



## DUFFERIN-PEEL CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

### **CENTRAL ERIN MILLS PUPIL ACCOMMODATION REVIEW**

**PUBLIC MEETING # 2  
February 19, 2008, 7:00 pm  
St. Aloysius Gonzaga Secondary School**

#### **Approved Minutes of the Central Erin Mills Pupil Accommodation Review, Public Meeting # 2**

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Attendance:	Blessed Trinity	14	
	Divine Mercy	7	
	Our Lady of Mercy	4	
	St. Joseph Streetsville	8	
	St. Rose of Lima	37	
	Other	1	Total: 71

- 1) **Introductions and Opening Prayer – M. Prospero**
- 2) **Role of the ARC – T. Munn**  
T. Munn explained who the ARC is, when they met, and what they have done to date.
- 3) **Community Meeting # 1 Review – T. Munn**  
T. Munn explained the Ministry of Education guidelines and Board Policy – Identification, Review and Analysis, and Implementation.
- 4) **Identification Criteria – T. Munn**  
School enrolment below 250 students; enrolment is less than 50% of the building capacity; long-term enrolment indicates continued decline; and Long-Term Plan indicates excess capacity in service area and identifies that pupil place reductions are required.
- 5) **The Numbers – T. Munn**  
The October 31, 2008, enrolment data was explained. St. Rose of Lima regular classes total 105, Blessed Trinity – 129 students. A graph showing the CEM review area enrolments from 1998 to 2012 was explained. Enrolment peaked in 2001 at 2,396 students for the review area. In 2007, enrolment was at 1,809 students projections indicate continued decline.
- 6) **Transportation – T. Munn**  
Transportation distances were explained. These are the same as the Peel Board's. Maps were shown – St. Rose of Lima, all would be bussed because of Erin Mills Parkway (70 km speed limit). Blessed Trinity showed the boundaries for bussing eligibility to Divine Mercy and Our Lady of Mercy. Not all students are eligible for transportation. Breakdown of transportation costs were explained.
- 7) **Program and Staffing – M. Prospero**  
M. Prospero explained the opportunities that exist in a larger school – varied programming, varied number of peers, Special Education Resource Class (SERC) for students with special needs, varied extra-curricular activities. Special Services staff (Psychology, Social Work, Speech Pathologist, Child and Youth Workers, Education Resource Workers) would have more time in the larger schools. Teachers can learn with other teachers. Staffing issues – possibility of triple grades, same teacher may teach same students for 2-3 years; staff could be divided between other schools.

8) **Accommodation Options – T. Munn**

The nine Options were explained. Maps showed the boundaries for each Option. Options are on the Board website.

9) **Next Steps:**

The Accommodation Review Committee (ARC) will convene on February 21 to review the feedback from the community meetings.

Public Meeting # 3 - March 4, 2008 – 7:00 pm @ St. Aloysius Gonzaga Secondary School

Public Meeting # 4 – April 8, 2008 – 7:00 pm @ St. Aloysius Gonzaga Secondary School

The ARC will present their recommendations to the community at Public Meeting #3. ARC report to Administration and Finance Committee on May 5, 2008. Staff report to Administration and Finance Committee on May 5, 2008. Board to make decision at public meeting on June 10, 2008 Public Board Meeting.

10) **Question Period**

**Parent – St. Rose of Lima**

- **Why was 24.5 used to calculate the class size? It seems high, any impact on primary class size?**

24.5 is used to calculate for portables. This number takes into account the primary class size.

**Student – Blessed Trinity**

- **Lives on Tavistock, across from Blessed Trinity. Going into Grade 6, wondering if she would be bussed or would have to walk? What if I'm scared to walk or if something happens to me?**

Transportation criteria explained. Criteria applies to all students in Dufferin-Peel.

**Parent – Blessed Trinity**

- **What percentage of the population did not go to the new school?**

Majority of students went to receiving schools. Schools have been closed in Malton and Mississauga and the Board hasn't experienced mass exodus to the Peel Board.

