

Minutes/Notes from PARC Meeting #6

Burlington Secondary Schools Program and Accommodation Review

March 23, 2017

J.W. Singleton Education Centre - 2050 Guelph Line, Burlington, ON

Board Room - 7:00 PM

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), 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), Domenico Renzella (General Manager of Planning), Michelle D'Aguiar (Senior Planner), Dhilan Gunasekara (Planner), Kirk Perris (Ipsos), David Boag (Associate Director).

Absent: Dianna Bower (Parent Rep, MMR) [Comments sent by email prior to meeting, and included in notes], Steve Armstrong (Parent Rep, LBP), James Ridge (City Manager), Adriana Tari (Ipsos).

Introduction

Meeting opens with Trustee providing clarification to comments made at the last working meeting regarding the letter to fund Hayden from 2009. Noted that the Board did pass motion at the time to fund Hayden using funds from sale of sites, however the Ministry policies regarding the funding of schools changed afterwards. In addition, the General Brock site was not sold at the time.

Chair welcomes back PARC members and runs through agenda.

Revised Timelines

Chair discusses revised timelines. Trustee explains that the Director's Report would first go to the Committee of the Whole, for preliminary review by Trustees. Revisions can then be made before the report goes for "information", at which point further discussions are held. Based on the new timelines, the report would go for a decision at the June 7, 2017 Board meeting. Chair noted that the revised timeline would allow for the Board to discuss options before producing the Director's Final Report.

Chair mentioned that an additional meeting could be added on Monday, March 27. Discussion ensued regarding the need to further discuss innovative solutions to the challenges currently faced by the Board. Several PARC members noted that innovation should focus on addressing programming challenges, as opposed to solely revenue generation through shared space.

Exploring the Student Experience

Chair briefly introduces programming challenges faced by the Board, following which a discussion took place regarding the two sets of two school closure options. Chair noted that focus of discussion should be programming and student experience.

Note, plenary discussion regarding no school closure and one school closure options took place at the last PARC working meeting. Meeting notes are available on the Board website under Program and Accommodation Review Committee (PARC).

General comments

- Some PARC members expressed concern that two school closures would have a significant impact on current secondary students as there would be significant shifts in students.
- Some PARC members noted that they would like to see no school closures north of the QEW (i.e. LB Pearson) as future growth will be north of the QEW.
- 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).
- Concern of “mega-schools”. Chair noted that regardless of which option is chosen, the Board would continue to have schools of different types, sizes and models of program delivery.
- Loss of current community partnership at Pearson (Pearson Nursery) under both options discussed.
- Current unique teaching style used at Hayden is also used by elementary feeder schools. Students may have difficulty adjusting to a new teaching style at other secondary schools. Some noted that the Board could look at implementing Hayden’s teaching style at other schools.
- Concern that Hayden English and FI communities would be split and popularity of school would result in many students switching from FI to English to remain at school. Concern of stable long term boundaries and balance of enrolment if students switch programs or school boards.
- Chair and Board staff noted that FI and Extended French are separate streams and cannot be combined.
- Need to think of what is best for not only current students at the schools, but also students that will enter secondary schools in the long-term.
- Issue of disrupting current high school students a concern. Transition planning will be an important process under any option.

Option 23d

- Chair noted that as this option sees the closure of Bateman, comments regarding the delay in implementation discussed for Option 4c, would also be applied to this option.
- Cohorts at Bateman would remain together.
- Aldershot enrolment remains low, programming not improved.

- MMR numbers are high.
- Nelson exceeds total capacity. Concern that additional capacity beyond SPED addition may be required.
- General concern that shortage of 411 pupil places through this option results in a significant loss of pupil places. Concern of space for future growth. Chair noted that secondary schools have flexibility to house additional students within existing instructional spaces without the addition of portables due to timetabling.
- High number of cohort splits.
- Movement of SC-SPED students and diverse, specialized programming from Bateman a concern, as these students have high transition issues, and have attended as much as 5 elementary schools before attending Bateman. Some PARC members noted that specialized programs have moved in the past and can be moved.
- Community Pathways students (SC-SPED) currently integrated into Bateman school community, as opposed to being in a new “wing”. Chair noted that any addition would be designed to be inclusive.
- Community partnership with Centennial Pool would be lost. City could look at partnerships at Bateman site if school is closed.
- Some PARC members acknowledged there was no guarantee that IB program could be relocated due to timing and approvals. Chair noted that generally IB program could be relocated.
- Not fiscally responsible to build an addition to Nelson when significant facility improvements have already taken place and specialized facilities are available at Bateman.
- Not fiscally responsible to close a school that has the lowest AODA costs. Nelson current has the second lowest AODA costs. Conversely, Bateman has the highest five year renewal costs, which is significant, even if lower AODA costs are considered.
- Grandfathering mentioned. Noted that grandfathering students in the 7 year SC-SPED program may be difficult.
- Suggestions:
 - Increase Aldershot enrolment through boundary changes in the south between Central/Nelson or relocation of specialized programs such as IB.
 - Tecumseh portion that feeds into Nelson would prefer to remain at Nelson.
 - Keep Pearson open.
 - Rural Burlington (Kilbride PS) should go to MMR for both Eng and FI.
 - ESL hub should remain closest to where students live.

