Call to Order:

D. Amaral, Chair of the East Credit ARC Working Group Committee, called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

1. **Prayer**

The Chair led the group in prayer.

2. **Approval of Agenda for ARC Working Group Meeting #3**

Approval of the agenda was moved by: E. Ljubanovic, seconded by: J. Greenman.

*CARRIED*

3. **Approval of January 27, 2016 Meeting Minutes from ARC Working Group Meeting #2**

Approval of the January 27, 2016 meeting minutes was moved by: E. Kostuch, seconded by: E. Ljubanovic.

*CARRIED*

4. **Transportation Department - STOPR**

Manager, Tom Howe provided some background information on STOPR (Student Transportation of Peel Region)

- Consortium serves Dufferin-Peel CDSB and Peel DSB
• Transports 64,000 students daily
• 1,400 vehicles
• $55 million each year
• One of the key functions of the department is to establish eligibility at each school at each board that we serve.
• Board policy is distance based for bussing: Kindergarten-Gr. 1 need to live more than 1.0 km, Grades 2-4 need to be more than 1.6 km, Grades 5-8 need to be more than 2.0 km and Secondary need to be beyond 3.8 km.
• In a new school or revised boundary, staff will make assessments. Any staff considerations are raised to Mississauga Traffic Safety Council, who make most or all of the decisions on safety hazards.
• City of Mississauga is ultimately responsible for safe pedestrian access; we abide by their direction.
• Intersections deemed problematic are sent to Mississauga Traffic Safety Council and they conduct a site inspection to determine whether: 1. Students can cross this road/intersection without assistance (in terms of a crossing guard, 2. A crossing guard is required to assist students to cross, and 3. Students can’t cross this roadway; they need to be bussed.
• STOPR responds to the requirements, both from the City of Mississauga and the City of Brampton Traffic Safety Councils and incorporate these into our transportation plans.
• In addition, the Highway Traffic Act restricts the placement of a crossing guard on a roadway, if the speed exceeds 60 km/hr.

Questions/Responses to specific questions posed by ARC members:
1. Will students be required to cross Mavis Road (Option 1): Mavis is 70 km/hour?
   Response: Kindergarten-Grade 5 students would be bussed automatically
   Grades 6-8 - we would go to Mississauga Traffic Safety Council to conduct a site inspection to see if students can cross or need bussing.

2. Will students be required to cross Eglinton Avenue (Option 3)?
   Response: Mississauga Traffic Safety Council determined that all grade levels can cross this street safely.
   STOPR will confer with Mississauga Traffic Safety Council if and when this circumstance does exist.

3. Will students be required to cross Britannia Road (Option 3)?
   Response: Britannia is mostly 70km/hour, therefore Kindergarten-Grade 5 will be automatically bussed
   Grades 6-8 we would seek advice from Mississauga Traffic Safety Council

4. The cost of Option 4 presented by St. Dunstan:
   Response: Estimated at an additional $162,000 in transportation costs

ARC member asked if studies are ever initiated for intersections that are high in traffic accidents.

5. Questions and concerns have been raised regarding the school start times and the effect that they will have on students/parents if schools are to consolidate.
   STOPR Response: School bell times are a responsibility of STOPR, orchestrated and approved through STOPR Governance Committee. There is a significant savings if buses do multiple runs; average three runs/day per school bus. This keeps transportation expenditure at the most efficient level for the funding we receive.
   STOPR runs optimization routines for student loads for the coming year; priority is maintaining additional efficiency with bell times. Bell time adjustments are done to accommodate schools, however, we only transport 26% of school enrolment, so it is somewhat conservative in approach.
ARC member asked if any of the options go through, whether there is a chance of sharing bussing with the public school.

STOPR Response: Integrated transportation is encouraged, but usually beneficial in rural areas. In urban areas, such as East Credit, there is limited use; one bus is full at one stop. We would need to have schools in close proximity to one another; no common attendance area.

ARC member asked if STOPR looks at the speed limit at the intersection.

STOPR Response: Yes. It is a very specific site inspection. For an arterial road or a road of any significance, it is a signalized intersection. Some stops in the communities are local roads; they are not high volume roads, for example, in front of a school. It is the speed limit at the site we are investigating which would be the most appropriate walking route location. Mississauga Traffic Safety Council may pick another location; they wouldn’t want to place crossing guards at numerous locations.

ARC member asked if students could cross on their own at Eglinton being mostly 60 km/hour. The crossing guard would be eliminated.

STOPR Response: Yes, students would cross, however, Mississauga Traffic Safety Council would address if they would they need a crossing guard to assist these students across. STOPR believes they would need more than one crossing guard at Eglinton.

ARC member asked if the criteria is 60 km/hour and above or greater than 60 for no crossing guard.

STOPR Response: Greater than 60. Sixty is the limit for a crossing guard. Under the Highway Traffic Act, you cannot have a human being controlling traffic in excess of 60 km/hour.

ARC member asked if the transportation of students from school to church, aside from home to school is included in the administration costs.

STOPR Response: Home to school only.

The Chair thanked Manager Howe for his presentation.

5. Finance Department

Superintendent, Julie Cherepacha and General Manager, Brian Hester provided an overview of the Board’s financial information through a PowerPoint presentation entitled Financial Considerations of Pupil Accommodation Reviews.

The Chair reaffirmed that all boards are legislated to balance the budget.

ARC member stated that the two biggest pieces of one of the pie charts shown are utilities and transportation. St. Gertrude is in good shape, yet it is proposed to close and bus all the students to other locations. This is adding tremendous costs. Why does this make sense in the scheme of things?

Finance Response: The accommodation review looks at a collection of schools; the net effect of options 1, 2, 3 and 4. Some may have savings in utilities and more in transportation and others vice versa. The scenarios are focused on more than just-operating costs, renewal top up is another area of funding that is impacted. The renewal funding is specifically for the large fixes, i.e. boiler, change lighting to be more efficient. That funding is also disappearing, so you have to factor that into operating and future capital needs.

ARC member added that capital needs are on a square foot basis, where funding is on a per student basis.

Finance Response: Yes. Each building would be unique based on square footage, number of students, etc.

ARC member asked if the $4.5 million in savings would come out of that $72 million operations. You’re not looking to save the whole chunk from East Credit area?

Finance Response: Correct. The $4.5 million reduction to top up would come from school operations grant. A phased-in portion of this reduction is already in our 15/16 budget. In the long term, we can’t sustain that. We have to find a plan and work through all different scenarios. This is the chosen area to start with; the largest under-utilized area.
Planning staff added that the approval of a balanced budget is an annual process decided by the Trustees. Trustees may choose to do nothing, but depending on the outcome of this process, it will affect the budget next year. Trustees may reprioritize the budget cuts. If savings don’t come from here, they must come from somewhere else to balance the budget.

ARC member asked where is the funding coming from to maintain those schools that might close. Who is still maintaining those schools without students in them? If those buildings need upgrades, where is that money coming from?

**Finance Response:** If the school is not operating at capacity, you still have to maintain it; you still have those costs. If school is closed, there are some savings. If we don’t go forward with these closures, we will have to make reductions from other areas to balance the budget.

ARC member asked, if any options occur with the three surplus schools, a) who pays for those schools to run until we decide what to do with them? If there is a high priority repair in the next two years, that repair does have to be done.

**Finance Response:** If that school is closed, we would not maintain it as an open school; a process would follow to keep the property or sell it. It is not an instructional building in use, so we would not do major repairs.

Planning staff added, if the board chooses to close schools and dispose of them, there is a carrying cost during that time, i.e. insurance, boilers. It is estimated to be 25% of the total operating cost, if the school was open.

ARC member asked who is responsible for a major repair, if the building is leased. Planning staff replied, we would expect the lessee to be responsible.

ARC member looked into one of our biggest competitors; Peel DSB has a 9/4 ratio and Dufferin-Peel has an 8/1 ratio of staff/student ratio. Would we ever consider taking out of that portion of the pie, as opposed to the schools and the children?

**Finance Response:** We can’t speak to those ratios, however, we are a service organization, part of the public sector. 90% of our budget expenditures are salary & benefit related. There are requirements in this area as those costs are part of class size requirements, contractual requirements related to eleven different associations and unions, etc.; the largest part is instructional staff. We have looked into this area and there has been reductions in staffing in the past few years. It’s not an area where a substantial change can be made.

ARC member stated each SIP has a section that reads, “What is the impact of this Schools Closure on Facility Operating and Capital Budgets”. Then states, “School Operations and School Renewal Funding from the GSN model is reduced by approx. X”, then lists different amounts for each school. Can you elaborate on that? Is that the vacancies in the school you were referring to earlier?

**Finance Response:** the information provided was school specific related to the funding. If we close one school, we lose one principal, but we also lose the funding for secretarial staff. The funding is not on a one-to-one ratio, it depends on the size of the school. The other operating costs need to be considered as they are no longer funded by the Ministry when empty pupil places exist.

ARC member wanted clarification that the $2.5M referred to earlier correlated with the reduction in funding for GSN.

**Finance Response:** Our top up reduction amount is $4.5M. There are pieces of that reduction all across the board for schools with excess capacity. What we are looking at here is one particular area where we associate a significant amount of that top up is being reduced.

The Chair thanked Superintendent Cherepacha and General Manager Hester for their presentation and reminded the committee members that any questions regarding Transportation or Finance can be sent to the PAR Info mailbox.

6. **Follow-up Items**

ARC Requested Information from WGM#2 was provided to ARC members either through Planning staff, Transportation or Finance Departments. Items 8, 11, 12 and 13 were tabled until after the Break.

7. **Public Open House #1**
• Survey Results Update – to be discussed at a future working group meeting – Planning staff indicated receiving over 1000 responses and the Research Department is still formulating them

• Parking Lot Questions - to be discussed at a future working group meeting – 136 questions were posted on the board at the community meeting

Questions from ARC members
- Were all 1000 responses mentioned unique?
Response: Research is determining if they are from the same IP address; we will share that information at the next meeting.
– If there were multiple survey responses from same IP address, do you take the first one or will all be considered?
Response: Research Dept. will clarify and we will bring back to next meeting.
– Clarification of the intent of the survey was requested. The public was asked to select a preferred option, the results of which are being determined, but ARC members are not to vote.
Response: The Chair clarified that at no time was the survey developed for ranking purposes or to be used as a voting mechanism of one option over another. The purpose of the survey was to gather feedback in terms of themes, concerns, suggestions and accommodation as well. The committee does not vote on the options and the survey was to mirror that philosophy.
– Request that more information regarding the purpose of the survey be provided about the survey prior to Public Meeting #2.
Response: The Chair indicated that there will be a rider clearly identifying the purpose of survey.

8. BREAK
The Chair called the break at 7:18 p.m. to reconvene at 7:33 p.m.

9. Correspondence Items

The ARC Members moved receipt on all correspondence items for review at this meeting (WG3-54 to WG3-96). Moved by S. Bonello and seconded by J. Belmonte.

CARRIED


WG3-55 – St. Dunstan
St. Bernadette finds this offensive

WG3-58 – St. Gertrude
ARC member asked when FI was moved the first time.
Resource staff responded that the FI program was never moved before and that the program began at St. Gertrude. Wait lists don't warrant opening another FI class.

WG3-61 – St. Dunstan
St. Bernadette finds this offensive

WG3-62 – St. Gertrude
ARC member asked for clarification regarding FI bussing.
Resource staff replied that FI is a program of choice, therefore no transportation is provided. Email says 5% of FI population being bussed is incorrect information. The Chair clarified that the email indicates that a great amount of the St. Gertrude population proper have accessed the French Immersion program.

WG3-63 – St. Dunstan
ARC member asked how staff would be redeployed. Would they travel with the students to that school? The Chair responded that the Board will work closely with the OECTA Elementary Bargaining Unit to relocate any teachers displaced due to a school closure.

WG3-64 – St. Gertrude
Tom Howe, Manager of Transportation discussed crossing Mavis Road during his presentation.

WG3-65 – St. Dunstan + 65a, 65b att.
ARC member asked to go through the specific questions in this email. Resource staff responses:
1. This was one of the parking lot questions, to be answered at a future meeting
2. We are one of first boards to go through the accommodation review process with brand new guidelines. As far as best practices, there are none, only lessons learned from old way of doing it.
3. EQAO results and different issues raised at different school boards. No one has completed the process yet, so there are no best practices.
4. We are not aware of any research; no enrolment survey is part of our registration information. Real estate sales have no correlation to closure of schools.
5. & 6. We spoke to transference of student’s ability in the minutes; can’t predict transference of ability of student, external factors may influence ability when transferring to other communities. As far as a direct correlation between EQAO and transference to other schools, we don’t have that data, but we do have data on innovation and celebration of things happening in our schools.

ACTION: Provide information on innovation and celebration of things happening in our schools.

Two attachments – case study / what makes a good school
ARC member asked if staff are aware of this report, have any comments and if it is a good report? The Chair responded that he had no previous knowledge of this report. It speaks to the whole combining of schools; the effective practice of what effective schools are made of.

WG3-66 – St. Gertrude + 66a att.
Tom Howe, Manager of Transportation identified in the presentation that students JK-5 will be bussed across Mavis and Britannia Roads. STOPR will request that the City of Mississauga’s Traffic Safety Council do site specific assessments of major intersections to determine walking safety for students in grades 6 – 8 and identify any issues or make recommendations to improve safety.

WG3-67 – St. Gertrude
ARC member expressed concern that St. Gertrude with capacity of 85% is being considered for closure, yet we have schools in this area of less than 50% - why weren’t these schools selected to automatically close? Why not relocate those students to another location as a whole.
Resource staff responded that we look at the area as a whole, not just one school at 50%.
ARC member suggested that if two schools adjacent to each other both have less than 50% utilization, why not fold the two schools into one.
Another ARC member disagreed with the suggestion that a school should close based on the school's utilization and all of the relevant factors must be considered - we need to consider the long-term viability of our schools as a whole so that we are not faced with more school closures in five years from now.
Resource staff added that staff are not making the final decision; trustees make the decisions. Board staff have to identify a number of options, so trustees can make those decisions. Staff reviewed other options which did not satisfy the rationale to the same extent as the options presented to trustees. ARC members may bring forward an option to close schools with less than 50% utilization.
The Chair added that staff had to initiate the process and had to present options with certain rationale; examining individual school utilization could be a formal recommendation from one of the communities in this group.
ARC member asked to receive information on the options that staff looked at that didn’t make it to the committee.

