

ARC MEETING NOTES

Tuesday, March 4, 2008
St. Margaret Catholic School, Sarnia

Chair: Philip McMillan, Superintendent of Education

Recording Secretaries: Tina Smith & Cathy Calvert

TIME	ITEM
3:30 to 7:00 p.m.	Accommodation Review Committee (ARC) members toured the schools: St. Margaret, St. Therese, St. Benedict and St. Peter.
7:00 p.m.	<p>Opening Prayer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Philip McMillan opened the meeting with prayer.
7:05 p.m.	<p>Welcome/Opening Remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Philip McMillan, Superintendent of Education introduced himself as Chair and thanked everyone for attending. ▪ Philip McMillan asked the members of the ARC to introduce themselves. ▪ The Chair introduced attending Trustees and Board staff. ▪ A brief overview was given regarding the issue of excess capacity in the four school communities.
7:10 p.m.	<p>Rules of Order</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An Agenda for each meeting will be followed and will be used for order in the meeting. ▪ The Chair's role is to ensure that the agenda is followed, Rules of Order are met and for clarification of any points. ▪ The role of the ARC is to consider the evidence and to suggest ways in which the problem should be dealt with. ▪ All meetings, deliberations and decisions by the ARC will be done in public. ▪ All meeting notes will be posted on the board website. This is the second of five meetings. ▪ The final decision rests with the elected Trustees of the Board who will consider the recommendations of the ARC and any recommendations from the Director of Education at the June Board meetings. ▪ All meetings will be public. It is a prerequisite of the appeal process that those wishing to appeal must demonstrate that they have attended meetings; therefore, attendance is being recorded. <p>Attendance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All attendees were asked to register their attendance at the beginning of each meeting. <p>Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Only adults (voting age) will be permitted to address the ARC or ask questions. ▪ Microphones are available to those who wish to ask questions at appropriate times during the meeting. ▪ For the benefit of the audience and those taking notes please state your name and your relationship to the process. ▪ The Chair will determine the order of questions. ▪ A maximum of one hour will be devoted to the question period. If questions remain at the conclusion of the

ARC MEETING NOTES

Tuesday, March 4, 2008
St. Margaret Catholic School, Sarnia

	<p>meeting, the Chair will close the meeting and invite those with questions to submit their question(s) in writing. The questions will be answered at the next ARC meeting and may be posted on the website.</p> <p>Notes of the meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Notes will be taken by two recording secretaries and will be placed on the web shortly after the meeting. These are not minutes. <p>Protocols</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All ARC meetings will be held in public, at least one meeting in each of the schools involved in the process. ▪ Of the five Sarnia meetings one will be held in each school involved in the ARC process with the last meeting being held at St. Patrick’s Catholic High School. ▪ The meeting falls under the direction of the Chair and the Chair will 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.
	<p>Presentation of the February 5, 2008 notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The notes of the February 5, 2008 meeting were presented by the Chair. ▪ These are posted on the board website. ▪ The ARC members requested broader EQAO data and that data has been provided in the ARC packages tonight. <p>Questions arising from the previous meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Questions and answers from the first ARC meeting are included in the ARC package for tonight and are posted on our Board website. <p>Review of the issue for which the Board has charged the ARC to make recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Problem of excess pupil places in Sarnia schools. ▪ Declining enrolment is a factor/concern. ▪ Ministry of Education guidelines and Board policy relative to the accommodation review process were reviewed. ▪ Each individual school site was reviewed with respect to the current and predicted (2012/2013) enrolment and capacity.
7:33 p.m.	<p>Considering the Possibilities/Options:</p> <p>Discussion and questions among the members of the ARC with respect to the possible options</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Philip suggested that the options should be charted to help ARC members consider the possible benefits and drawbacks.

ARC MEETING NOTES

Tuesday, March 4, 2008
St. Margaret Catholic School, Sarnia

Identification of the options to be examined:

Option #1 – Not closing any schools – 4 schools open, none closed

Positives	Negatives
No dislocation of students or staff	Possibility of all split grades, including triple grades
No change of boundaries	Cost of support staff in under utilized schools
No increase in transportation	Loss of 4.2 million to the board – the government stipulated that at least one school was to be closed
Community schools	Loss of funding due to enrollment falling below 80% utilization
Communities remain intact	Ongoing cost of aging facilities – while the funding provided is not even close to being what is required
	All schools and students in the board carry the cost
	Fewer resources

Option #2 – Closing 4 schools and building one new school

Positives	Negatives
Would allow access to 4.2 million	870 students in an elementary school in 2008 by 2013 into the 700's
New school – barrier free	Sense of community lost
No one school community is disadvantaged more than another	The school would eventually decline and classes would be empty or portapacs would have to be part of the solution
All one boundary	Transportation costs would go up
No threat of future change to boundaries or school closures in 2013 or the foreseeable future	Going from four principals to one principal
Advantages to program, fewer split grades, more admin., more support for students (efficiencies of being in one building), more diverse programs available i.e. arts, intramurals etc.	Less access to organized co-curricular activities
Child care built in, air conditioned etc.	
Create their own individual culture – everyone new	
Possible return of pupils who have left the Catholic	

ARC MEETING NOTES

Tuesday, March 4, 2008
St. Margaret Catholic School, Sarnia

system may now return to a brand new school	
Regular and consistent support staff – child and youth workers, social workers etc. in one school	
Possible transition of students between different classes of the same grade.	
Use of school as a community school and use of facility as a community facility.	

