christopher site; that construction be undertaken at the St. Christopher site to accommodate the consolidated school population; that upon completion of construction at the St. Christopher site, the current St. Patrick’s site at 281 East Street N., shall be closed and the building and land disposed of as per Board policy and Ministry of Education guidelines. This recommendation is contingent on funding.

Boundaries will remain in place as they currently exist as will transportation. At the time of consolidation, Lambton County will constitute the catchment area for the new consolidated school at the Rapids Parkway site.

That the St. Clair Catholic District School Board instruct the Director of Education to appoint a committee of representative stakeholders for the purpose of making recommendations with respect to the naming of the new consolidated school, to guide consolidation through a thorough review of the implementation suggestions and to determine ways in which to protect the legacy of the consolidated school and pre-existing school(s).

RECOMMENDATION:

That the St. Clair Catholic District School Board receive the report: *Accommodation Review Committee – Sarnia-Lambton Catholic Secondary Schools* for information.