**ACTION: Provide options that staff did not present to the committee.**

**WG3-68 – St. Dunstan**
St. Bernadette finds this offensive that our school is not good enough.
The Chair responded that some of the correspondence was received prior to the Open House. At Open House, it was clarified the appropriateness of communication with respect to EQAO scores and achievement. Some people did not realize others would take offense to that.

**WG3-71 – St. Gregory**
Resource staff indicated that FI would move to St. Gregory making it dual track; regular English track stream and FI stream.

**WG3-73 – St. Gertrude**
The Chair asked that the personal information outlined in the email be redacted prior to publication in the minutes.

**ACTION: Redact references as indicated above.**

**WG3-76 – St. Gregory**
Resource staff indicated as part of this process, we engaged the Archdioceses and they have communicated feedback to local parishes.

**WG3-78 – St. Gregory**
The Chair asked that the personal information outlined in the email be redacted prior to publication in the minutes.

**ACTION: Redact references as indicated above.**

**WG3-79 – St. Dunstan**
The Chair asked that the personal information outlined in the email be redacted prior to publication in the minutes.

**ACTION: Redact references as indicated above.**

**WG3-80 – St. Dunstan**
Resource staff stated that this was clarified last week – no preference, does not imply no ranking; looking for qualitative data.

**WG3-81 – St. Dunstan**
St. Bernadette finds this offensive.
The Chair indicated that a realtor’s evaluation of a school is not considered reliable information.

**WG3-82 – General (Survey)**
Resource staff indicated this came to our attention the day after. The “no preference” comment was already clarified.

**WG3-83 – General (Survey)**
ARC member asked what the data on incomplete surveys was. Resource staff indicated that as of the day after the survey was first posted, only 10 stopped at that point, out of 427.

**WG3-84 – St. Dunstan**
Resource staff indicated that the St. Dunstan parking lot was redone and drainage work completed over the summer. Planning for this project would have been initiated this same time last year. At that time there was no indication that the Board would initiate an ARC process or we would have reduced the scope until the final decision was made on any of the schools.

WG3-86 – Our Lady of Good Voyage
Resource staff indicated that board staff will meet with child care operators to determine their needs and discuss the possible reallocation of spaces.

WG3-91 – St. Gertrude
ARC member referenced the 3rd paragraph and echoes feedback from the community, specifically re FI community. These parents are bringing their FI students there and back each day. They are having second thoughts about finding alternatives for their students; causing further attrition to the board in its entirety. Further disrupting their routine by closing the school – do they pull from that program, to keep their kids closer to home.

WG3-92 – General
The Chair indicated that the Program Department presentation on February 24th will address specialized programs. Resource staff added that the Police and EMS are on our community partners list and did not come forward as a potential partner.

WG3-94 – St. Dunstan (Survey)
Resource staff stated that this was corrected at last ARC meeting – students move to Our Lady of Good Voyage.

WG3-95 – St. Gregory
The Chair asked that the personal information outlined in the email be redacted prior to publication in the minutes.

ACTION: Redact references as indicated above.

ARC member asked whether the parents at St. Gregory would be given priority to PLASP at their new school; there is a high demand, waiting lists, and places full already before moving students. ARC member asked if parents receiving child care subsidies would continue to receive them if they move to another location. Resource staff responded that we would pose these question to the child care operators.

ACTION: Ask Child Care Operators questions indicated above.

ARC member asked to redact names from correspondence WG1-48 from previous meeting.

ACTION: Redact references as indicated above.

Senior Planner, J. Rogers concluded by indicating the correspondence for the next meeting would be emails WG4-97-110; 12 items for next meeting.

10. Future ARC Working Group Meetings
   • Group review and discussion of All Alternate Options – The Chair asked if we need to revisit the number of meetings and look at school site visits. Resource staff clarified that site visits are not a mandatory requirement of the ARC.
   ARC members brought forth various ideas and comments:
     o would like to see them pushed towards the end, if there is a need for it
     o condensed version using one night only
     o useful to see sites, if students will be going to another school – may help the situation to better evaluate the options
The committee took a vote to cancel the February 11 school tour date in favour of a working group meeting. The Chair indicated that the vote must be 50% + 1 to rule. Eight members were in favour of the change.

**CARRIED**

**ACTION:** Resource staff to post on the Board website the meeting date change and identify the location of the meeting.

The chair confirmed that correspondence regarding the February 11th ARC meeting, location TBD, would be communicated to the schools. As this is an ARC working group meeting, the public may attend but are there for observation purposes only.

**ACTION:** Send notice to schools indicating new ARC WGM date of February 11.

The committee took a vote to defer the School Site Tour date discussion until the next meeting. The majority were in favour of this idea; 1 opposed.

**CARRIED**

Agenda items and supporting documentation should be directed to Manager, S. Cox by the Friday before the next Working Group meeting.

**March 2 – Review of all alternative options** - A number of options have come in. We will set aside the majority of this meeting to go over all the options presented.

ARC member asked if that is the night we will go around the table and present what we are bringing as our presentations?

Resource staff replied that you could present your option, but we would need to look at all the options presented to-date. Planning staff would consolidate them all on a table and we could look at all of them together. Alternatively, committee members can email Manager, S. Cox at any time with their options and not have to wait until March 2nd.

The Chair concluded that March 2nd would be an evening showing a consolidation of information received to-date in terms of recommendations and options, and resource staff would provide committee members a template or tool to allow organization of that in a graph format. It would be an opportunity for the committee to ensure that we all have a consolidated understanding of all the information presented to us thus far.

ARC member commented that it would be good for trustees from a correspondence point of view, to show a consolidated group effort.

The Chair added that it is not mandatory for each community to put forth an option, but resource staff is here to assist you with that. We must provide some sort of summary to the trustees of all the information that has come forward.

ARC member asked if the public would review the options at the next open house. How would we decide what would be presented?

As we get closer to that date, we as a committee have to decide how we best present the preferred options. The Chair indicated that March 9 would be last meeting before the public meeting on March 30th. We have no meetings during March Break or Holy Week.

**March 30 – Public Open House Meeting #2 (Tentative)**

11. **Other Business**
   - Future meeting dates
Manager, S. Cox suggested that committee members review and share with their communities the Ministry of Education Guide to Pupil Accommodation Reviews which was recently released. The guide is part of their package and also posted on the board website. This provides information on the new process and good information to share with their community.

Superintendent, D. Del Bianco stated that the details for delegation night on May 9 is still being worked out.

ARC member asked if individuals will be delegating or the school community on delegation night. The Chair indicated that we will follow the policy for board meetings; delegations can be done individually, as a group, or on behalf of a school community.

ARC member asked what if they can’t make it on delegation night, will they have an opportunity to be heard?

The Chair responded that there is only one night of delegations set aside. Given the demand of delegations, there may be another night added, but not at this time. They can email their correspondence.

Superintendent, D. Del Bianco stated that if any member of the public feels that the board did not adhere to its policy, i.e., one public meeting, instead of two, you can ask the Ministry to conduct an Administrative Review. It is not an avenue to overturn the board’s decision, but they make sure we follow the process and there may be recommendations. The actual form is in your package right after the Ministry’s Guide to an Accommodation Review. It describes the requirements to initiate an Administrative Review. It is posted on our website as well.

12. Adjournment

The Motion to adjourn was moved by: J. Belmonte, seconded by: E. Ljubanovic.  

CARRIED

The meeting was adjourned at 9:02 p.m.

Future meeting dates:
February 11, 2016 – ARC Working Group Meeting #4
February 17, 2016 – Site Visits (ARC Members Only) St. Gertrude, St. Valentine, St. Raymond, St. Gregory TENTATIVE
February 24, 2016 – ARC Working Group Meeting #5
March 2, 2016 – ARC Working Group Meeting #6

Distribution:
ARC Members
ARC Resource
Dear [Name],

Thank you for your email regarding the Pupil Accommodation Review and St. Dunstan School in particular.

Your comments and concerns are appreciated.

It is important, if you have not already done so, to submit your feedback directly to the PAR Committee by way of the board website at www.dpcdsb.org (through the link on the left side of the main webpage) or by email to PARinfo@dpcdsb.org. You may also bring your feedback directly to your PAR Committee representative. This ensures direct receipt by the PAR Committee and inclusion in any committee level discussion.

As you may be aware, trustees receive all information related to the PAR, but do not actually sit on the PAR Committee. It is, however, the Board of Trustees who will collectively make a decision regarding the current options, or other options that may be presented based on community feedback received during the consultation process, in late May of this year. I wish you the very best.

Sharon

Sharon Hobin
Trustee, Wards 2 & 8 (Mississauga)
Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board
40 Matheson Blvd. West.
Good Evening

I thank-you for taking the time in reading my email. I am writing in regards to the upcoming possible closure of St. Dunstan Catholic Elementary School. I am aware that our trustee is Luz del Rosário, however as you yourself are a voting trustee, please let me voice my reasons as to why St. Dunstan should not be considered for closure.

I have been a Mississauga resident since I was 4 years old. When my husband and I got married and decided to start our very own family we thought of no where else to purchase our very first home then Mississauaga. We LOVED the City! This is our city and what we are comfortable in.

We have raised our 3 children in the Creditview and Eglinton area and have seen a lot of changes over the last few years. Some of the changes have been positive but some NOT so good and we are seeing it in our community. The topic has come up a few times to move to another City, (Cheaper cost of living, better area, not as populated, etc.) but we cannot make that move. WHY?! Because of the amazing school our children attend!

We have twin boys whom are almost 7 years old and a 4 year old daughter who will be attending St. Dunstan in September. One of our twins has special needs as he is Hearing Impaired. From the moment we enrolled him at St. Dunstan to the minute he walked into his first day of Junior Kindergarten we have had NOTHING but love, support and guidance from the school, principal and all the staff.

For any parent the thought of sending your children off to school in JK is a difficult one, I’m sure you can imagine the nervous feelings we had about sending our son who has Special Needs into a new environment with many new faces and sounds he has never heard before. The communication we received from the staff was amazing. My son had everything in place and waiting for him the moment he entered his 1st day of JK, the staff worked very quickly to make the environment a safe place and the proper listening environment to help my son learn and focus throughout his JK year. Fast forward 3 years later and nothing has changed, the school has always maintained it’s superior communication and support along the way. My twins are in separate grade 1 classes and I am blessed with the love and guidance from 2 amazing teachers who take what they do very seriously. I receive multiple phone calls, meeting and written updates to inform me of the struggles and progress my kids have made. The school and staff makes every effort to see all their children succeed.

I beg you, please understand where us parents are coming from in fighting for our children’s education. Why make a closure on something that is running and working so well for the community? This is the very last piece of the puzzle that is keeping my family and I in the Mississauga community, the very thought of leaving St. Dunstan is devastating…if St. Dunstan goes, unfortunately our family will go as well!

Thank you Again for taking the time to read over my argument. I wish you all the very best in 2016.

May God Bless
Greetings,

Thank you for your recent email regarding St. Dunstan Elementary School and the East Credit Pupil Accommodation Review (PAR).

Your feedback is very much valued. While I have forwarded your email to our Planning staff who will, in turn, bring it forward to the Pupil Accommodation Review Committee’s attention, I encourage you, if you have not already done so, to submit your feedback directly to the PAR Committee via the board website at www.dpcdsb.org (through the link on the left side of the main webpage) or by email to PARinfo@dpcdsb.org. You may also wish to bring your feedback directly to your PAR Committee representative. This ensures direct receipt and inclusion in any discussion at the committee level.

All feedback will also be made available to trustees, who will make a decision regarding the current options, or other options that may be presented based on community feedback, in late May of this year.

I encourage you to attend the upcoming Public Open House scheduled for Wednesday, January 20 from 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm at St. Joseph Secondary School on 5555 Creditview Road. Board staff will be on hand to respond to questions and invite feedback.

Thank you for your support of Catholic education. Your commitment and interest are appreciated.

Mario Pascucci

Sent from my BlackBerry 10 smartphone on the Bell network.
I understand that the PAR process is triggered by low utilization in our collective area (currently 63% of total capacity); and that the Ontario Ministry of Education guidelines for school boards emphasize that the PAR process identify potential closures and consolidations based on managing enrollment in the area, ensuring student well-being and managing budgets responsibly. This is why I’m so concerned with the current PAR process taking place near my home in Mississauga, which has clearly not adhered to these principles.

Of the 8 schools being considered for closure in the PAR review, St. Dunstan is the only school recommended for closure in all 3 proposed options, including the board’s “preferred option”. Here are some key facts about St. Dunstan that I would like to share with you:

- Of the 8 schools under review, St. Dunstan has the **highest overall academic achievement** (based on combined grade 3 and 6 EQAO scores). It is #1 in reading, #2 in writing and #1 in math.

- St. Dunstan is currently above the area’s average utilization and has the **fastest growing enrollment** of the 8 schools. It is projected to be **#2 in utilization in 2016**.

On the other hand, there are 2 schools in the area that are not even being considered for closure; St. Bernadette and St. Raymond. So what makes these schools exceptional?

- St. Bernadette has the **worst current utilization** and St. Raymond is projected to have the worst utilization by 2025.

- St. Bernadette has the **worst total EQAO scores** in the area and St. Raymond scores below the board average in grade 6 math scores.

- St. Bernadette has the **second worst Facility Condition Index (FCI)** and **second highest annual operating cost**.

