

Minutes/Notes from PARC Meeting #7

Burlington Secondary Schools Program and Accommodation Review

March 27, 2017

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

Revised Apr. 4, 2017.

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), Steve Armstrong (Parent Rep, LBP), Kate Nazar (Parent Rep, NEL), Lisa Bull (Parent Rep, RBH), Sharon Picken (Parent Rep, RBH), James Ridge (City Manager), Maria McLellan (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), Jacqueline Newton (Superintendent of Education-Innovation/Ingenuity), Gord Truffen (Superintendent of Education-IT and International Students), David Boag (Associate Director), Stuart Miller (Director of Education).

Absent: Dianna Bower (Parent Rep, MMR), Marie Madenzides (Parent Rep, MMR), Rebecca Collier (Parent Rep, NEL), Adriana Tari (Ipsos).

Welcome

Director thanked PARC members for their contribution to the PAR process.

Innovation Discussion

Discussion ensued regarding the current state of innovation at the Board, with the Associate Director and the Superintendent of Innovation/Ingenuity.

Current state

Superintendent of Innovation discussed the definition of innovation. Innovation for the Board would be to see an improvement in process, product or understanding, both in a classroom and on Board administration. In addition, a network to share demonstrated good practice was also mentioned. Director and Associate Director discussed community partnerships, which is part of the Board's Multi-Year Plan and elaborated on existing formal and informal partnerships/relationships, such as with Siemens for robotics programs and other technology; ArcelorMittal Dofasco for an advanced manufacturing program at MMR that aligns with Ministry curriculum standards as well as industry standards; and Kerr Street Ministries/YMCA pilot program for disengaged children in Oakville. Noted that most of the time, relationships are established by community partners engaging with the Board through programs such as co-op.

Chair discussed community/neighbourhood hubs which are designed for service delivery with other Ministry-funded agencies, which largely occur at elementary schools with an early years, pre-natal focus. Chair noted current projected underway in Oakville and Milton.

Associate Director introduced Board's current eLearning (online learning) program and its growth over the last ten years as well as success in terms of student course completion rates, which have increased to approach the completion rates of standard instructional courses. Challenges to online learning were also noted, such as the difficulty to provide courses such as experimental sciences and technology. Noted that self-paced learning is now offered at every school.

Superintendent of IT discussed current status of ICT (Information Communication Technology) at schools and how funding for ICT is provided. Noted that all schools are currently using G Suite (Cloud-based service), and that training sessions are provided to teachers. Schools can choose how to use their capital budget and noted that Hayden chose technology as opposed to textbooks. Hayden parents identified the uniqueness of their school through its way of learning, i.e. textbook free.

Ideas

New ideas from the PARC members were then discussed. Chair indicated that the metric the Board would look at would vary for different options, however, the challenges currently faced at the Burlington secondary level need to be addressed under any solution. Innovative ideas could be applied to any school under any option if it addresses the challenges.

- Ensuring that students are taught the business aspect of innovation as well to support entrepreneurship.
- PARC members raised the option of providing students the opportunity to return for a victory lap (fifth year), which can increase enrolments and may enhance programming. Examples of speciality programs such as Police Foundations, or Pre-health may assist students to determine their future post-secondary plans.
- Partnership with post secondary institutions. Example is the Community Learning Campus post-secondary-high school partnership in Olds, Alberta. Concept of "innovation hubs" in partnership with post-secondary institutions was also raised.
- Continue to seek community partnerships to enhance programming for students.
- Expand trade programs such as masonry, elevator tech.
- Partnerships to create community centres and services for seniors.
- Raising revenue through programs, such as cosmetology and auto shop. Board staff noted that programs must be at cost-recovery basis based on Ministry Guidelines, with the only exception being food services based programs, which may have flexibility. It was also noted that programs could only be opened up for community participation during course times, which can be difficult if a course can only be offered two periods during the day.

- Magnet programs were discussed, such as the high school basketball program at Orangeville Collegiate. Build on geography and specializations at each school, such as athletics at Nelson and arts/culture/entertainment at Central to create magnet programs.
- Attract additional international students to Burlington. Superintendent of IT noted that these are fee-paying students and that the Board is promoting Burlington, particular Burlington Central. Director noted that increase in the number of international students may not provide more course options for regular track students as some do not take regular track courses.
- Ensure elementary students are selecting the HDSB high schools.
- Adult learning was discussed. Director noted that adult learning would not occur in the regular school day.
- Continue to enhance online learning.
- Hubs for students that prefer small schools.
- Virtual learning, i.e. students from multiple schools join in through video calling for a class.
- Community partnerships with corporations. Director noted that there are rules regarding partnerships with corporations and it can pose challenges, such as loss of partnership due to decisions by the business to downsize. Partnership at White Oaks in Oakville with Ford Manufacturing mentioned.
- Decommissioning parts of buildings, however it would not address programming.
- Add elementary grades to high schools, which can ease transition to high school and reduce the cost of portables at overutilized schools. Director noted that while some schools are overutilized, many others are underutilized. The Director indicated that there is a significant number of empty pupil places at the elementary level in Burlington (3500).

General Comments - Revised Apr. 4, 2017

- Cyclical nature of population/enrolment decline and growth mentioned.
- City Manager noted that higher density units with 0-1 bedrooms typically don't house many families with secondary students and these families will continue to prefer ground-based homes.
- City Manager suggested that if any school is closed, the land not be sold, given the exorbitant costs (forecasted) to re-purchase the land in future.
- City Manager indicated that he should be informed (on behalf of the City) regarding the future availability of space within schools.

Implementation of Options

Chair mentioned that Trustees may consider grandfathering; minimize impact on current students; staffing considerations; integration of new students; capital projects and flexible timelines; PARC to be part of integration committee; and transportation planning.

Some PARC reps indicated that some students should attend a school of their choice if their current school is closed. PARC members also noted that grandfathering should be important and that students should have the option of attending their new school prior to the implementation of boundary changes.

Next Steps and Wrap Up

Chair noted that after the PARC is dissolved, advocacy to shift to Trustees. A PARC member suggested that each PARC member send a personal email to Trustees as well. PARC email addresses to be phased out through discussions with IT. New emails to PARC accounts will have bumper response indicating emails be sent to Trustees. Chair noted that PARC members will have access to email, but it will be phased out and archived.

PARC members indicated that the public delegations need to be equitable to ensure fair representation of schools and topics/themes. Chair noted that the Board will ensure a variety of perspectives and issues are represented.

Feedback from PARC members regarding the process to occur in June or the Fall.

Chair and Trustee thank PARC members and Board staff for their commitment.

Chair formally dissolved the PARC.

Meeting adjourned at 9:20 pm.