

# Minutes/Notes from PARC Meeting #5

## Burlington Secondary Schools Program and Accommodation Review

March 21, 2017

J.W. Singleton Education Centre - 2050 Guelph Line, Burlington, ON  
Board Room - 7:00 PM

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Present: Scott Podrebarac (Chair), Donna Danielli (Trustee), Eric Szyiko (Parent Rep, ALD), Steve Cussons (Parent Rep, ALD), Marianne Meed Ward (Parent Rep, BCH), Ian Farwell (Parent Rep, BCH), Matthew Hall (Parent Rep, DFH), Tricia Hammill (Parent Rep, DFH), Cheryl De Lugt (Parent Rep, LBP), Marie Madenzides (Parent Rep, MMR), Dianna Bower (Parent Rep, MMR), Rebecca Collier (Parent Rep, NEL), Kate Nazar (Parent Rep, NEL), Lisa Bull (Parent Rep, RBH), Sharon Picken (Parent Rep, RBH), Luisa Botelho (Vice-Principal, ALD), Kelli Pfeiffer (Principal, BCH), Nick Varricchio (Principal, DFH), Loraine Fedurco (Principal, LBP), Andrea Taylor (Principal, MMR), Karen Hartman (Principal, NEL), Mark Duley (Principal, RBH), James Ridge (City Manager), Domenico Renzella (General Manager of Planning), Michelle D'Aguiar (Senior Planner), Dhilan Gunasekara (Planner), Kirk Perris (Ipsos), Adriana Tari (Ipsos).

Absent: Steve Armstrong (Parent Rep, LBP).

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### Introduction

Chair welcomes back PARC members and runs through agenda. Format will be a round table discussion. Topics #4 and #5 will be blended. Possibility of an additional PARC meeting may be discussed at Board Meeting tonight.

Gallery and PARC norms discussed.

### Ipsos Quantitative Data from Online Survey

#### [Online Feedback Survey \(Topline Results\)](#)

Ipsos provided a summary of the quantitative data. Qualitative data to be presented in a fulsome report to be available before Thursday's PARC Working Meeting. 1611 surveys completed, average complete time was 21 minutes. Note that the option-specific close ended questions were based on the PARC Framework.

Concern about repetitive survey submissions from community noted and reviewed. Frequency of responses from same IP address was presented. Most are likely to be from computers used during the public meeting at Hayden and New Street as well as within schools. There were 105 frequencies of using the same IP address twice, and significantly smaller frequencies of survey submissions coming from the same IP address more than twice. Ipsos noted that from a

researcher point of view, these results are acceptable, and suggests that there was no tampering of survey submissions.

Detailed quantitative findings by option were presented. It was reminded that the survey was an additional, but important resource to provide feedback to the Director. The ensuing qualitative data would provide more information to this survey exercise.

### **New Information**

Cohort analysis was presented. Cohort analysis was previously presented as a part of the Options, however, the information presented at the meeting was a different format to show the same information.

Transportation analysis was presented. Discussion ensued regarding bus driver shortage. Chair noted that any transition plan would require examination of bussing and discussions with Halton Student Transportation Services (HSTS).

### **Programming Implications**

Sharing administrative space currently housed at JW Singleton and New Street, as well as Gary Allan HS was discussed. Noted that Gary Allan HS does not offer traditional high school programming. It was also noted that this would not address programming challenges at schools.

A PARC Rep brought up a letter from 2009 regarding the use of future proceeds from sale of sites for the construction of Hayden (not verified by the Board). General Manager of Planning explained that the letter was regarding a previous provincial funding model (New Pupil Places), which is not applicable, as that funding model is no longer in use. The Manager noted Hayden is paid in full through provincial funding.

Course selection sheets from a selection of small and large schools from Halton were distributed to PARC members to highlight the current timetabling and programming challenges faced by secondary students.

Factors that impact programming were further discussed, and summarized under the following bullet points:

- Larger schools are able to offer a diversity of courses.
- In smaller schools, some courses can only be offered outside of the school, such as online courses. This may not be an issue for some students, but should not be the only choice for students, given the value of face-to-face instruction.
- Schools where enrolment has decreased has seen more courses being offered online.
- Chair noted that the Board is increasing its online course offerings.
- “Sectioning”, which is the number of classes a school can have, was discussed. Schools with higher enrolment are assigned more sections. It is common for some courses to be combined to balance student numbers, such as when students from a Gr11 and Gr12 course being in the same class.

- Personal experiences regarding online courses as well as small vs. large schools were discussed.