From this report, the message from Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board seems to be clear: *schools that achieve top academic performance, are well-utilized and show positive growth projections will be closed; while those that underperform, are under-utilized and are costly to operate will remain open.*

Several years ago when my husband and I were looking for a new home, our main concern was finding the best school possible for our soon to be school age son. When speaking to our potential neighbors of the house we were considering buying, they all talked about how wonderful a school St. Dunstan was. After doing our own research we realized, they were right. St. Dunstan had the highest academic records of any of the other schools in the other neighborhoods we were considering.

The board’s “preferred option” will split the students from St. Dunstan and relocate them to St. Bernadette and St. Herbert, the only 2 schools in the area with less than 50% utilization and EQAO scores among the worst in the area.

Since one of the main reasons we moved into this area was so that our son could attend a fantastic school like St. Dunstan, we may be forced to move to another area as we will not have our son attend a sub-standard school. We will consider both public and private school if St. Dunstan closes.
Thus, the long-term utilization of area schools and the sustainability of the board’s revenues from local taxation will not be solved by this approach.

The more appropriate approach should be to protect schools like St. Dunstan that have high academic achievement, high utilization and are showing positive projected growth in enrollment and utilization. I ask that in your capacity as Trustee, that you please take action to ensure that the desired outcomes of the PAR policy: namely high student achievement, high utilization and responsible budgets, are brought back into the focus of this process.

Please feel free to contact me or our group of concerned parents at saveStDunstan@gmail.com if you would like more information regarding the proposed closure of St. Dunstan. Thank-you for your commitment to protecting the quality of education for our children for generations to come.

Sincerely,

[Name]
Please DON'T Close St.Gregory School

Sent: Wednesday, January 13, 2016 4:02 PM  
To: PAR - Info

Attention: Dufferin Peel Catholic District School Board

In reading the findings from the East Credit Pupil Accommodation Review (PAR), I am a deeply concerned parent. My 2 children attend St. Gregory and I am very saddened to read that one of the options is to close St.Gregory.

PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE do NOT close St.Gregory !!!
We moved to this neighborhood approximately 5 years ago and I am so glad we did particularly because of the fantastic group of students and the amazing staff that St. Gregory has. I can't express enough how much our family adores everything about St.Gregory. We are so lucky to have this school and it's staff in our neighborhood. I don’t want my kids to go to another school in another neighborhood...I want them to continue to be able to walk to and from school. Not be ‘bused’ to another neighborhood.

Thanks for your Time
To whom this may concern,

As a parent of a student that is attending St. Gregory Elementary School, it is concerning me about the potential of the school being closed down. This is a letter, written to show my concern and the Peel Catholic District Board should reconsider this decision. These students deserve the opportunity to finish their learning at the school they started at.

Kindest Regards,
To whom it may concern,

I am a parent who strongly supports keeping St. Gertrude open.

In reviewing the materials presented in each option, has consideration been given by the Board to the disruption of moving the French Immersion students for a second time? It seems unfair that students in the French Immersion program have to be moved and displaced yet again.

Our school has a fully integrated school where both the French Immersion and regular stream students are united as one. Separating the French Immersion and regular stream students as presented in option 1 would severely impact the students as teachers and students alike have worked hard to integrate the two programs.

Additionally, there is a wait list to enrol in the French Immersion program at St. Gertrude. Has this been taken into consideration? If the students in the wait list are allowed to enrol in the program at St. Gertrude, enrolment rates would not be an issue and St. Gertrude would not be placed into option 1. Again, I would like to reinforce that students in both the French Immersion and regular stream are fully integrated as one. The French Immersion and regular stream enrolment at St. Gertrude should not be looked at separately; they should be looked at together as they are an integrated school community.

Can clarification please be provided as to why the French Immersion students at St. Gertrude are being moved for a second time and why the wait list for French Immersion was not considered.

I look forward to your response. Thank you in advance for taking the time to review my concerns.

Regards,

St. Gertrude
To whom it may concern

Can information please be provided about the evaluation criteria that will be used in the final section by the board of trustees.

Thank you

St Gertrude
To whom it may concern

Can information please be provided about the evaluation criteria that will be used in the final section by the board of trustees.

Thank you

St Gertrude
Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Luz del Rosário
Date: January 13, 2016 at 10:55:41 PM EST
Subject: Re: Possible Closure of St. Dunstan

Good Evening

I thank-you for taking the time in reading my email.
I am writing in regards to the upcoming possible closure of St.Dunstan Catholic Elementary School. I am aware that our trustee is Luz del Rosário, however as you yourself are a voting trustee, please let me voice my reasons as to why St. Dunstan should not be considered for closure.

I have been a Mississauga resident since I was 4 years old. When my husband and I got married and decided to start our very own family we thought of no where else to purchase our very first home then Mississauaga. We LOVED the City! This is our city and what we are comfortable in.

We have raised our 3 children in the Creditview and Eglinton area and have seen a lot of changes over the last few years. Some of the changes have been positive but some NOT so good and we are seeing it in our community. The topic has come up a few times to move to another City, (Cheaper cost of living, better area, not as populated, etc.) but we cannot make that move. WHY?! Because of the amazing school our children attend!

We have twin boys whom are almost 7 years old and a 4 year old daughter who will be attending St. Dunstan in September. One of our twins has special needs as he is Hearing Impaired. From the moment we enrolled him at St. Dunstan to the minute he walked into his first day of Junior Kindergarten we have had NOTHING but love, support and guidance from the school, principal and all the staff.

For any parent the thought of sending your children off to school in JK is a difficult one, I’m sure you can imagine the nervous feelings we had about sending our son who has Special Needs into a new environment with many new faces and sounds he has never heard before. The communication we received from the staff was amazing. My son had everything in place and waiting for him the moment he entered his 1st day of JK, the staff worked very quickly to make the environment a safe place and the proper listening environment to help my son learn and focus throughout his JK year. Fast forward 3 years later and nothing has changed, the school has always maintained its superior communication and support along the way. My twins are in separate grade 1 classes and I am blessed with the love and guidance from 2 amazing teachers who take what they do very seriously. I receive multiple phone calls, meeting and written updates to inform me of the struggles and progress my kids have made. The school and staff makes every effort to see all their children succeed.

I beg you, please understand where us parents are coming from in fighting for our children’s education. Why make a closure on something that is running and working so well for the community? This is the very last piece of the puzzle that is keeping my family and I in the Mississauga community, the very thought of leaving St. Dunstan is devastating…if St. Dunstan goes, unfortunately our family will go as well!

Thank you Again for taking the time to read over my argument. I wish you all the very best in 2016.
May God Bless
Dear Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board Trustees:

I'd like to comment on the PAR report in advance of the public open house meeting. I understand the problem with declining enrollment and realize hard choices need to be made. I can also see why the Board prefers Option 1; by just looking at numbers Option 1 would cost the least amount of money to implement. However, I'd like the board to consider more than just costs.

My daughter started full day kindergarten in the Fall at St. Gertrude. The school is walking distance, many of my neighbours with young children also go to St. Gertrude. The school allows parents to drop off their children as early as 8:05 a.m. eliminating the need for a paid before-school option for many parents. They also recently hosted a Night with Santa event that was very popular. Communication from the school and from the teachers to the parents is excellent, I am constantly being informed about what is going on at the school. In short, I am very satisfied with St. Gertrude.

In reviewing the Board's preferred option, it proposes to merge St. Gertrude non-immersion with St. Valentine to bring the overall school capacity to 114%, merging St. Gregory with St. Gertrude French Immersion to increase capacity to 108% and merging St. Raymond with Our Lady of Good Voyage to increase it up to 98%. My daughter's is in one of three kindergarten classes two of which have over 30 kids and St. Gertrude is reportedly "only" at 86% capacity. Does the Board believe that overcrowding to save some money is good for the students?

According to the report, St. Gertrude's current capacity is 86% -- which is actually the highest among all the schools in East Credit. Even with the French Immersion program, the percentage of students eligible for bus transportation is only 5%, which means the French Immersion demand is actually in the area. Based on your preferred option, does it make sense to require all the French Immersion students that live in the area to travel further just to continue their program at another school? Clearly, St. Gertrude is in a high demand area for Catholic and French Immersion students.

Looking through the school profiles, the biggest issue against St. Gertrude seems to be the projected five-year costs. The largest expenditure is the roof repair estimated at $300,000. Other than that, the other high and medium priority repairs are not out of line with the other schools. I'd also like to point out that it is not fair to include low and "n/a" priority costs because the school can easily opt to not go forward with these non-urgent items to save the school board money, yet the report has included these non-urgent costs to effectively inflate the projected renewal costs for some of the schools.

Aside from five-year projects, St. Gertrude as a building is actually the most cost efficient to operate in East Credit, utility costs are reportedly the lowest at only $12 per square foot. If the school is well-run, in a high-demand area, and doesn't cost more than any other school to run, should it be closed just because it has an expensive roof to replace?

I'd like to board to re-consider their preferred option, because I think to close a good school like St. Gertrude would do more harm than good in the long run for the current and future students in the community and could further erode enrollment into the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board.

Yours Sincerely,
Thanks for the reply to my earlier email. I have some additional concerns/questions that I would appreciate a response to and be considered during your review process.

1. Should a school close, does the entire population of that school get transferred to one receiving school? My concern is that children do not get separated from their peers. You can appreciate that if kids have been going to the same school for several years (since preschool) they have formed really strong relationships and it would be traumatic for the children to be separeated from their friends that have become like family. How do you ensure that the psycho-social wellbeing of the children continues to be of utmost importance, is protected and maintained?

2. For children with IEPs that require special education, how do you ensure that these children continue to receive the focused attention they need and that the quality and access to these services are maintained or improved during transiton and integration of schools. Do you anticipate a change in the ratio of special education resources to student? How do you ensure these children do not fall through the cracks?

3. It is my understanding that not all schools have the same start time. St. Dunstan has a start time of 8:30 which allows parents to drop off children and get to work by 9:00 a.m. I am concerned that if St. Dunstan closes, not only will it be very disruptive to our children but it may also cost us more money if they get transferred to a school with a 9 a.m. start time. A later start to the school day would require us to enroll 2 children in a before school program costing our family a significant amount of money. Should this be the case the school board saves money by closing schools and parents are burdened with additional costs. How will the school board ensure that integration will not result in additional costs to families?

I look forward to your response and hope that you will address these concerns at the upcoming public meeting on Jan 20th.

On Dec 3, 2015 10:59 AM, "PARinfo@dpcdsb.org" <PARinfo@dpcdsb.org> wrote:

Thank you for your email. We appreciate and value your input. Please be assured that your comments have been documented and will be discussed and considered as part of the accommodation review process.

By way of background, accommodation reviews are designed to look at a grouping of schools to determine how best to address an enrolment shortfall, with the least possible impact on students and families. We understand, and are sensitive to the fact, that the possibility of a school closing can be stressful. While the initial staff report may contain a proposed option that impacts your child’s school, it does not necessarily mean that this will be the option that will ultimately be adopted. The final decision by the Board of Trustees to move forward with a recommendation will not take place until extensive consultation with the community has occurred.

The staff recommendation, outlined in the November 24 Board Report, will be presented at the first public meeting, scheduled for January 20, 2016 at St. Joseph Secondary School. This recommendation provides a foundation for the ARC (Accommodation Review Committee) committee’s discussions. The rationale for developing the options considered available capacity, enrolment projections, facility condition and distribution of schools within the review area. The committee may also create alternative accommodation options, which should be consistent with the objectives and criteria outlined in committee’s terms of reference. The current recommendations propose any schools selected for closure would be closed, effective June 2017.

All meetings are open to the public. Please join us at the ARC Working Group or Open House Public Meetings that will be scheduled in January for more information on the development of the options. Talk to your principal about how you can get involved.

All information related to the process, including meeting dates, Policy documents, Board reports, Q and As, and other
Dear ARC Members:

Please let me introduce myself virtually. I'm residing at Road and I have 3 children that currently attend St. Dunstan elementary school.

Wanted to share with you that two of my children, (8 year old twins) were both in tears this evening at the thought that their school could potentially close. This was very upsetting for my husband and I.

Having said that, I have reviewed the potential options and it appears that St. Dunstan would close in all options unless the eight schools stay at status quo, or at least that is how I'm interrupting the options outlined on your website. I have observed that the staff preferred option lists St. Bernadette, St. Herbert, St. Raymond and St. Valentine. Does this mean that in this scenario (option 1) St. Dunstan would close? If this is the case, this doesn't make sense to me considering the current utilization rates at three of those schools are actually lower than St. Dunstan. This would mean that you're actually impacting and potentially displacing more students and potentially being disruptive to more families.

Could you please explain the rationale behind the development of the three options? Also, could you please provide the estimated timing of the changes/closures, should they occur?

I would appreciate a response to the questions posed above and would like to stay informed through these deliberations. Could you please keep me informed about the accommodation review process going forward including any dates and locations of public consultations.

From a very concerned parent.

Regards,
Dear Staff,

Here are some of our concerns about the preferred option which includes the closing of St. Gertrude.

1. SAFETY
One cannot just add one group of students to another to crunch numbers. Our daughter is not a number. Did anyone consider how these hundreds of students from St. Gertrude are going to safely get to St. Valentine? If one is walking (and in our case our distance changes from 500m currently to 1.9 Km!) most students will be crossing Mavis at Lafayette/Preston Manor. This is a 6 lane plus turning lane intersection. The traffic is excessive in volume and speed. This would be extremely dangerous to cross. Also, if one is driving we can only imagine the effects of adding a couple of hundred cars to this intersection.

2. Capacity
By adding the regular track students from St. Gertrude to St. Valentine the number of students would be over the St. Valentine capacity by almost 100 students! How would this make sense. Adding the St. Gertrude F.I. students to St. Gregory also puts this school over capacity.

We strongly oppose the closing of St. Gertrude Elementary School. This is our third child to attend St. Gertrude and part of the appeal of this community and the reason many chose to purchase their homes here, is the close and safe walk to both our elementary and secondary school. If the option of St. Gertrude closing were to be chosen we would have to unfortunately consider removing our daughter from dpcsdb and continue to walk our safe 500m to the public school next door.

