



ST. CLAIR CATHOLIC
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
Lighting the Way ~ Rejoicing in Our Journey

MEDIA RELEASE: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TRUSTEES APPROVE RECOMMENDATIONS OF SOUTH SARNIA ACCOMMODATION REVIEW COMMITTEE

Trustees for the St. Clair Catholic District School Board have approved recommendations from an Accommodation Review Committee (ARC), which propose the closure of four south Sarnia elementary schools, to be replaced with the construction of two new ones.

“I am delighted that the accommodation review process has produced a result which is supported both by our school communities and our board,” says Paul Wubben, Director of Education.

“Tonight’s recommendation and subsequent support for it from our trustees is a tremendous affirmation that our consultation process is an effective way to address the on-going problem of declining student numbers,” says Anita Labadie, Chair of the Board.

The recommendation, which was passed by the Board of Trustees tonight, calls for St. Benedict, St. Margaret, St. Peter and St. Therese Catholic Schools to be closed effective September 2010 and for the four school communities to be consolidated into two new schools to be built on the St. Benedict and St. Therese sites.

New boundaries have also been defined as part of the accommodation review process.

All four south Sarnia Catholic elementary schools are under-capacity according to the Ministry of Education On the Ground Capacity rating. By 2012, fully one half of the pupil places are projected to be empty among the four school communities. The On the Ground Capacity (OTG – a ministry measure of the occupancy of a school building) of the four south Sarnia schools as of September 2007 was below the 80% funding threshold set by the Ministry of Education. In September enrolment was 79.3% for St. Benedict; 48.4% for St. Margaret; 57.8% for St. Peter and 66.7% for St. Therese.

By 2012, the OTG will decline even further to 56.5% for St. Benedict; 41.0% for St. Margaret; 53.7% for St. Peter and 49.2% for St. Therese. In 1999, there were six schools in south Sarnia with a combined enrolment of 1,525.0 FTE. Combined enrolment in the four schools that remain, is currently at 942 FTE, with 20 vacant classrooms among the four schools.

The motion by the Board of Trustees to approve the recommendation now requires the support of the Ministry of Education.