Option 19b, 28c

- Generally, PARC members preferred option 28c over 19b. General agreement that 19b be removed. Noted that some prefer more FI schools (rather than consolidating them to 3 FI schools).
- CPP (SC-SPED) students currently integrated into Bateman school community, as opposed to being in a new “wing”. Chair noted that any addition would be designed to be inclusive.

- Good utilization rates across schools and City overall. Some noted that utilization is high, and may not provide space for future growth.
- Based on current numbers, Hayden overutilization addressed. Noted that Hayden utilization is lower under 28c than 23d.
- Wide range of programs could be available to all students across Burlington, expect number of course conflicts to decrease.
- Some Central students would go to a smaller school at Aldershot, which would mean some students get fewer program choices.
- Nelson and Bateman are in close proximity but serve very different communities.
- Program viability addressed.
- Less programming relocation than other two closure option 23d. 28c allows Pineland single-track FI students to remain as one cohort to Nelson. Specialized programs (CPP) do not relocate.
- Minimal use of portables, as noted that the school can accommodate up to 15% more students within the school building due to timetabling. Students could be accommodated in permanent facility.
- Under two closure remaining options, reduction of pupil places in 19b/28c much less significant, with 42 available pupil places in 2020, than 411 pupil place shortage in 23d.
- Currently shared activities already take place between Aldershot/Central and MMR/Pearson.
- Balance of enrolment across schools.
- Empty space in Aldershot elementary could be more efficiently used by the secondary school. Others noted that Aldershot is over capacity and actual availability of elementary space.
- Benefit of having a Gr.7-12 school facility. Suggestion that approximately 1000 overutilized spaces at elementary level could be moved to secondary schools. *(Clarification: Some elementary schools are currently over utilized, while others are underutilized. According to the 2015-2016 LTAP, overall Burlington will have approx. 2027 empty pupil places at the elementary level by 2020).*
- Approx. 600 additional students will require transportation, which adds air pollution emitted from buses. In addition, current bus driver shortage was raised ([Response in FAQ](#)).
- High number of cohorts and the most number of students will be directly impacted by this options, either through closure or program/boundary change.
- Walkability decreased, and surrounding health concerns.
- Geography not balanced.
- Elementary PAR will be triggered.
- Fiscally responsible to close a school with high AODA costs. Conversely, cost of transportation will be high over the long-term.
- Fiscally responsible to maintain investments already made at Bateman, and not build a new addition at Nelson as in 23d.
- Suggestions:
 - Bateman boundary very close to Nelson, so students with a very short walk to Nelson now have to travel longer to Bateman (return to Appleby Line). Chair

noted that this revision was examined as requested by the PARC rep earlier, however it would result in Nelson utilization increasing from 96% to 108% and Bateman decreasing from 83% to 71% by 2018.

- Rep request info if boundary moved to Brant. Planning to follow.
- Option 3b similar in solving utilization and programming challenges but reduces cohorts impacts.
- Tecumseh triangle to Nelson.

IPSOS Report

Ipsos discusses survey results. Noted that removing bias in a given option could be examined and that this will be provided in the next and final draft of the survey report next week. Also noted that some respondents may have selected more than 1 option for classifier questions (i.e. school affiliation and respondent type), hence the greater sum of respondents than 1,611. Verbatim quotes connects individuals with their true feelings and provides valuable results from the survey. Noted that codes determined by Ipsos team associated with PARC framework (Kirk Perris).

Final Feedback

No objections were raised to removing Option 19b. Noted however that Hayden opposed reduced number of schools having FI. Noted that under 28c, issue surrounding elementary not addressed. PARC members did not support removing any other options.

Next Steps

The Chair will produce discuss the findings of the PARC to Committee and for the Director's Final Report. Noted that innovation can be considered to lessen the impact of any option.

Associate Director presented data regarding regional/magnet programming to PARC. Innovation should be through from the programming lens, not filling space. Currently a total of only 12 Burlington students and 43 students from Halton attend regional programs in Etobicoke School of the Arts, Cawthra Park SS, Glendale SS. The Board does not expect a sufficient number students will enrol in magnet programs to fill 1800 empty pupil places based on prior experience at the Board and in other GTA school boards.

With respect to SHSMs (Specialized High Skills Majors), Associate Director noted that HDSB has the highest percentage of students enrolled in SHSMs in the province. Noted that the Board typically does not see a larger number of students attending a SHSM who are outside of their municipality. Therefore, only students already within Burlington will likely be reshuffled, instead of more students arriving from out of Burlington. PARC members identified grade 7-12 school model. Associate Director noted that this may fill space, however programming for secondary students (Gr. 9-12) would not improve, which was one of the reasons to initiate this PAR.

Trustee mentioned that at the end of the PAR, the Board will review the PAR process.

Discussions ensued regarding additional another meeting next week. Some members wanted to discuss innovation further at a future meeting.

After the role of the PARC ends, public feedback should shift to Trustees. Trustee noted that Board Trustees cannot respond to emails due to high volume, however, all emails are being read. In addition, communications could occur through school councils. Two delegation nights are scheduled with 25 delegation spots each. Additional spots may be available at the Board meetings themselves. Trustee indicated that from past experience, adequate representation was ensured, and would work to ensure same in this PAR.

Based on feedback of the PARC, another PARC working meeting will be scheduled for Monday, March 27 at 7:00 pm. Agenda expected to include innovation, implementation and wrap up.

Meeting adjourned at 10:15 pm.