Sincerely,
I'm writing to express my deep concern with the current pupil accommodation review process underway in the east credit area. I am a parent of 3 children at St. Dunstan and have read the documents prepared by the dpcsdb and recently attended the ARC committee meeting on Jan.13th; where I was deeply offended by the committee chair who implied that St. Dunstan parents were being "elitist" by raising EQAO scores as a factor of consideration.

At that meeting, it became clear to me that the board has presented options for closure based solely on geographic distribution. While I recognize this is an important consideration, it strikes me that this approach is a rather shallow analysis; especially given the potential impact of these decisions on our children's educations and the sustainability of all schools in this affected area. After further exploration of the PAR process guidelines by the ministry of education, I noted that the guidelines specifically identify student well-being, academic achievement and school board financial viability/sustainability as the key guiding principles that should be at the core of any PAR process. No mention of geographic considerations.

Question #1: How is the dpcsdb incorporating the guiding principles of student well-being, academic achievement and school board financial viability/sustainability into their review process; and in the options presented by staff?

Further research on the ministry of education site uncovered some interesting best practices that were identified through 3 case studies and summarized in the attached document. I would like to call attention to 2 highlighted quotes on this document by the superintendents involved in these processes:

"While operational decisions may differ from school to school the mission and vision around student achievement has to take the lead in all conversations about facilities" (Superintendent)

"Decisions are made through the lens of student learning so there has to be strong collaboration between those making capital and finance decisions and program planning and leadership." (Superintendent)

Question#2: Given that this is the first PAR review process by dpcsdb, what research did the board do in regards to learnings and best practices of other PAR reviews in the province? If any, what were the key findings and specifically, the role of student achievement (EQAO or otherwise) in the decision making process?

The implication that St. Dunstan parents are being "elitist"; and somehow less christian by bringing up EQAO scores for consideration is simply offensive to the highest degree. We understand that students have varying abilities, strengths and personalities; and we love and care for all our children in our community. We are not suggesting that we value our children by assigning a score. Rather, we are simply recognizing the reality that EQAO scores (whether like them or not) play a role for parents when deciding where to enroll their children and thus are a factor in determining long-term viability of the schools sustainability (through taxation and enrollment).

Questions #3 and 4: Has the board researched any data or correlation between EQAO scores and enrollment? Has the board researched the correlation between EQAO scores and real estate sales?

I would like to also draw your attention to a 1994 study by the Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards & Student Testing (CRESST) that clearly spells out the factors that contributes to a successful school; specifically that:

"What makes a good school has less to do with the configuration of the school or the socioeconomic standard of the neighborhood. There are successful schools in the inner cities of America, just as there are unsuccessful ones in the country's wealthy suburbs."
The report goes on to describe the factors leading to high performing schools being:

- Strong and professional teachers and administrators
- A broad curriculum available to all students
- A philosophy that all children can be taught; coupled with high expectations for all students
- A school environment that is conducive to learning (caring, clean, organized, safe)
- An on-going assessment system that supports good instruction
- High level of parent and community involvement

This should emphasize to you that our St. Dunstan community is not being "elitist" when we cite EQAO scores as a factor for consideration; and such an implication is completely unfounded. Rather, we want to ensure that this PAR review results in the best quality education for all the children in the east credit region regardless of the school location or neighborhood demographics. You should also note that most of these factors are ingrained in the systems, personnel and environment of the school and are not simply transferable through students.

**Question #5 and #6:** Has the board researched the factors that contribute to high performing schools and high enrollment schools (including the influence of performance scores and rankings)? Does the board have evidence/research to support which of these factors are transferable?

I sincerely pray that you are able use the contents of this email to help inform an evidence based decision process that will lead to the best outcomes for our most valuable asset in our east credit community; our children.

God bless.
What is School Consolidation?
For the purposes of these studies, school consolidation is defined as the closure or re-organization of one or more school(s) and the subsequent amalgamation into one single school, either on an existing site, or, in an entirely newly constructed facility.

“Early transition planning with students, staff and the community is essential for successful consolidation of schools.” (Senior Board Staff)

Background
Given the current fiscal context, the School Board Efficiencies and Modernization (SBEM) strategy was developed to promote consolidation or joint use of existing or new school space.

To support this goal, the Ministry committed to conducting case studies on recent experiences of school consolidations/reorganizations across the province to share promising practices based on the results of these experiences and ultimately increase positive outcomes.

The research team conducted approximately 100 on-site interviews and focus groups with key stakeholders impacted by recent school consolidations/reorganizations. The research team also conducted site visits to understand the diversity of stakeholder views.

“While operational decisions may differ from school to school the mission and vision around student achievement has to take the lead in all conversations about facilities.” (Superintendent)

Three Case Studies
Three distinct case studies in two district school boards focussed on school consolidation/reorganization experiences:

Algoma DSB
1. Merging two schools into a newly created cross-panel school: Bawating and Sir James Dunn into Superior Heights Collegiate and Vocational School (Grades 7-12).
2. Merging elementary and secondary panels into one cross-panel school: The reorganization of the grade seven and eight programs from all Central Algoma elementary schools through a relocation of these programs into Central Algoma Secondary School (CASS).

Durham DSB
3. Merging two schools into an existing / refurbished school: Dr. F.J. Donevan Collegiate Institute and Eastdale Collegiate and Vocational Institute into Eastdale Collegiate and Vocational Institute.
What Are Some Highlights from the Findings?

The detailed studies have a wealth of information on lessons learned and advice for school board administrators in future consolidations/reorganizations. Some highlights from the studies include:

- The initial fears of individuals impacted by consolidation/reorganization were significantly allayed after the transition plans were successfully implemented
- There were perceived benefits particularly around expanded academic programming and co-curricular activities
- Students adapted more quickly than school staff to their new environment.

“We made every effort to hear every concern from students and parents and by the time the process was over, people felt much more positively because they didn’t realize how much more they would be getting in the new school.” (Supervisory Officer)

What Was Learned?

Lessons learned were articulated around the themes of Communication, Transition Planning and Implementation of Decisions, and Program Offerings and School Culture. The three reports offer lessons learned specific to each case study and deserve specific attention. The following are broad examples that apply to all three case studies:

- Establish working groups for collaborative planning involving students, parents, staff and community members to explore similar experiences in other jurisdictions to fuel planning activities and reduce anxieties about transition issues.
- Create ample opportunities for all stakeholders to be provided with timely and accurate information from the formation of the Accommodation Review Committee (ARC) through to the monitoring of the first few years of the operation of the newly consolidated school or reorganized facility.
- Facilitate the involvement of students and the inclusion of student voice and leadership in transition planning and implementation to ensure an empowering and productive learning environment.
- Ensure sufficient time to allow for transition planning and transition activities for staff, students and parents before the consolidation/reorganization takes effect.
- Provide ample opportunity for shared planning, staff collaboration and facilitated professional learning for the staffs from the schools involved in the consolidation/reorganization to:
  ✶ Break down divisions among staff,
  ✶ Identify new or emerging student needs resulting from the consolidation, and
  ✶ Set the stage for a genuinely effective professional learning community.
- Empower an ongoing group of staff, students and parents to monitor the implementation of transition plans throughout the consolidation process and in the first year after the consolidation to provide advice on ‘course adjustments’ and to ensure that legacy and other commitments are honoured.

“Decisions are made through the lens of student learning so there has to be strong collaboration between those making capital and finance decisions and program planning and leadership.” (Superintendent)

Key Themes

**Communication**: the quality and consistency of communication, of board decision-making and planning and the facilitation of connections and dialogue between staff groups, between student groups and between the board and stakeholders (including parents, staff and student and community members) had a direct impact on the acceptance and positive impact of the consolidation/reorganization experience.

**Transition Planning and Implementation of Decisions**: collaborative planning coupled with efficient and thorough implementation of decisions and commitments were vital to the success of consolidation/reorganization efforts.

**Program Offerings and School Culture**: due to larger student cohorts and consolidated staff, program offerings and co-curriculars were generally enhanced through consolidation/reorganization. When all parties in the consolidated/reorganized school were engaged in creating a new school culture an inclusive and encouraging learning and teaching environment resulted.
A Guide to Parents and Communities Seeking Excellence in Education 1994

The Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards & Student Testing (CRESST)
Eva Baker, Director
Joan Herman, Associate Director
Josie Bain, Senior Research Associate

A Research Unit of the UCLA Graduate School of Education
Dean Theodore R. Mitchell
405 Hilgard Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90024-1521

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For as many years as there has been a place called "school," we've been seeking ways to fashion the best educational experience for our children—the place that would provide students with the best possible education and send them forth fully prepared to meet life's challenges.

Every American generation has desired quality education for its children and in many ways the system has responded by expanding opportunities to historically underrepresented students, updating curriculum, and improving teaching techniques.

Yet, for all the changes implemented in the American classroom, parents and the community, in general, are ill-prepared to measure the quality of the schools that serve them. As consumers of education, parents and other taxpayers have a right to know whether or not their schools are doing a good job.

In the search for a good school, many parents have moved to new locations; many have gotten permits that would allow their children to attend a school in their neighborhood, district, or city; and many have opted for private schools.

School districts and private schools, aware of parents' search for quality education, have explored many innovative ways of accomplishing this aim and have tried many different configurations. There are now alternative schools, schools of choice, magnet schools, schools without walls, and countless numbers of educational centers. None of these schools, however, comes with a certificate of quality. What we do know is that quality education comes from a real partnership between parents and professionals working together.

So, how do we know what makes a good school? Fortunately, that question can be answered based upon sound research findings that make it possible to measure the quality of the education a school offers.

What makes a good school is less to do with the configuration of the school or the socioeconomic standard of the neighborhood. There are successful schools in the inner cities of America, just as there are unsuccessful ones in the country's wealthy suburbs.

- What makes the difference between success and failure? We can identify several qualities of successful schools that set them apart. A good school has:
  - Strong and professional administrators and teachers.
  - A broad curriculum available to all students.
  - A philosophy that says all children can learn if taught, coupled with high expectations for all students.
  - A school climate that is conducive to learning. A good school is safe, clean, caring, and well-organized.
  - An ongoing assessment system that supports good instruction.
  - A high level of parent and community involvement and support.

LET'S LOOK AT EACH OF THESE QUALITIES.

ADMINISTRATORS AND TEACHERS

- Good schools have a strong administrator who:

  - Leads instruction at the school and knows in depth the school's curriculum and instruction provided in each grade level.
  - Helps teachers develop instructional strategies and techniques and encourages teamwork.
  - Makes time for in-service training and seminars for the school's entire staff.
  - Marshals resources and distributes them to benefit the greatest number of students.
  - Communicate with parents and provides sufficient time for such dialogues.
- Establishes goals for the school and articulates those goals with clarity, conviction, and understanding.

- Maintains a well-balanced staff with multiple skills and competencies and knows the staff's strengths and special capabilities.

- Works to maintain high morale which contributes to great stability and limited teacher turnover.

- Strives to keep class sizes appropriate for the subject and grade being taught and within state guidelines.

- Develops with staff and parents a clearly defined policy on discipline, grading, attendance, testing, promotions, and retentions.

- Knows the community and is equipped to work cooperatively with teachers and parents to provide support services to students encountering problems.

- Maintains a good relationship with the district and makes wise use of district resources.

- Set challenging classroom assignments that are appropriate to the subject, are interesting, and clearly relate to other lessons taught.

- Use a wealth of materials and many different approaches to teaching difficult concepts.

- Relate, as often as possible, the objectives of lessons taught to students' backgrounds, communities, and cultures.

- Maintain discipline in the classroom to foster the optimal learning environment.

- Keep students consistently informed on how they are doing and what they will be doing next, and discuss the significance of each step and its relationship to concepts previously taught.

- Keep students informed as to how well they are doing.

- Use testing and evaluation as a tool to measure student progress as well as to determine curriculum changes and teaching strategies in order to accommodate the needs of ethnically and culturally diverse groups of students.

- Good schools have strong professional teachers who:

  - Hold current certification in the classes they are teaching and have mastered the subject matter.

  - Maintain high expectations for student achievement, which is evident in every aspect of classroom work.

  - Teach students how to learn.

  - Provide students with ample opportunities to practice skills taught in order to grasp concepts.

  - Create consistency in learning methods that include problem-solving, thinking, and creative activities.

  - Hold students responsible for completion of work assigned within established standards for quality.

- Good schools have counselors who:

  - Know the school, its community, and understand the strengths, assets, and goals of each.

  - Serve as a bridge between students, parents, and school personnel.

  - Assist students in class selection.

  - Understand the system of testing and assessment, and explain it to parents, teachers, and staff.

  - Play a significant role in interpreting test results to staff, teachers, administrators, and parents and analyze test results in order to make informed recommendations when changes in testing procedures are appropriate.
• Keep themselves and their schools up to date on state testing requirements.
• Understand and use a combination of strategies to determine student progress.
• Provide information concerning college, career, and vocational options available to students.
• Provide all students with access to appropriate counseling and give students timely advice on program planning, requirements for graduation, and requirements for college

• Good schools often have or have regular access to additional support staff geared to meeting the needs of a diverse student body:
  • A School Psychologist
  • A School Doctor
  • A School Nurse
  • An Attendance and Adjustment Counselor
  • A Child Abuse Counselor
  • Bilingual Education Assistant
  • Proficiency in English Services
  • Resource Teachers who are prepared in a wide range of subjects and who can offer assistance to new teachers.