Option #3 – 3 schools open – 1 school closed

Positives	Negatives
Would allow access to 4.2 million	Disruption to the school community
Three schools would stay open	Increased transportation costs
Reduces the impact of program issues i.e. split and triple grades, supervision, allows for some economies with itinerant staff	Would require more change in five years, boundaries and family dislocation
Depending on the school chosen may reduce excess capacity and bring the OTG at remaining schools closer to 80% for Sept. 2008	Closure of a school
	Loss of population – students leave our system when we close a school.

Option #4 – 2 schools open – 2 schools closed

Positives	Negatives
Would allow access to 4.2 million	Initial disruption of families
Meet 80% utilization target	Closure of two schools
Minimize future disruption	Disruption to the community
Either new school, or two retrofitted schools would reduced maintenance in future	Less access of community to gyms, green space etc.
Program advantages of larger schools to the student	Increased transportation costs
	Loss of students to our system
	Retrofit is costly and may not be as effective as new construction
	Loss of some support staff i.e. Principal and

ARC MEETING NOTES

Tuesday, March 4, 2008
St. Margaret Catholic School, Sarnia

	Secretarial
	Possibility of having to do this process again in 10 years

Option #5 – 3 schools closed – 1 school open, but new

Positives	Negatives
<i>Very much like Option #4</i>	

Of the scenarios discussed #1, 2, 3, 4 & 5 which ones do the ARC want to discuss?

The ARC members decided that:

Option #1 did not seem to be a good option, and consensus was reached that it is not an option to consider. If one of the other options is considered then we will have 4.2 million available to use.

Option #3 is only a short term option and not viable, consensus reached that this is not an option, but may be used as a transition plan to Option #2.

Option #2 and Option #4 were selected by the ARC members as the two that they would like to explore further and receive more information about. Further discussion will take place at the next meeting.

The ARC does not want to have a new school built on a new site which is not in south Sarnia.

- **Question:** If we consolidate schools will that give access to more programs i.e., music, instruments and resources?
- **Answer:** Yes, there would be more opportunities to increase programs and extra-curricular activities.
- **Question:** What size would a school need to be to accommodate all the students in one school?
- **Answer:** St. Christopher is about the size of school that we are talking about, in terms of student numbers.
- **Question:** Is it possible to build the school to meet the needs of the students i.e. divisions could be separated?
- **Answer:** That could be looked at during the planning stage.

ARC MEETING NOTES

Tuesday, March 4, 2008
St. Margaret Catholic School, Sarnia

- **Question:** Would any one of our current school sites accommodate a new school of this size?
- **Answer:** Yes, there is a site, which is large enough to accommodate the new larger school. Information with more detail as to which site(s) are possible to accommodate this will be available at the 3rd ARC meeting.

- **Question:** If building a new school on an existing site how will students be split up during the building year?
- **Answer:** That will depend on whether the new school will be built on a new site or on an existing site.

- **Question:** How can the board determine if there is a new site available for a new school in one month?
- **Answer:** That will need to be looked into by board staff.

- **Question:** Has the city set aside a site for a new school within this community?
- **Answer:** The board will have to look into this.

- **Question:** What will this school community look like for the next 25 years and not just to 2012? How far can we predict ahead and what will this look like in 10-15 years?
- **Answer:** The board's population prediction goes 10 to 15 years ahead.

- **Question:** Can a cost analysis of Options 2 and 4 be available by next meeting?
- **Answer:** Yes, as well as a cost analysis of a combination of Option 2 and 3 will be available for our next meeting.

- **Question:** If we are looking at keeping St. Benedict's open, what will the cost be to retrofit the school to bring the facility up to standard?
- **Answer:** The 4.2 million will not cover the cost to retrofit St. Benedict's to bring the facility up to standards. All existing facilities will require money to be spent on them as well to keep them open and that will require millions of dollars to be spent over the next 5 years. Money will need to be put into all the schools for retrofitting that are chosen to stay open.

- **Question:** If we go with Option 4 is it possible to make one school a junior school and one school an intermediate school?
- **Answer:** That is something, which could be looked at.

- **Question:** When we close and sell a site can that money can be used for building new school?
- **Answer:** Yes.

- **Question:** If we close a school and build a new school on that site would we have to relocate students while the new school is being constructed?

ARC MEETING NOTES

Tuesday, March 4, 2008
St. Margaret Catholic School, Sarnia

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Answer: That will have to be looked into depending on the existing site chosen. ▪ Question: How long would it take to build a new school? ▪ Answer: A one-year timeframe would be likely. ▪ Question: How would a new school be financed? ▪ Answer: The 4.2 million would be available, in addition to capital funds and projected savings from the closure of existing facilities. Financing would also be required.
8:40 p.m.	<p>Presentation of the agenda – April 1, 2008 – St. Benedict Catholic School</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The meeting will focus on working towards a recommendation.
8:45 p.m.	<p>Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Please allow ten working days for all questions/answers to be posted. <p>The Chair thanked everyone for his or her respectful participation and closed the meeting with prayer.</p> <p>The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 p.m.</p>
	<p>Future ARC Meeting Dates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Tuesday, April 1, 2008 – St. Benedict School</i> • Tuesday, April 29, 2008 – St. Peter Catholic School • Tuesday, May 20, 2008 – St. Patrick’s Catholic High School
	<p>Future Board Meeting Dates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuesday, June 10, 2008 – 6:00 p.m. • Tuesday, June 17, 2008 – 6:00 p.m. • Tuesday, June 24, 2008 – 7:00 p.m.