

**Boundary Review Committee Meeting  
Minutes, April 28, 2011  
West Oak Trails P.S.**

**Meeting started at 7:05 p.m.**

**Chair: Superintendent Stuart Miller**

Thanks to BRC for their great involvement in the Public Meeting on April 7. The Steering Committee has received lots of positive feedback from public.

**1. Questions/Comments**

Emails were sent to Wards 5 and 6 parents of school-aged children to notify them of the April 7 meeting. No synervoice message was sent. However, an email message implying that FI parents want the new high school to be an FI only high school was inadvertently sent out to Iroquois Ridge Community. It was an error. A BRC member representing the Forest Trail Community spoke to the BRC Committee to assure this committee that the French Immersion Community at Forest Trail is not in favour of a single track FI High School for the new high school – it has never been “on the radar.”

Comment re French Immersion from FI parents – priority that Forest Trail FI students remain together.

Parents concerned around “other” category on feedback form. On feedback form, need to provide option to provide feedback on three preferred scenarios plus “other” scenario, just in case anything idea has been missed and it is part of inclusive nature of Halton policy. Comment from BRC member suggesting that in future processes the “other” category be outlined in a different way – different set-up – BRC not aware that the “other” category was going to be available. Today clarification was posted on the website regarding the reasoning for the “other” category on the feedback form.

There was a question regarding clarification of “87” optional attendance students at Abbey Park. The practice is that once students are approved for Optional Attendance in High School, the student remains at the high school for his/her high school career. However, in providing data for these scenarios, the “87” was moved to zero once the new high school opened. In fact, this would not happen. These “87” optional attendance students would be grandfathered and so the “87” students would be factored down to zero over four years. Planning agreed that this was correct so when reviewing scenarios these “87” students will allow for some numbers to be revised.

## **2. Community Feedback**

Individual comment sheets (names blacked out) and a summary sheet were distributed to all BRC members for review. Planning Dept. summarized comment forms on summary. Only 7 participants commented under “other” scenario and no brand new scenarios were suggested. There was some good feedback. Member suggested that we could possibly add or amend existing scenarios based on feedback. Approximately 60% of respondents were in favour of T.A. Blakelock being the only dual-track high school and approximately 40% of respondents were in favour of both T. A. Blakelock and the new NW high school being dual-track schools.

18% concern with FI and English track balance at new high school  
35% concern with walk-to school compared to bussing  
17% keeping cohorts together  
29% long-term stability in boundaries important

BRC member asked for clarification of responses. Most of the feedback was from the April 7 public meeting and most electronic questions were received after public meeting. One BRC member noted that her response from Heritage Glen was not in the package of feedback forms.

## **3. Feedback Discussion**

2015 instead of 2016 mentioned on many forms regarding FI start at new school.  
(Preference for Grad 9 start, not Grade 9/10 start)

BRC member noted that of approximately 4000 students in the NW area, we only received approximately 100 responses. One member noted a concern regarding the quality of the feedback – some important points have been reiterated. We need to trust the informed knowledge of BRC members; however, most comments were well-thought out and rational and provided good feedback. The comments were a good validation for BRC criteria as they are reflected in community feedback

In all the preferred scenarios, there is one school that is at or above maximum student numbers. One member stressed the importance of having more of a buffer regarding student numbers in new areas where there is more development than in mature communities so that stable boundary and programming criteria can be met.

BRC decided on reviewing feedback with input from planning. Did we miss something? No new scenarios. Is there completely new information that might have impact on Scenarios? Important to remember that many students in this community have lived in the same home but been moved around to several different schools because of fast-growing community – new schools being built. i.e. The grade 9 children are the same children moved from Lorne Skuce – changes the numbers for a short period of time. (about 80 students)

There was a query regarding who gets to go to new high school. Board staff advised that it does not matter if student has attended private, separate or public school for elementary school, they may go to new high school if they live in catchment area. The Planning Department has looked at this scenario but it is very difficult to project and can lead to overcrowding. Can we draw anything from the Abbey Park experience?

Costing for French Immersion program was reviewed by Director of Programs. When new program starts up, there are start-up monies available. i.e. \$3,100 per section, \$950 for year two of course. This is built into the budget along with individual student grants. Library start-up costs are also part of new programming. Other funding that comes to Board is for core French and French Immersion – can be used for teacher resources, websites, etc.