A CURRICULUM AS BROAD AS THE STUDENTS ARE DIVERSE

• A Good School recognizes the great diversity in backgrounds, needs, and aspirations of its students and develops a curriculum that meets these needs. Good Schools:
  • Offer a broad curriculum within the guidelines established by both state and local mandates that is appropriate to the students’ age and educational background.
  • Place a strong emphasis on basic curriculum including Science, Math, History, Geography, English, and the Arts.
  • Have a visual and performing arts curriculum.
  • Value the importance of multicultural education and encourage students to experience other cultures.
  • Constantly seek ways, wherever possible, to enrich the curriculum by offering more courses that supplement a strong academic program.
  • Believe that all children can learn if properly taught.
  • Show great flexibility in the presentation of subject matter to maintain student interest.
  • Keep athletics in proper relation to academics.
  • Evaluate school offerings on a continuous basis, so as to include studies appropriately related to the social and academic changes in our society.
  • Review on a regular basis requirements necessary for students’ entry into college or university and make sure needed courses are offered.
  • Keep abreast of work-force requirements and incorporate the necessary skills in the curriculum of the school.
  • Make every effort to help students develop proper interpersonal skills needed for college, work force, or everyday living.

Good schools teach lessons for living as well as thinking.
HIGH EXPECTATIONS GO HAND-IN-HAND WITH EQUITY

- In good schools, high expectations for students’ achievement are observed throughout the school. The surroundings of the school give a message to all who enter that academic achievement is valued in this place. These high expectations for achievement are found on school bulletin board displays, in the hallways, in classroom displays, and in the school newsletter. They are also recognized by the number and quality of awards presented. The overall environment and outreach makes a statement that learning is valued and rewarded. In Good Schools:
  - Learning is promoted as the most important reason for attending school.
  - High standards for classwork are carefully set with students and are maintained on a consistent basis.
  - Each lesson offers a challenge for students, but each also is within the students’ ability to attain.
  - Class time is used as learning time and few interruptions are permitted.
  - Homework is assigned with a purpose, usually to reinforce a concept taught or to give additional practice.
  - Homework is always checked, reviewed, and feedback is given.
  - High standards for classroom behavior are established and adhered to in order to permit classwork to proceed on an established schedule.
  - In keeping with the high expectations of each teacher and each class, awards for outstanding work are presented at assemblies and community meetings. This is done to advertise and maintain the goals established for a high-achieving student body.
  - Improvement in achievement is high on the list of priorities, and resources to assist teachers and students are continuously made available.

In the equitable classroom, fairness is the guiding principle.

- All classrooms in all locations maintain an academic environment that addresses the needs for basic learning.
- All classes receive consistent and appropriate classroom instruction.
- All classes are provided with adequate and updated instructional materials.
- Proper emphasis is placed on the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills and the continued use of assessment systems that analyze the quality and quantity of student learning. Included in all of this is the opportunity for change in teaching strategies when warranted.

In good schools, the concept of equity is applied on a continuous basis.

A SCHOOL CLIMATE CONducIVE TO LEARNING

- Learning requires time and a conducive atmosphere. Since learning is as much a social activity as it is an individual activity, much of what students learn comes from interacting with other people. Thus the nature of the relationships among the people at the school will have a strong influence on students’ learning. Good schools:
  - Develop a social and academic climate that gives students a strong feeling of belonging; students feel proud of their school; feel they belong; feel they are wanted and nurtured by the school.
  - Have high morale due to the cooperation of teachers, staff, and parents who work closely together to provide the best school environment for their students.
  - Offer appropriate supervision so that only those persons eligible are found on the school grounds. Students are given, on a continuous basis, instructions as to how to respond to visitors on the school grounds.
  - Buildings are kept in good condition, making them safe at all times.
* Students know the safety drills held at the school and respond with precision when the signal is given.

* Good schools recognize and respond to students who come from many different home environments.

* In good schools, staff expect and accept some divergent responses to school rules and make appropriate preparations for effectively responding in a positive and constructive manner.

* Every effort is made to create an atmosphere in which the student feels the school offers him or her an understanding and a caring response to life’s inequities.

**Good Schools Are Well Organized**

* Good Schools have libraries that are stocked with up-to-date books appropriate for the age and interest level of students; centrally located for ready access by total student body and staff, staffed, where possible, by a full time librarian on duty daily. All children are taught how to use the library.

* In the school office student work and awards are proudly displayed; secretaries and clerical personnel are courteous and knowledgeable about the school and its programs; students’ needs are met promptly so as to minimize the amount of time out of their classrooms.

* Halls are neat, clean, and free of debris. Traffic patterns are established for safety. Bulletin boards in halls are reflective of the educational programs being promoted at all grade levels.

* Evidence of knowledge, acceptance, and understanding of the diversity of cultures in the school is reflected in art displays and the recognition of student achievement.

* On the school grounds play areas for students are well-defined and well organized; games played give evidence of necessary skill having been taught; safety rules are clearly defined and assiduously followed; lunch areas are clearly defined and properly supervised; school grounds are supervised by competent personnel.

**DETERMINING SUCCESS: AN ONGOING ASSESSMENT SYSTEM**

* Good schools are very concerned about the overall achievement of their students and make testing and assessment an integral part of their programs. Assessment measures the level of student achievement; helps schools discover the strengths and weaknesses of their curriculum; and suggests areas where programs need to be modified or added.

* In good schools, clear goals are established as to what students are expected to learn.

* The curriculum is guided by these carefully constructed instructional goals, with tests, resource materials, and experiences orchestrated to promote success.

* Good schools use a variety of tests and assessments to meet their needs. Some of these may be developed by commercial publishers, some may be developed by state departments of education and districts, and some are constructed by teachers for use in their classrooms.

* In good schools teachers prepare students for assessments in many ways:

  * Give students suggestions for readying themselves for a test or assessment – for example, proper rest, be on time.

  * Give tests or assessments under conditions that allay fears and reduce anxiety.

  * Do not teach the test, but make sure concepts and skills that reflect the goals of the test or assessment are taught.

  * Make sure that students are exposed to and are learning the broad concepts, issues, topics, and skills that are taught at a particular grade level.

  * Let students know what to expect on the test or assessment.
Good teachers use assessment to:

- Hold students to high standards.
- Examine the effectiveness of their teaching strategies, to determine if they are presenting understandable materials.
- Diagnose the strengths and weaknesses of a particular class and of individual students within it.
- Determine whether the class, a group within it, or individual students are ready to go on to the next unit or next class.
- Gather a balanced picture of a student’s ability and mastery; do not use the results of one particularly pencil-and-paper test as the sole determinant of a student’s achievement.

Where assessment results are less than satisfactory, good teachers:

- Help students read and review concepts presented.
- Determine if they have adequately reviewed materials presented, asked questions, and shared additional materials to reinforce a given concept.
- Question if they have consistently reviewed and encouraged students to relate class experiences with some of their own personal experiences.
- Determine if the tests or assignments used mirror the textbook material used by the class.
- Determine if the tests are assessing what was actually taught.

In good schools, students also are encouraged to use assessment results.

- It conveys to them the level of success with which they are meeting.

- It helps them see the continuity in their learning and offers them the encouragement to apply learned skills in one field to other fields and to everyday living experiences.
- They are encouraged by an assessment system that reveals both their growth and the areas in which improvement is needed.
- It empowers them to share in the responsibility for their own learning.

The pursuit of excellence on the part of the school is always the goal.

In Good Schools, parents use assessment to observe the progress being made by their children.

- Assessment helps parents note progress or lack of progress on the part of their youngster and to determine when to seek assistance.
- Assessment helps parents understand what a given school is seeking to accomplish and whether the school’s goals are in sync with the goals the parents desire.
- Good schools encourage parents to ask questions, to seek clarification of procedures used, and to determine the impact of a given test on their child’s future.

Parent Involvement

One of the most prevalent and consistent findings in the research on good schools is that parent involvement makes a difference. Positive parent involvement has a significant impact on student achievement, school attendance, and the central role of the school in students’ lives. In good schools, parents:

- Participate with the school in establishing its organizational goals.
- Actively participate in developing the school’s policy on discipline, grading, attendance, testing, promotions, and retentions.

PARENTAL AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND SUPPORT IS CRITICAL.

Parent Involvement
Parents can use assessments to help their children to learn and develop.

- Visit with teachers and administrators at the school on a regular basis.
- Inquire as to what happened at school on any given day and help children clarify concerns. Inquire about homework assignments, provide place and time for students to complete their work, and offer assistance to students as needed.
- Speak well of the school.
- Take stock periodically to determine if they, their child, and the school are working together in their plans for the child's future.
- Recognize that children spend only a portion of the day at school and that much more of their time is spent at home; therefore much can and should be done at home to increase the child's learning.
- Join a school organization if at all possible.
- Listen to their children.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND SUPPORT

- Good schools are an important part of a community. Recognized leaders of the community often share their talents and experience with a school, thereby projecting positive images and serving as role models for students.
- The utilization of office space by agencies, corporations, and businesses to display outstanding work accomplished by students (essays, art work) makes a positive display of the togetherness that exists between the school and the community.
- Good schools know that they and the community are one. Failure on the part of either can bring discredit to the other.
- Good schools receive broad support from their communities and identify with the community and its agencies in multiple ways and on a continuous basis.

- In good schools, the social agencies are active participants in the life of the school, often providing additional counseling, tutoring services, and food and clothing to the needy.
- Members of the community visit the school regularly and participate in assemblies, often addressing some of the critical issues of the community and indicating where and how help can be obtained.
- Good schools make every effort to schedule events at times and places that are convenient for parents and encourage maximum participation by the entire school community.

THE RIGHT SCHOOL IS ONLY THE BEGINNING OF A LIFETIME OF EDUCATIONAL ENJOYMENT.

Finding a good school for your child is only the initial step. Reaping the benefits of any school requires the constant participation of all concerned—students, teachers, and parents. When your child enters a school, it represents a commitment on the part of both you and the child and gives a vote of confidence to the school that you believe it will do its best. The education of your child is above all a cooperative effort that involves the school, teachers, parents, and the community.

CRESTT would like to thank the following persons for their advice and assistance in compiling this booklet:

Thaddeus Mitchell, Ph.D., Dean, UCLA Graduate School of Education
Eva Baker, Ph.D., Director, UCLA Center for the Study of Evaluation
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Audrey Clark, Superintendent, Lynwood Unified School District
Cindy Wood, President, 108th District Calif. Parent-Teachers Association
Janet Phillips, President, 12th District Calif. Parent-Teachers Association
Bob Witherpoon, Executive Director, Parent Center, Washington, D.C.
The Honourable Augustus Handlin, Retired Member, U.S. House of Representatives
Good Day,

My name is [Name redacted], I have two children that attend Saint Gertrude Elementary school, and along with many other parents, I would like to express my concern over the probable closure of our school.

We live in the vicinity and this is our home school. My children walk to and from school, we are exactly 600 meters within walking distance.

I want to raise the issue of Safety in light of the probable closure of St. Gertrude School.

Currently many families because of the distance they live from the schools (St Gertrude and St Valentine) are not eligible to be bussed to school. This means that all families East of Mavis will have to cross Mavis road on a daily basis to get to their "new" schools.

This presents some significant risk, as Mavis is a 4 lane road with a maximum speed limit of 70 Kms/Hour. There have been reported accidents involving pedestrians over the years with a recent one in December. See the link below.

Why was the present location of St Gertrude chosen in the first place?

The present location of St Gertrude School was selected after careful analysis of the areas, avoiding dangerous roads, utilizing safe paths, parks, crosswalks with safety as a first consideration for all of our children. Focusing on our childrens' safety instead of on monetary savings must be first and foremost.

Regards,

[Name redacted]

Pedestrian struck on Mavis Road, police investigating

Louie Rosella

Mississauga News | Dec 11, 2015

Peel Regional Police and Peel Region Paramedics have responded to the intersection of Mavis Road and Lafayette Drive this afternoon after a pedestrian was struck and injured.

Police say southbound Mavis Road is blocked in the area for the police investigation after the incident occurred just after 3:15 p.m. The pedestrian has been taken to hospital with minor injuries.
To whom it may concern,

The below email was recently sent to parents of Catholic students in Halton from their Trustees. It is regarding a province-wide initiative to collect ideas and several suggestions included consolidating both Catholic & Public school boards (which we have yet to be informed about in Dufferin/Peel).

The number of unanswered questions that have come up as part of the PAR & the potential St Gertrude closure proposal seem to be shrouded in a lot of secrecy (Mavis border excludes St G? Kids having to cross Mavis is a major safety issue but not taken into consideration? Our high enrollment rate of almost 85%? Add'l French Immersion program re-startup costs to taxpayers? Add'l costs of more portables & overcapacity issues to taxpayers? Social impacts to our children potentially being moved to a lesser performing school? etc etc....). It also appears we continue to be kept in the dark not only by the school itself "because they have to remain neutral" but by the board and trustees too :( Maybe it's high time we as parents engaged the province and media for action??

KEEP ST GERTRUDE OPEN!!!!! PLEASE HELP US SAVE PUBLIC CATHOLIC EDUCATION IN ONTARIO!!!!

Signed,

Concerned Parents of Dufferin/Peel Catholic Students -

-------- Original Message --------
"From: Halton Catholic District Schools
Date:01-14-2016 7:04 PM
Subject: Please Show Your Support for Catholic Education

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We are writing to with a special request.

You may have read online and in the media that the Government of Ontario has launched the “Talk Ontario” website, asking Ontarians to share their opinions on publicly funded Catholic schools.

In recent years, there has been some growing discussion around the idea of amalgamation of school boards and the elimination of publicly funded Catholic schools. Although we have experienced tremendous academic excellence in our faith-based education and have exemplified many positive contributions to Ontario and our local communities, the funding of Catholic education has been up for debate. Every now and then, the issue resurfaces, re-invigorating the efforts of groups that want to end public funding for Catholic schools in Ontario.

Special interest groups opposed to Ontario’s Catholic schools argue that the elimination of Catholic schools through amalgamation would save about $1 billion. This figure has no basis in fact.

-The Reality: Education funding in Ontario is per-pupil based. This is the driver of costs and would not change under an amalgated model. The only way to save money through amalgamation would be to close SEVERAL HUNDRED schools in Ontario.