### **Community Feedback: Refining the Options**

A roundtable discussion was held where each PARC member presented their view of each option. Based on the sample course selection sheets distributed, timetable and programming was a major focus of this discussion. The premise of discussion was on the student experience/perspective from students on the outstanding options.

#### General comments

- Some members felt that if a one school closure option were selected, then it will likely be in south of the QEW as the south has a high number of empty pupil places.
- Some members preferred two school closures as being the best solution to address long-term viability.
- Possibility of regional and/or anchor/magnet programs discussed to fill current empty pupil places. Some raised the issue that it might not be enough to fill all 1800 empty pupil places.
- All changes through this PARC will change the DNA of every single school in Burlington; boundary changes can affect communities as much as school closures.
- The notion that larger schools would mean more programming was questioned.
- Some preferred having a few French Immersion (FI) schools with high enrolment (consolidated to three high schools), while others felt that more schools should offer FI (currently five high schools).
- Transition planning will be a major component of any implementation.
- Long term impact should also be considered, beyond the current cohorts.

#### Option 3c

- MMR English program enrolment does not increase under this option, as only FI enrolment increases.
- Low enrolment at Pearson will not address programming issues.
- Does little to address low enrolment at Aldershot.
- Utilization at Hayden addressed.
- Strong preference for current students to remain at Hayden, even with portables. Hayden students may chose to attend Catholic schools, if boundaries changed.
- Nelson offers great academic and wellness programs currently, including the availability of Nelson Stadium.
- Well established Gifted program at Nelson. Gifted program should not be moved to a smaller school.
- Parents have chosen to move to John T. Tuck and Pineland catchments in hope of attending Nelson HS
- High utilization at all remaining schools under this option a concern as it does not leave room for growth.
- Close proximity of Nelson and Bateman would not result in increased bussing, which is less than other options.

- FI at three schools was a concern to some (see General comments above).

#### Option 4b

- Gifted and IB programs should not be at a smaller school as it decreases course options.
- Does not fully address issues at Hayden
- Does not address low utilization at MMR.
- Pearson utilization is high, although the availability of FI at Hayden was a benefit.
- Minimal impact on cohorts.
- Timing for new facilities construction is a concern as the current timing would not ensure that facilities may be ready for Sept., 2018. Suggestion of delayed implementation repeatedly mentioned.
- Benefit of purpose-built space for SC-SPED students.
- SC-SPED students at Bateman are currently integrated as a part of the school community, not in a separate “wing”, concern of integration to rest of the school community.
- While Nelson and Bateman are in close proximity, they serve very different communities, e.g., SC-SPED, IB.
- Noted that under any option Food Services and Essential program are tied together and must be at the same school.
- The relocation of the industrial kitchen, Life Skills kitchen, auto body paint booth, PSW, hairstyle currently at Bateman not discussed, as well as the potential costs of such a relocation.
- Proximity of schools addressed. However, concern that small walking distance would not translate well for SC-SPED students, as smaller distances may feel larger for them. Less bussing.
- Some SC-SPED students already under seven year transition to MMR, which may explain high number of students from north of the QEW.
- Bateman currently allows SC-SPED students to move through every single pathway at the school.
- Transitions for SC-SPED/Essential students will be difficult. It was noted that students in these programs have already gone through a multiple transitions during elementary school before arriving at secondary school.
- Long term viability of enrolment and utilization a concern under this option, as opposed to 3c.
- Chance that IB recognition at a new school may be denied, or not implemented in time to ensure smooth transition.
- Suggested tweaks: Gifted (to MMR) and IB programs (to Central). These programs should not be offered at a smaller school (see first bullet point under this option).

#### Option 7b

- Potential for innovative programming to fill space to be further explored by PARC. Noted that generally most students from anchor/magnet programs are likely to be local.
- Virtual learning.

- New community uses could be explored, but would not address programming issues.
- Hayden enrolment challenges addressed.
- Bateman and MMR have low utilization.
- Does not address Aldershot enrolment/programming issues.
- Any changes under this option would not address overall utilization and empty pupil places.
- This option does not solve equity of access to programming across schools.
- Three cohort split for Hayden will result in students switching programs or boards.
- Suggestion that no change be made now and review again in 3-5 years to see growth from younger families.
- Find money for more programming while keeping empty pupil places.
- Option of combining programs with Catholic board.
- Decommission wings to eliminate space, but does not address programming challenges.

Option 19b, 28c

To be discussed at Thursday's meeting.

Option 23d

To be discussed at Thursday's meeting.

Further discussions to take place at the next working meeting scheduled for Thursday, March 23, 2017.

**Meeting adjourned at 10:00 pm.**