- **If going with status quo, would there be another ARC in the future?**

Board could initiate another accommodation review. Staff would continue to report enrolment status of all schools in the Board to the Board. Review for Central Erin Mills could take place again in 5 years. The Board would give direction.

- **Would like ARC to consider how to maintain a Catholic presence in the Review Area.**

**Students – Grade 7, Blessed Trinity**

- **Why do the older students have to walk? Some students have jobs, more homework. They carry heavy backpacks, shoes, art portfolios, lunches, etc.**

The Board has approximately 120 elementary schools. The transportation criteria applies to all students. Older students are more responsible than younger students.

**Parent – St. Rose of Lima**

- **How long is the Long-Term Plan?**

Long-Term Plan goes to 2022. St. Rose of Lima enrolment shows as still declining.

- **Why not consolidate all the schools in CEM into one large elementary school?**

Larger schools would have different issues. The Board does have some large elementary schools. Board is trying to create viable schools, not create elementary schools as large as secondary schools.

- **Amount of time students would be on a bus – a 7 year old could be on for 45 minutes?**

Transportation routes have not been created yet. Transportation would look at them over the summer.

- **What is the most cost effective Option?**  
The ARC would have to reduce the number of Options then the Options would be sent to the Finance Department to cost out. There would be savings on Administrators and various staffs. As enrolment declines the operational budget would also decline.
- **When schools close, what regulations are followed for the disposal of the property?**  
First step is the decision to close the school. Next – does the Board need it? If no, Board can declare it surplus and offer it to multiple agencies as described in the Ministry Guidelines for Disposal of Surplus Property. If there is no interest in the property, the Board could sell the property. This process can take years.

**Parent – St. Rose of Lima**

- **Extended French – what changes to the program/location?**  
Programs will continue at St. Rose of Lima until the Board gives direction otherwise. Registrations are coming up shortly. If more than 30 students register for extended french, it will go to a lottery.
- **Would the teachers be the same as they are now?**  
Staff have the option to stay or move. It is their decision.
- **Would the Board discontinue the program?**  
That would be the decision of the Program Department. Board is now looking at French Immersion.

**Parent – St. Rose of Lima**

- **What rationale was used to choose the Options – e.g., Option 4?**  
Option 4 was used as an example. Enrolment numbers for St. Rose of Lima and Blessed Trinity are declining. St. Joseph, Our Lady of Mercy and Divine Mercy do not meet the Board criteria for the ARC.
- **Is the Board paid by the number of students in the school?**  
There is special funding for the Extended French and Gifted Programs.
- **Erin Mills Parkway is a major thoroughfare, why isn't Eglinton Avenue also considered a major roadway.**  
Transportation department identified that the difference between Erin Mills Pkwy and Eglinton Avenue is the speed limit.

**Student - Blessed Trinity**

- **How many teachers would go to the new school?**  
Teachers have the opportunity to move to the new school or they can access postings for other schools. Some teachers could be declared surplus.

**Parent - St. Rose of Lima**

- **Has the new development been taking into consideration?**  
Yes, new developments are always looked at. High density developments do not have as many younger children moving in.
- **Is the Peel Board going through the same process?**  
Yes. Peel Board has schools with declining enrolment, but trustees are not doing anything yet.
- **Why is this so important to Dufferin-Peel?**  
The Board is trying to be financially responsible. The Ministry has just recently left the Board during its financial situation. There are a lot of challenges for schools with only 105 students. Board is trying to create viable schools and better programs for Dufferin-Peel students.
- **Peel, Halton and other Boards – how much money is spent in Catholic schools? Now we are closing to save money. What other things can we do to cut costs?**

**Parent – St. Rose of Lima**

- **Having a hard time understanding the logic – Our Lady of the Airways taking 5 years to settle?**  
Board went through the same process. It has taken five years to finally dispose of the site. School was used for 2 years by the Board. Then it is taken time to negotiate the

deal. The money will go into the Capital accounts. The Board will not lease the property.