-The Reality: If schools were amalgamated and hundreds of schools closed, all Ontario students (across all systems) would be displaced. There is no indication that public school supporters would be prepared to move their children from the local public school in order to accommodate children living closer to a Catholic school or vice versa. There would be disruption and chaos in every community across this province.
-The Reality: The cost of amalgamation would far out-strip any savings. The last amalgamation in the education sector happened in 1998 and resulted in the province spending $1.2 billion in additional “transition” costs for that amalgamation (SOURCE: Ministry of Education).

-Recent research from the University of Western Ontario (Timothy Cobban, 2014) shows that amalgamation does not save money.

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Please take a moment to comment in support of publicly funded Catholic education in Ontario’s education system on the Talk Ontario website at: https://talks.ontario.ca/idea/amalgamate-catholic-and-public-school-boards

Note: you will need to register in order to provide your comments.

Catholic education is one of the essential pillars in Ontario’s publicly-funded educational system, a system which is highly regarded and recognized around the world. Our system is built upon a strong foundation and the future of Catholic education is a shared responsibility for all of our stakeholders. Let’s speak up together to ensure that we keep our Catholic schools.

Thank you,

Your School Board Trustees
Halton Catholic District School Board"
Dear Harinder Takhar,

We are parents of a 4th grade school who attends St. Dunstan Elementary school, as we live in the Credit Pointe Village, which is part of the East Credit Community in Mississauga. We are contacting you to express our concern with the current pupil accommodation review (PAR) that is taking place by the Dufferin-Peel Catholic School Board.

We have been informed that the PAR process is triggered by low utilization in our collective area; and that the Ontario Ministry of Education guidelines for school boards emphasize that the PAR process identify potential closures and consolidations based on managing enrollment in the area; we have been also told that this decisions should ensure student well-being and managing budgets responsibly.

That is why it’s surprising for us to see that out of the 8 schools being considered for closure, St. Dunstan was recommended for closure in all 3 proposed options, including the board’s “preferred option”.

This really surprised us because out of those 8 schools under review, St. Dunstan has the highest overall academic achievement on the EQAO scores and its enrolment rate is the one increasing the most out of the same schools.

When we were told that the well-being of the students was important for the School Board we thought that the academic performance of the schools was part of it. At St. Dunstan our kids do not find only excellent scores in the EQAO, we have found also a community of involved parents, teachers and caregivers as the YMCA center attached to the school works really closely with the school.

We moved to the Credit Pointe Village 3 and half years ago, when our middle kid was going to start Elementary School; it took several months for us to find a house we wanted to buy as we knew we wanted our kids to attend St. Dunstan and houses in its boundary sell really fast; in fact it’s one of the selling points of the different Real State agents working in the area. We knew we wanted both our kids to attend St. Dunstan. Our youngest has been attending the YMCA day
care center attached to the school since before he was two years old, and he will become 4 years old this April, he
cannot wait to start attending JK at St. Dunstan this coming September and it breaks their and our hearts to think that
they would have to move to a different school and day care altogether next year, due to a Board decision that will
impact our entire community and it wouldn’t be the best choice for the kids.

We would like to invite you to review the board’s “preferred option” to split the students from St. Dunstan and relocate
them to St. Bernadette and St. Herbert as these 2 schools have less than 50% utilization and their EQAO scores are the
worst in the area. This will make us explore different options for education for our kids outside of the catholic school
system as for us the main factor on our house hunting was always the well-being of our kids which includes their
education and academic performance, and as I know many parents we have spoken with will take the same paths, this
will ended up impacting even more the school board.

Please, I invite you in your capacity as MPP Mississauga-Erindale, to make a recommendation to the board to re-visit its
approach and recommend to keep the good schools like St. Dunstan to ensure that the desired outcomes of the PAR
policy; namely high student achievement, high utilization and responsible budgets, are brought back into the focus of
this process taking always in account what is best for our kids.

Thank-you in advance for your commitment to protecting the well-being and the quality of education for our children.

Sincerely,

---

Tel: [Redacted]

Mississauga, ON

L5M – 3M8
Dear Sir/Madam,

I am a parent of 2 young children who study at St Gregory Elementary School.

The teachers and Staff at St Gregory are the most affable, efficient team that is always welcoming and inclusive. When my brother moved from Calgary to Mississauga in 2012, they were appalled at the excellent governance/management of this school. They enrolled their kids here as well - one of them was identified as a student to join St Lima for the gifted students program.

The staff at St Gregory have been exemplary at imparting the necessary education as well as physical and spiritual upbringing of my kids in the way of Christ.

It warms my heart to hear my children humming hymns
- Growing in Faith, growing in Christ

while being optimally developed and honed on the academic side as well.

I understand that the Pupil Accommodation Review might be a required step and should be implemented for cost savings by pooling smaller schools to save on overheads, but St Gregory has the capacity to take on more students.

I obviously say this because it will be a unsettling experience for the school and the children at this school, including mine. But I also sincerely take this time to speak for the Performance, experience and capabilities that exist at this Institution. That to me would be a great loss of a value that the DPCSB has created and perfected at St Gregory through these years.

I would like to represent the many St Gregory parents I have spoken to and request you to increase students at St Gregory since there is capacity, it being a big school, instead of considering its closure.

Regards,
Hello,

I heard many amazing reviews about St. Gregory, the principal, student council, and overall child experience. I specifically bought my home in 2013 in the zone of St. Gregory so that my child would be able to attend there.

She went from a private school to St. Gregory. You would think that coming from a private school with smaller classroom sizes, she would be slightly advanced. On the contrary, she struggled adjusting since the private school did not provide her with the proper classroom structure, organization and order that is expected for her grade level. Towards the middle of her first year at St. Gregory, she finally adjusted and is so thankful that I pulled her out of the private school to attend there.

It truly is an amazing school, with great amenities, in a great neighborhood and location, and it will be a shame to have it closed. I strongly support merging another school into St. Gregory as opposed to closing St. Gregory down.

If there is any way I can support this, or any other information you would like from me, please feel free to contact me at [redacted].

Thank you
Good evening
I am unable to attend the presentation tomorrow evening and would like to ask a question about the current "staff recommendation" option for St Gregory.
If this plan is implemented and the french immersion group is sent to St Gregory does that mean the ENTIRE school will be french immersion or will the currently enrolled students remain and the french students will be added to the enrollment.
My son and our family love St Gregory and will do anything to keep it open and alive..we hope the addition of the french group doesnt mean existing students will have to leave their beloved school.
Thank you in advance for responding to my question.

Save St Gregory
I am a parent of 2 boys that currently attend this school. I have one in the French immersion program and one that is not. Having said this, I am deeply concerned that if this school should close down, my boys will be in separate schools.

Not sure why this particular school is one of the schools that is being considered to be closed down because of the French immersion program which I believe has brought many students from other areas as this is an ideal program in a catholic school. As a practicing Catholic, I feel very concerned that we will lose all schools going forward.. This is truly devastating.

Any information regarding the decision to close this school down or any other pertinent information, would be greatly appreciated.

Kind regards,

(a very concerned parent)
We are and both are boys attend St. Gertrude. Our is diagnosed with and our younger son is . Please consider our story in your decision and keep St. Gertrude open.

Before we had our diagnosis for he entered JK and we had very difficult time for him. After our diagnosis of ASD and severe separation anxiety the St Gertrude Special needs team was incredibly supportive and helped our little boy, who would not eat on purpose to stay sick and not have to go to school (was 4 at the time), to get him to the point now where he loves his teacher and school! It was a very long and difficult journey that St. Gertrude helped us through.

For our younger son it's another successful story. We started from our little boy terrified of entering ANY building and making himself heavy and sitting in the middle of the road to a very happy boy who joyfully goes to school EVERY afternoon. From a boy who was overwhelmed and couldn't stand being in the same playground with all his classmates- to being able to play AND interact and be aware of his classmates- this is all due to the incredible staff of St. Gertrude.

God blessed us with all our Angels at St. Gertrude. If you only knew how difficult it was for our Family - and through it all it was our St.Gertrude school that helped us through our difficulties and struggles St. Gertrude is a God send for us and a blessing. I could go on and on and tell you so many more examples of their care and concern and influence for our boys - our Family.

Sincerely,

Sent from my iPhone
Good Afternoon,

I just wanted to share my thoughts with you regarding the proposal to close St. Gregory. I feel it would be a great disservice to the community to close this school which figures so prominently into the heart of our neighborhood. Anyone who has spent any time at St. Gregory or with any of our students will vouch for the family atmosphere our school provides to our children. The students at St. Gregory have a wonderful bond with each other that leads to them showing each other a kindness and consideration I have not experienced at other schools. Our teachers provide both nurturing as well as strong leadership in their guidance of our children.

As the only Catholic school north of Britannia, St. Gregory allows our children the ability to walk to and from school, without fear of crossing a major roadway, thus encouraging them to enjoy the fresh air and exercise that is missing in the lives of so many kids in society today. The ability to walk to school enhances their relationships with their classmates as well as children from other grades and as such further develops the bond between them that makes them so special.

Please consider removing St. Gregory from the options of schools to close and allow our children to continue to receive a faith based education as many parents will likely consider moving their children to the Public School Board in order to continue attending a school in our neighborhood.

Sincerely,
Kindly review attached letter.

Thank you,
To whom it may concern,

We are writing this letter to express our concern as parents and as community members for the pupil accommodation review for St. Dunstan Elementary School. It is surprising to us that St. Dunstan is being considered under all three options for the proposed school closure. Of the eight schools under review, St. Dunstan has the highest overall academic achievement, is above the areas average utilization, and has the fastest growing enrollment. That said, there are two other schools in the area that have not been considered for closure. These schools have and are projected to have: lower utilization, EQAO scores, higher annual operating costs, and worse facility condition index. These schools that we are referring to our St. Bernadette and St. Raymond.

On a personal note, we chose to move into the area after reviewing various schools for our daughters, and St. Dunstan was clearly the best school for our children. St. Dunstan is an exceptional example of the kind of school that every child deserves and should experience. When our daughter began school she struggled socially and eventually developed social anxiety and as a result stopped speaking in school. We had never anticipated that our vivacious daughter would have such a difficult time and were unsure how to help here. Luckily the amazing staff as St. Dunstan knew exactly what to do. They built a community around her, from the secretary, to the Principal, the teachers, and the older children in the school - they all came together to help our daughter feel safe and secure in school. I can happily say now that she not only loves school but she is thriving academically and socially as well.

I am sure many parents would agree with us that we can go on and on about our personal experiences, the ones that touch our hearts and make us forever grateful for St. Dunstan School. Unfortunately you won’t be able to hear all those experiences but I hope that with the amount of letters written, phone calls made, and the acknowledgment of the number of attendees to all the meetings it will be evident to you all that closing St. Dunstan should not be an option.

We trust that the right decision will be made for community and St. Dunstan will remain open. However if St. Dunstan is closed despite the facts above, the personal stories, and all of our efforts, unfortunately we will be removing our daughters from the Catholic School Board. We have looked into the other catholic schools in the area and they are substandard and therefore not an option for us; so we will be choosing an alternative such as public or private schooling. We hope that it does not come to this and that our daughters can continue to grow and learn at St. Dunstan.

Thank you for taking the time to read our letter.

Best Regards,
Hello,

I would like to send my comments to save the school my daughter goes to. It is St. Gregory Elementary School. They have teachers and staff who work hard and care for their students education and religion. I love St. Gregory, my family loves St. Gregory, and we do not want it to close. Please keep it open.

However, I shall assume you will also be receiving similar types of comments from the other seven schools under review.

I want to fight to keep St. Gregory open, but I also do not want to fight to see other schools in Mississauga close. I do not want to see any family suffer with school closure. Jesus does not want us to fight. So instead I will ask my questions and list my comments that I hope you will consider in your meetings:

...I believe the world today works to keep a business profit. Is that the main purpose of your meetings? Then I am helpless to influence your decision.
...Will you simply choose to close the schools that will save the most money?
...If it is down to a profit, how can I make a difference? I believe that you will be able to make the proper business decision.

So what can I say to make a difference to save St. Gregory? Instead, I will start to make my religions comments to save all schools:

...If you do close the schools, will that not mean less Catholic people to live in Mississauga in the long run?
...How are you comparing profit today verses long run Catholic community 50 to 100 to 500 years from now?
...Are the priests involved in your meetings? Shouldn't they get involved?
...How much of the Catholic community of Mississauga, or even Ontario, or even Canada, is involved in your discussions? Do enough people know about your issue before you reach a decision?
...If school closures make the Catholic community decreases, does that not mean the churches may also need to close in the long run because they too will no longer be able to keep a profit?
...Will your decisions cause a long run ripple effect?
...Shouldn't all 8 schools and priests and politicians and media work together to stop the school closure discussion?
...Did Jesus want us to work for a profit?
...Did Jesus tell us to share what we have and to care for everyone?
...Was Jesus upset when he saw the churches collecting taxes?

The Catholic religion worked hard in history to build our schools. Did they make a mistake because now profit matters more? Did God want this to happen? If we close our schools we too are changing history. What will children read about in history e-books 2000 years from now? Will they read that profit mattered more, and that is why our schools in Mississauga, and then Ontario, and then Canada, slowly disappeared and that is why there is no Catholic religion left?

The decision that you make will influence our history. Do you have any past cases to show if things got better or worse? Even if you do have past case examples, how do you measure this? How do you compare money/profit to feelings/love/caring/communities?

I believe that every religion today is working to make a profit no matter what they preached. Did Jesus and God want the world to have changed this way? Please get the priests, and maybe even other religions, involved in your discussions. Please consider getting more media involved and more public surveys.

Please do not make your decision too quickly. You are changing history.

Again, if it is all about a profit, then I am helpless because your decision has already been made, and so too has the world already changed. Did the world get better or worse? What is God thinking?

Maybe even consider asking what would the Pope comment if you need someone to give you an answer.

Another comment is that I do attend St. Gregory when they have mass days. So if my daughter's school closes I also feel that a church has closed. Schools still should influence your heart and soul, not just churches. Again, please remember your long run ripple effect in history when you reach a decision.