It was decided to have each BRC member critically review 8 feedback forms for pertinent information and report back to the group. There was some lengthy discussion regarding the feedback and the need to listen to the community from the feedback given by the community members who took the time to give input.

#### Individual Feedback

- FI program available within walking distance
- Palermo, Heritage Glen and siblings split at different schools
- High density growth area, demographics of Ward 4, immigration, ESL
- Question re FI funding model
- Optional attendance for new school – policy, process
- Optional attendance at Abbey Park to increase attendance
- Re-locating special needs program to new school
- Minimize moves for students
- French Immersion enrolment should be capped
- Improving public transportation to high school
- Concern regarding busy road on Bronte
- Bigger school so no student has to leave neighbourhood
- 2016 start time for Palermo FI students should be 2015
- concern regarding questions not related to scenarios
- difficult to find feedback on website
- keep cohorts together
- keep Heritage Glen students at Abbey Park
- keep bussing grandfathered students
- Would prefer a 100% FI high school not watered down programming at many schools
- French Immersion Centre
- Overcrowding at new school, because of students from Catholic schools
- Optional Attendance questions
- Cost of FI program, concerns re Special Needs
- More flexible optional attendance and grandfathering might eliminate some problems

## 4. Discussion of Preferred Scenarios

### Preliminary Discussion on Scenarios

#### Scenario One

- Look at impact of potential numbers with Catholic student input
- Moving kids out of neighbourhood school to overcrowded school out of area when neighbourhood school is not overcrowded
- Does not meet long-term programming for TAB as overcrowding with all FI students
- Concern regarding numbers for FI programming – may be larger than expected
- Need to balance community school with program
- Easier to accommodate larger numbers at newer schools (i.e very difficult for portables at TAB)

#### Scenario Ten

- New school has room for start-up growth
- Scenario 10 – overcrowds Abbey Park
- Taking mandatory Palermo English students and bussing to Abbey Park
- Clarity on Palermo programming – it will depend on the community
- High Schools can absorb over capacity easier than elementary schools

#### Scenario Five

- All Palermo students get to go to neighbourhood schools
- New school opens close to capacity
- Abbey Park under utilized; however, need to factor in cycle of Abbey Park community and optional attendance factor.

*Following up discussions comparing rationale for Scenario 5 and Scenario 10, one BRC member commented on discrepancies in rationale.*

During the Scenario 10 discussion, it was argued by a BRC rep that “aesthetics from the use of portables” to accommodate the larger number of English mandated program students was negative to the launch of an FI program at the new high school (SRA 103). The trustee and Board Chair also commented that “100 students in a population of 900” (nearly 10%) was an immaterial amount that can easily be accommodated in reference to the added overcrowding resulting at Abbey Park. The Board Chair also added that “local schooling is of utmost importance” and that the BRC should focus on “local students best served by attending their local school” not based on English or FI programming.

Using the same rationale for Scenario 5, a BRC member noted that the new high school (SRA 103) would have just 15 more students (1491-1476) in 2020 than its total capacity which equated to exactly 1% of the total capacity versus the supposed “immaterial” 10% difference argued in support of Scenario 10. The member questioned how can 15 students be an issue if 100 students considered immaterial? The member noted to the

contrary, that 100 extra students are an issue. Both the new high school (SRA 103) and Abbey Park would have extensive use of portables. The member questioned the use of portables as a material difference relative to the primary issues of program viability, local access and boundary stability.

In Scenario 10, Palermo English mandated programming students would NOT be attending their local school which the Board Chair had argued was of key importance. While some students have asked to be eligible for optional attendance at Abbey Park (students at Heritage Glen), Scenario 5 gives extra space to allow any Palermo students to attend Abbey Park if they wish to remain with their cohort. The BRC member closed by reiterating that Palermo students would all be eligible to attend the new “local” high school which has been of primary importance in the feedback received from the Palermo community. It was noted that the primary reason for building the new high school was to alleviate overcrowding at Abbey Park. It was reiterated that the Palermo community is absolutely opposed to Scenario 10

*Following the initial discussion (pros and cons) of the three preferred scenarios, BRC members were reminded that a decision would be required at the next meeting and were encouraged to review scenarios on their own and with their school community.*

Meeting Adjourned: 9:30 p.m.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, May 10, 2011  
Palermo P. S. - Library 7 p.m.  
2561 Valleyridge Drive

## **5. Recommendation**

Tuesday, May 10