- **The Board should put the time and effort into the decision of closing the schools as it does for disposing of a school.**

The ARC is following the process. The ARC can make recommendations in its report to the Board to close the schools in September, 2009.

#### **Parent – Blessed Trinity**

- **What is being done to ensure the safety of children crossing Eglinton Avenue – crossing guards?**

We can't answer that now. Once the decision is made to close the school, Transportation Department and Traffic Safety Council will do an assessment. Routes would be assessed based on needs. Transportation Department and the school would work with the City of Mississauga Traffic Safety Council regarding crossing guards.

- **Children are just developing skills to be able to judge speed and distance. Should be considered in addition to Board policy.**

Transportation assesses each situation.

- **The April 8 report – would the Planning Department's report be public also? Why not?**  
ARC report follows regulations – goes to the community with its recommendations first. The Planning Department report will go to the May 5 Administration and Finance Committee Meeting.

#### **Parent – St. Rose of Lima**

- **Are there plans to poll parents so opinions can be known? Are there any other ways for the public to provide input besides the Public Meetings?**

No plans to poll parents. Parents can provide input at public meetings or through their school councils.

- **How disruptive will the school closure be for the children?**

Schools would close at the end of June 2008 and students will start in the new school in September, 2008.

- **The least disruptive would be to close just one school.**

#### **Parent – St. Rose of Lima**

- **Strength, courage – Blessed Trinity and St. Rose of Lima should stick together so that both schools don't close. To the ARC – have the courage to say 'No'. Parents will send their children to the public or private schools. With the full day kindergarten enrolment starting in 2010, numbers might start to go up.**

#### **Parent – St. Rose of Lima**

- **Are there any health and safety issues at Blessed Trinity or St. Rose of Lima that are determining this decision?**

No.

#### **Parent – Divine Mercy**

- **Why are Trustees not at these meetings?**

Legal opinion advised trustees not to attend.

- **Worried about the increase in enrolment – where would portables be placed?**

Administrators and teachers would work for a best fit.

- **Do the St. Rose of Lima and Blessed Trinity ARC representatives have the ability to poll the parents?**

Yes, they can.

#### **Parent – St. Rose of Lima**

- **Have 3 children in 2 schools. Bus would not stop in front of my house. Working moms would have to rush home to make sure the children get in safe. Could you guarantee the safety of my children?**

The Board can't guarantee. If a child is in Extended French, the other sibling can go to the same school, with Principal's approval for flex boundary. Principal will have to justify reasons to his Superintendent.

- **The Board is forcing parents to go to the other schools.**

**Additional Comments:**

- Eglinton Avenue at Churchill Meadows is only 4 lanes.
- Comments will be shared with ARC on February 21.
- For the record, I am opposed to the closure of St. Rose. Comment – this meeting was to allow public to have input in the process. People have come out on two evenings (both cold and snowy) to object to the closings. The message is being sent but I am not sure that the message is being received. Please hear the message from the children, parents and community that you are affecting.
- Option 4 – St Rose of Lima students moved to Blessed Trinity, wouldn't that be a better option considering the number of students together (both schools) can be accommodated without any portables, instead of increasing numbers in Divine Mercy or Our Lady of Mercy or St. Joseph. We live on Gosthview Street, west of Winston Churchill, south of Eglinton, if she had to go to St. Joseph its going to take a very long time on the bus to get there.
- If having considered any transport and less cost. Not a good option to allocate students of St. Rose of Lima to Our Lady of Mercy. Neither a good option to allocate students of St. Rose of Lima to St. Joseph.

11) The meeting adjourned at 9:26 pm.

**Next Community Meetings:**

**Public Meeting #3 – March 4, 2008 – 7:00 pm - St. Aloysius Gonzaga Secondary School**

**Public Meeting #4 – April 8, 2008 – 7:00 pm - St. Aloysius Gonzaga Secondary School**