Sincerely,

a helpless feeling mom,
Sent from my iPad
Good afternoon, As 10+ year residents in the Gt Gregory district with 2 children attending St Gregroy our main reason for purchase in the neighborhood was because of St Gregory school. While looking at the proposed options, we as the family support Option 1 or Option 2 which means that St Gregory will not close and thus our home values will not decrease and continue to be marketable to both Catholic and Public supporters alike.

Please think about all aspects of education and our community as we love St Gregory and keep our school alive and growing!

We will be attending the meetings to voice our concerns with Option 3 which would leave St Gregory closed! This is not an option we will accept without legal advice!

Thanks in advance for your attention to this critical decision……

[Redacted] and [Redacted] on behalf of our kids [Redacted] and [Redacted]
Hello,

My name is [Redacted] and I am the parent of one of St. Gregory's students, [Redacted] (currently in SK).

I have recently found out about the Pupil Accommodation Review and how this is affecting our school. I am very concerned about the possible closure due to the impact that changing schools will have on my 5 year old son.

[Redacted] started JK in [Redacted] (100% French Speaking School) and had countless difficulties which included daily visits to the office at 3-4 years of age. In February 2015, by God's grace and wisdom, my husband and I made the decision to switch him to St Gregory Elementary School with hopes of a better environment and future for him. St Gregory staff has been amazing, understanding and accommodating to our family's needs as well as [Redacted] social, classroom and behavioural challenges and needs. The principal, Mrs. Krolewicz and her staff have been instrumental with their nurturing, patient and kind attitude towards [Redacted]. Within just a few days we were offered and received professional support from a child psychologist to a Child & Youth worker, amazing teachers as well as a speech therapist. All of this turn out to be detrimental towards his later improvements. One of the most influential factors in his behaviour and attitude towards learning is relationships. He has been able to establish warm, caring, accommodating and instructional relationships with the support staff as well as his teachers. I do realize that he will have a new teacher next year but I believe that he understand what are the expectations from St Gregory staff and more importantly, the school has a good understanding of what to expect from him and what works better with him. He is very happy to go to school and I am very happy that it is at St. Gregory Elementary School. Please keep it open!

If I can be of any help, if you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at [Redacted].

May God be your guide when making this difficult decision that will affect so many families.

Thanks and may the peace of the Lord Jesus Christ be always with you.

Regards,

[Redacted]
To Whom It May Concern;

Peace for the New Year!

I will go straight to the point, I heard news that St. Dunstan Elementary School will be closed and students will be accommodated by other school per catchment area.

I am sure that you have valid reasons, however; my son transferred to St. Dunstan two years ago from a Catholic school nearest to where we live. Dt. Dunstan staff and teachers manage to change my son’s perspective of school and his attitude in life improve because of the support they provided for my son. St. Dunstan definitely made a difference to my son, to our family and to our community.

Furthermore, going to another school does not only concern us parents but, these IMPACT the students’ well-being. Students, especially higher levels will suffer from separation anxiety, emotional stress, and do not know what to expect. My son has special needs and for him to be anxious because of this issue will affect his medical condition. My son’s emotional and physical condition has been stabilized for the past two years since he came to St. Dunstan. In addition, the physical layout of the school greatly help my son’s physical mobility. The staff made changes/alternatives with my son and arranged resources for him to be able to cope with his studies. I am sure that other school will do this too. But St. Dunstan took the initiatives and did not wait for us parents to suggest all this. The staff plan and implemented the plan. We saw the difference.

St. Dunstan’s performance is remarkable.

Questions:

- Is the school board planning to close St. Dunstan?
- My son was in a Catholic school in our catchment area previously, (as parents, because of my son’s experience in that school, we do not want him to be back to that school). Is there an option for parents to CHOOSE their child’s school?
- Is there a way we can help not to close St. Dunstan? What are the other options that the board have aside from closing or transferring students to another school?
- We highly recommend the principal, teachers and staff at St. Dunstan, will they be in the school that our kids will be accommodated into?

I apologize that I cannot attend the meeting today. I am not feeling well. I really wanted to come but I have a flu.

Thank you very much. I really appreciate all your input in this matter.

Concern Parent
Hi

I am a parent of 3 students at St. Dunstan.

I started filling out the survey but on the question, "which closure option do you prefer" there is no answer that suited my needs. I do not want St. Dunstan to close, hence I would not pick options 1-3 and option 4 (no preference) implies that I equally prefer options 1, 2 and 3. As a result, I am unable to fill out the survey.

If you are seeking the opinion of parents of St Dunstan in addition to the rest of the community, I advise you to revise the survey and repost.

Thank you for attention to this matter.
Thank you for considering this point.

On Tue, Jan 12, 2016 at 5:23 PM, Mazzorato, Marianne <Marianne.Mazzorato@dpcdsb.org> wrote:

Greetings,

Thank you for your recent email regarding St. Dunstan Elementary School and the East Credit Pupil Accommodation Review (PAR). I note you had sent your comments to a number of elected officials, as well as to the current Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board Director of Education, John Kostoff. As you may be aware, Mr. Kostoff is retiring from the board this month and has asked me to respond on his behalf. As you may also be aware, I will be succeeding Mr. Kostoff as director upon his retirement.
Your feedback is very much valued. While I have forwarded your email to our Planning staff who will, in turn, bring it forward to the Pupil Accommodation Review Committee’s attention, I encourage you, if you have not already done so, to submit your feedback directly to the PAR Committee via the board website at www.dpcdsb.org (through the link on the left side of the main webpage) or by email to PARinfo@dpcdsb.org. You may also wish to bring your feedback directly to your PAR Committee representative. This ensures direct receipt and inclusion in any discussion at the committee level.

All feedback will also be made available to trustees, who will make a decision regarding the current options, or other options that may be presented based on community feedback, in late May of this year.

I encourage you to attend the upcoming Public Open House scheduled for Wednesday, January 20 from 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm at St. Joseph Secondary School on 5555 Creditview Road. Board staff will be on hand to respond to questions and invite feedback.

Thank you for your support of Catholic education. Your commitment and interest are appreciated.

With kind regards,

Marianne Mazzorato
Director Designate
Dufferin Peel Catholic District School Board
Mississauga ON
905-890-0708
Toll Free: 1-800-387-9501
marianne.mazzorato@dpcdsb.org

From: [redacted]
Sent: Sunday, January 10, 2016 11:50 AM
To: D'Souza, Darryl; Di Cosola, Frank; Hobin, Sharon; Thomas, Thomas; O'Toole, Esther; Pascucci, Mario; Abbruscato, Anna; Iannicca, Bruno; Xaviour, Shawn; Da Silva, Anna; del Rosario, Luz; PAR - Info; lsandals.mpp.co@liberal.ola.org; BobDelaneyMPP; htakhar.mpp.co@liberal.ola.org; gagan.sikand@parl.gc.ca; Kostoff, John
Subject: Proposed Closure of St. Dunstan, Mississauga

As a parent of three students, ages 4, 6, and 8 attending St. Dunstan Elementary School, I’m writing to express my extreme concern with the current pupil accommodation review (PAR) taking place by the Dufferin-Peel Catholic School Board.

I understand that the PAR process is triggered by low utilization in our collective area (currently 63% of total capacity); and that the Ontario Ministry of Education guidelines for school boards emphasize that the PAR process identify potential closures and consolidations based on managing enrollment in the area, ensuring student well-being and managing budgets responsibly. This is why I’m so concerned with the current PAR process taking place near my home in Mississauga, which has clearly not adhered to these principles.

Of the 8 schools being considered for closure in the PAR review, St. Dunstan is the only school recommended for closure in all 3 proposed options, including the board’s “preferred option”. Here are some key facts about St. Dunstan that I would like to share with you:

- Of the 8 schools under review, St. Dunstan has the **highest overall academic achievement** (based on combined grade 3 and 6 EQAO scores). It is #1 in reading, #2 in writing and #1 in math.
- St. Dunstan is currently above the area’s average utilization and has the **fastest growing enrollment** of the 8 schools. It is projected to be **#2 in utilization in 2016**.
On the other hand, there are 2 schools in the area that are not even being considered for closure; St. Bernadette and St. Raymond. So what makes these schools exceptional?

- St. Bernadette has the **worst current utilization** and St. Raymond is projected to have the worst utilization by 2025.
- St. Bernadette has the **worst total EQAO scores** in the area and St. Raymond scores below the board average in grade 6 math scores.
- St. Bernadette has the **second worst Facility Condition Index (FCI)** and **second highest annual operating cost**.

From this report, the message from Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board seems to be clear: *schools that achieve top academic performance, are well-utilized and show positive growth projections will be closed; while those that underperform, are under-utilized and are costly to operate will remain open.*

When my husband and I purchased our home, the high performance of St. Dunstan was a key reason why we purchased in the East Credit area. At that time, the school had a rating of 9.3 out of 10 (2005). Although we didn’t have our first child until 2 years later, we had planned to send her to St. Dunstan before she was born. My husband and myself, are both highly educated with post graduate degrees and as a result, the education of our children is our top priority. If the planned closure of St. Dunstan is approved, we will regrettable be forced to send our children to the higher ranking public schools in the area. We take their education very seriously, as the teachers in St. Dunstan also do. We have been very impressed with the teachers at St. Dunstan, who starting at Kindergarten encourage the children to always achieve their best. In particular, the teachers cater to different learning needs of the children to keep them engaged in the program.

The board’s “preferred option” will split the students from St. Dunstan and relocate them to St. Bernadette and St. Herbert, the only 2 schools in the area with less than 50% utilization and EQAO scores among the worst in the area. If this occurs, we will be forced to explore other education alternatives for our children, most likely the local public school. **Thus, the long-term utilization of area schools and the sustainability of the board’s revenues from local taxation will not be solved by this approach.**

The more appropriate approach should be to protect schools like St. Dunstan that have high academic achievement, high utilization and are showing positive projected growth in enrollment and utilization. I ask that in your capacity, that you please take action to ensure that the desired outcomes of the PAR policy; namely high student achievement, high utilization and responsible budgets, are brought back into the focus of this process.

I would like an update from each and everyone of you regarding the proposed closure of St. Dunstan; please contact me at

Sincerely,
Our parent community is concerned with the wording of the survey. Can the last option be re-worded as "none" or "none of the above". The wording now seems to imply a vote in favour of the 3 options vs. disagreeing with them.

Thank-you again for the open house last night.
Hello there,

Thank you for taking the time to hold a parent information night. It was very informative. I am very eager to take the survey that was mentioned and, I begun to do so last night after the meeting. However, when choosing an preference for scenario 1, 2, or 3 - option 4 is "no preference". I certainly do have a preference, but it is not listed in any of those choices. I am hoping that you might consider changing option 4 to read "none of the above" or "I'd like to suggest an alternate solution" or something to that effect. If this is done, my husband and I would be very happy to complete the survey.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.
Potential St. Dunstan's Elementary Closure

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to express my concern about the potential closing of St. Dunstan's at the end of the 2016-2017 school year. Simply, we moved into the St. Dunstan district specifically because of the school, and we like to see it remain open. St. Dunstan has an excellent reputation compared to the other schools our son would have to potentially move into, plus it offers an excellent YMCA before/after school program that we need. We would be at a loss for child care if St. Dunstan's were to close.

Plus, it's confusing as to why the parking lot was redone over the summer if the school was to be potentially closed? That seems to be a gross misdirection of funding.

I do understand the School Board's fiscal responsibilities in regards to school utilization, but I am at a loss why the highest ranked school in the district would be considered for closure? Why should there be a race downwards? Rather the goal would be to maintain the success of the school.

I trust that you will consider these points and side with the parents who are against the closure of St. Dunstan.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or comments.

Regards,
Hello,
I was in attendance at last night's meeting and am concerned about the wording on the survey question indicating the option preference for closure. I feel that the "no preference" is misleading, and indicates that I am not caring about what option the board is choosing, when in fact, I most definitely do. Could the last option be phrased "none of the above" or "other". Based on this, I feel that the results of this question may not truly indicate the true feelings of the population being surveyed.

Thank you for hearing my concern,
Good Afternoon,

I am a parent with my eldest son attending OLGV. Unfortunately, I was not able to make it out last night to the Public Meeting, however I do want to express my concerns for this issue.

I, like many parents in the area, have more than one child. I work full time, as does my husband. The value of having YMCA daycare attached to OLGV is tremendous in that the transition for younger children into "real" school is much smoother and the convenience is great by having them attached for our busy lives.

I hope that this is also taken into consideration when making the decision to close a school. I also was informed that swimming my be part of the OLGV curriculum, because River Grove Community Center is so close...this is a huge value added benefit to the school, students and community!

Please don't close OLGV! It's such a great school, with long time standing staff, and a great culture!

Thank you for listening to me (and my family)!

Cheers,
Hello,

As a parent of children that attend St. Dunstan I feel it is important to complete the survey provided.

The question below which is in the survey is very skewed and misleading.

Considering the three options listed above, which option is the one you would most prefer the board implement? the only options given are Option 1, 2, or 3 and No preference, which to my understanding means that you agree to any of the options...

there should be an option that reads that we do not prefer any option!(none of the above)

Why is St. Dunstan on all 3 options? why do the schools that will be closed have to be central? Why are you potentially closing a highly academic school?

Unfortunately, I will not complete the survey as it is very misleading making us choose the best option of the worst. We will have to be forced to remove ourselves from the catholic system and switch over to the public along with our tax dollars supporting the public sector.

Thank you,
Dear Sirs:

I really feel very disappointed, almost bullied for the way that you presented the questions that you have in the Feedback Survey. These questions doesn’t allowed that the voice of our small catholic community, the parents of the students of the St. Dunstan could be hear. In your questions you imply a favoritism for the 3 proposals and none of them are fair to our children, teachers and workers of the school and to our families. To really be impartial, you should have at least an option that make a statement that the people can express that we don't like any of the 3 options. Something like "none of the above".

So, I would like that you reconsider very careful the way that you are going to present this data, because you are discriminatory to us.

Thanks for the time that you dedicate to us yesterday night,
Hi Marianne

Thank you for your prompt reply. Your description of what the survey is designed to ask does not come across in the survey. If I choose "no preference", I am letting the board know that I prefer any of the options equally and this is not the case. Until the survey is changed, I cannot fill it out. This survey is clearly biased only against the parents of St. Dunstan. I would like to know how many of the parents of St. Dunstan got to that question and stopped filling out the survey.

Thank you

On Thu, Jan 21, 2016 at 5:13 PM, Mazzorato, Marianne <Marianne.Mazzorato@dpcdsb.org> wrote:

Hello,

Thank you for taking the time to provide feedback regarding the PAR survey.

The survey itself is divided into three sections. The first asks participants for their input on the staff developed recommendations. If they identify, "no preference" for any of the staff developed options, they are prompted to provide rationale for their selection. The first section was never anticipated to be a vote on staff options. Any one that identifies "no preference" can easily identify their rationale as being "because all three close my school and I’m opposed to that". In working with the research department to develop the survey, the use of “no preference” generates more comments/ feedback than using “none of the above”.

The second section of the survey asks participants to provide alternate scenarios should they not like any of the staff developed options.

The third section of the survey asks participants to provide any additional information which they believe we have missed or should consider as part of developing future options.

Again, thank you for your involvement in this process.

With kind regards,

Marianne Mazzorato
Director of Education
Dufferin Peel Catholic District School Board
Mississauga, ON
905-890-1221
Toll Free: 1-800-387-9501
marianne.mazzorato@dpcdsb.org
Hi

I am a parent of 3 students at St. Dunstan.

I started filling out the survey but on the question, "which closure option do you prefer" there is no answer that suited my needs. I do not want St. Dunstan to close, hence I would not pick options 1-3 and option 4 (no preference) implies that I equally prefer options 1, 2 and 3. As a result, I am unable to fill out the survey.

If you are seeking the opinion of parents of St Dunstan in addition to the rest of the community, I advise you to revise the survey and repost.

Thank you for attention to this matter.
Hello,

Staff will compose an email to ARC members to share the information provided below with their communities. Staff will also place a message on the website and on the survey, as well as provide a standard response to any email received through the PAR mailbox.

Thanks for your input.

Marianne Mazzorato
Director of Education
Dufferin Peel Catholic District School Board
Mississauga, ON
905-890-1221
Toll Free: 1-800-387-9501
marianne.mazzorato@dpcdsb.org

Hi Marianne

Thank you for your prompt reply. Your description of what the survey is designed to ask does not come across in the survey. If I choose "no preference", I am letting the board know that I prefer any of the options equally and this is not the case. Until the survey is changed, I cannot fill it out. This survey is clearly biased only against the parents of St. Dunstan. I would like to know how many of the parents of St. Dunstan got to that question and stopped filling out the survey.

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The second section of the survey asks participants to provide alternate scenarios should they not like any of the staff developed options.

The third section of the survey asks participants to provide any additional information which they believe we have missed or should consider as part of developing future options.

Again, thank you for your involvement in this process.

With kind regards,

Marianne Mazzorato
Director of Education
Dufferin Peel Catholic District School Board
Mississauga, ON
905-890-1221
Toll Free: 1-800-387-9501
marianne.mazzorato@dpcdsb.org

From: [email protected]
Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2016 12:28 PM
To: PAR - Info; Mazzorato, Marianne; del Rosario, Luz
Subject: PAR survey

Hi

I am a parent of 3 students at St. Dunstan.

I started filling out the survey but on the question, "which closure option do you prefer" there is no answer that suited my needs. I do not want St. Dunstan to close, hence I would not pick options 1-3 and option 4 (no preference) implies that I equally prefer options 1, 2 and 3. As a result, I am unable to fill out the survey.

If you are seeking the opinion of parents of St Dunstan in addition to the rest of the community, I advise you to revise the survey and repost.

Thank you for attention to this matter.
I’ve read the Ministry of Education documents and it appears the main drivers for the review are the declining enrolment in Dufferin-Peel Catholic schools and the increasing costs of maintaining underutilized schools. With this in mind, I have another option to those currently put forward that should also increase school utilization with less impact on the families within the East Credit area.

Our Lady of Good Voyage has the highest maintenance costs and closing this school and moving the kids to St. Raymond will increase St. Raymond's utilization over 20%. St. Valentine has one of the lowest utilization so closing this school and moving the kids to St. Gregory would increase St. Gregory’s utilization over 20%. I'm in disagreement with closing St. Dunstan, a better alternative would be closing St. Bernadette that has the lowest utilization and one of the highest maintenance costs. The children from St. Bernadette could be moved to St. Herbert which would increase their utilization more than 20%.

In Option 1 presented by the Board, St. Gertrude French Immersion children would be moved to St. Gregory but the utilization increase at St. Gregory, anticipated by that move may not be realized. Many families choose a French Immersion school based on convenience of travel and coordinating schedules with siblings remaining at the home school. Many of the French Immersion families at St. Gertrude either live south of Eglinton or within the St. Gertrude boundaries with siblings still attending their home school. It may not be convenient for these families to travel even further north to St. Gregory and they may opt to move their child to the public French Immersion program which may be closer to them or remove the child from the French Immersion program entirely.

The Dufferin-Peel board has always maintained children or a parent must be a baptized Catholic to enter Catholic elementary schools. Maybe it is time to review the board’s position in light of the declining Catholic enrolment. What makes Catholic schools great is their faith based curriculum and I think it is possible to maintain this if enrolment were open to Orthodox Christians and Anglicans. It is a slippery slope but I feel that there are families in the public system who would gladly embrace the faith based principles of Catholic schools if given the opportunity.

Regards

[REDACTED] parent of child in French Immersion at St. Gertrude.
Increased Enrollment and Raise Funds for East Credit Mississauga Schools.

Our son is attending one of the schools under this review for closure below I have listed a number of options that I hope you will consider and I know that some of them are already existing but can be improved.

- Increase advertisement for rent a business office space in a part of the school with computer terminal hook ups and wi-fi accessible for people to use for pre determined bought time on or off school hours to be determined.

- Have EMS, Fire Fighters, and or police rent out part of the school for a few hours a week and teach kids about what they do. It's a win-win they get to educate kids early in life.

- Set specialty programs for adults for night school. ESL, Computers, Reading and Righting skills, special needs kids, senior programs, bingo nights, dance classes, yoga, tai chi, Movie nights, video games night, Danceathon, Karaoke night, air guitar, trivial pursuit try and see what works in the community etc.

- Have a science fair and new ideas challenge and Bring entrepreneurs to judge and develop those ideas into business by making a contribution to the school.

- Get rid of ridiculous guidelines for kids coming from outside areas or wanting to become catholic to enroll any kid that can get themselves to the school. Be more flexible to increase your numbers.

- Be the only school to Create a fun Harry Potter type Wizardry class, create a fun learn to fly an airplane program and bring in a pilot. Do a spelling bee contest, have famous celebrities, politicians, construction workers, oil diggers, miners, come to the school all in efforts to increase enrollment numbers. Create awareness that we need help.

- Rent out the space to Music school, ie Walters school of Music is overwhelmed with students and could use some new space and its not very far from the school.

- Host basketball playoff games in the gym for teams needing a spot to practice or play games.

- Hold informational seminars with key speakers where people can purchase tickets to attend.

- Bring in car show, stock car, Indy car, antique show, bring in a car driver for questions and answers.

- Host televised spoting events in the gym.

- Create a bake off contest everyone donates cakes and baked goods to raise money with small prizes at the end.

- Do a TV shoot from the school to advertise all the thing you now offer and update your website regularly with these programs.

Please note that I do know that some of these ideas are already in place and for those ideas that are in place that could be reviewed again and revamped to increase the awareness of the Catholic school enrollment and funding options.
If any of these options appeal to any of the board members I would gladly be willing to discuss it further in person and provide a more detailed and comprehensive option that will work for a particular school and community.

Please feel free to contact me here should you wish to discuss anything further and I would appreciate a response to my email and options that I am providing.

Regards,
To whom it may concern:

I have some issues with the East Credit Pupil Accommodation Review Feedback Survey. Your options on the for the first set of questions include:

Option 1
Option 2
Option 3
No preference

I would think that there should be a "None of the above", because "No preference" promotes the idea that it doesn't matter which option you choose. Yes, my children attend St. Dunstan, which features in each of the Board proposed options. I don't like any of these options but I definitely have a preference. My preference would be that St. Dunstan doesn't close at all, regardless of it meeting the arbitrary criteria you have created to justify your options (which seems to me is based significantly on geography, not taking into consideration student well being or academics). Regardless of how the remainder of the survey is worded, I can not complete the survey which does seem to bias the options presented. And why even have this survey? What will you do with the data? Present it to the public, or trustees, or ARC committee? For what purpose? To support the options you've created? If I was a parent from St. Raymond or St. Bernadette of course I would choose any of those other options or no preference. So what? So you have automatically created a bias in your survey that will lead you and support your options. That doesn't make any sense at all. I will not be filling out this survey at all and I hope that you will be getting rid of all the information gathered from this survey.

Sincerely

[Redacted]
I am sorry to be writing again but there is a big problem with option 3 on this survey. Option 3 has St.Dunstan closing moving kids north of Eglinton to St.Herbert but the same option has St.Herbert closing moving all kids to St.Valentine including the St.Dunstan north of Eglinton kids. This option should be moving St.Dunstan to Good Voyage not St.Herbert which is proposed to close in option 3.

Thanks in advance for reviewing.
I wanted to start this email by saying that the teachers and staff at St. Gregory are incredible people, they exemplify what it means to be a true caring, considerate yet open minded catholic human being and I am proud to have my kids learn by example from them.

I am VERY concerned about the possibility of St Gregory being closed because it’s part of our community and because having it in that community was part of the reason we moved into the area when we were ready to start our family. We have two kids, a son who recently graduated from St Gregory and is in high school now and a daughter who will remain at St. Gregory for the next 2 ½ yrs.

My daughter is a unique child, she was diagnosed with an [redacted] disorder a few years ago and as a result she is unique in the way she approaches things, sees and interprets things as well as in how she learns and experiences things. That is not always interpreted as a good thing but at St. Gregory the staff welcome her daily with open arms and embrace her differences and challenges as blessings. I know for certain that is not the case in allot of schools. The staff at St. Gregory have helped not just my daughter but us as parents and our family in general to be as normal as possible under the circumstances through their support and empathy.

My concerns about the situation are many. First the fact that my daughter is not able to deal with change well, especially change of this magnitude when everything she has come to trust, rely on, be comfortable with and look forward to would be completely taken away from her. It would set her back months if not years of progress she has made thanks to the helping hands and hearts of St Gregory staff (Principal, resource teacher, youth worker and teachers) in addition to external counselling. And knowing that again in two years when she has to move schools again to attend high school she will be put through the same situation makes this all the more concerning.

Secondly my daughter attends the PLASP after school and PA day program at St. Gregory so I would need to know if the school is closed will there be a PLASP at St. Raymond and if so will I be given priority as a current PLASP parent and would it be the same staff that is currently at St. Gregory that my daughter trusts and is comfortable with.

Another concern is, I have spoken to several parents of my daughters friends and they say if the school is closed they will move their kids to the Public school next door to keep their kids in a familiar neighborhood for the last two years and if that happens I (and other parents) will have to give serious consideration to doing the same. If I am forced to put my daughter thru this unneeded stress then at least she would remain in the same neighborhood and have her friends with her.

This would mean the Catholic school board will be losing funding from several more families, maybe a drop in the bucket in the short term but would certainly make an impact when new families coming into the area figure for convenience sake they should put their kids into the public school and therefore re direct their taxes to the public school board.

Although change is not always a bad thing I’m convinced this would not be a good one CERTAINLY not for my daughter or our family, and all the sugar coating or political talk in the world is not going to change that.

Regards
RE: feedback survey

Hello,

Thank you for adding clarification on that section of the survey. I will gladly fill it out now with the hope that the feedback is used with the hope that strong communities are not broken up. Thank you.

From: PARinfo@dpcdsb.org <PARinfo@dpcdsb.org>
Sent: Friday, January 22, 2016 4:12 PM
To: PAR - Info
Subject: RE: feedback survey

Dear ,

Thank you for taking the time to provide feedback regarding the East Credit Pupil Accommodation Review Feedback Survey.

The survey itself is divided into three sections. The first section asks participants for input on the staff developed options. Selecting “No Preference” in no way suggests that the three options are equally preferred. If “no preference” is selected, participants are prompted on the following screen to provide rationale and include a comment suggesting that none of the options are acceptable. In working with the research department to develop the survey, the use of “no preference” generates more comments/feedback than using “none of the above”. The survey has been updated to add clarity around the selection of “no preference”.

The second section of the survey asks participants to provide alternate scenarios should they not like any of the staff developed options.

The third section of the survey asks participants to provide any additional information which they believe we have missed or should consider as part of developing future options.

The purpose of this survey is to gather feedback from all of the affected school communities. It is in no way intended to vote on the staff options. The survey will be available on the board website until January 27, 2016.

Again, thank you for your involvement in this process.

From: PARinfo@dpcdsb.org <PARinfo@dpcdsb.org>
Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2016 7:36 PM
To: PAR - Info
Subject: feedback survey

Hello,

As a parent of children that attend St. Dunstan I feel it is important to complete the survey provided.

The question below which is in the survey is very skewed and misleading.

Considering the three options listed above, which option is the one you would most prefer the board implement? the only options given are Option 1, 2, or 3 and No preference, which to my understanding means that you agree to any of the options...
there should be an option that reads that we do not prefer any option!(none of the above)

Why is St. Dunstan on all 3 options? why do the schools that will be closed have to be central? Why are you potentially closing a highly academic school?
Unfortunately, I will not complete the survey as it is very misleading making us choose the best option of the worst. We will have to be forced to remove ourselves from the catholic system and switch over to the public along with our tax dollars supporting the public sector.

Thank you,