November 26, 2015

Dear Parents and Guardians:

This past September, a letter was sent home with students explaining the Ministry of Education’s new Pupil Accommodation Review Guidelines and the requirement that all school boards develop or revise their Pupil Accommodation Review Policy.

The Guideline sets expectations for all school boards on managing and reviewing underutilized school space, including potential school closures, and for the greater co-ordination and sharing of planning related information between school boards and other community partners.

The Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board sought community input on its Policy and received considerable feedback. This feedback was considered during the revision of the board’s existing policy, which was approved by trustees on October 27, 2015.

The board conducted a review of all Education Service Areas in relation to its Long Term Accommodation Plan. This plan identifies the board’s 15 year enrolment needs relative to new schools, additions to schools, boundary reviews, and areas that are significantly under capacity. Areas that are identified as significantly under capacity require a reduction in pupil places which would result in a Pupil Accommodation Review.

The East Credit Education Service Area has been identified in the Long Term Accommodation Plan as being significantly under capacity in 2015-16, with a forecasted continued enrolment decline in the coming years, necessitating a Pupil Accommodation Review.

At its November 24 meeting, the Board approved the commencement of a Pupil Accommodation Review in the East Credit Service area of Mississauga. Your child’s school is one of the eight elementary schools involved in this review:

• Our Lady of Good Voyage
• St. Bernadette
• St. Dunstan
• St. Gertrude
• St. Gregory
• St. Herbert
• St. Raymond
• St. Valentine

Parents and Guardians are encouraged to read the Board Report and proposed options that were presented to trustees by staff, as required under the Ministry guidelines, on November 24. This report is posted in its entirety on the board website at www.dpcdsb.org.

The inclusion of your school in the accommodation review process does not necessarily mean that it will close. Accommodation reviews are designed to look at a grouping of schools to determine the best solution for everyone involved in the process. While the initial staff report may contain a proposed option that impacts your school, it does not 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 after extensive consultation with the community takes place. This is part of the review process.

Public consultation is at the heart of the accommodation review process. A minimum of two public meetings are to be held by the Accommodation Review Committee (ARC), which will be comprised of parents/guardians, principals and board staff, as well as a number of additional working group meetings.

A public delegation evening will also be part of the consultation process. The goal of the ARC is to engage a wide range of school and community groups to participate in the consultation in order to gather feedback on the proposed accommodation options, developed by staff, to present to the Board for its consideration. The review could result in recommendations including:

- The closure or consolidation of a school;
- Changes to grades and programs offered at a school;
- New facilities and/or upgrades;
- School boundary changes;
- Partnerships and/or joint use opportunities;
- Status quo (no changes).

The staff recommendation, outlined in the November 24 Board Report, would be presented at the first public meeting, which is scheduled for January 20, 2016. This recommendation provides a foundation for the committee’s discussions. The committee may also create alternative accommodation options, which should be consistent with the objectives and criteria outlined in committee’s terms of reference.

Accommodation review committees act as the official conduit for information shared between the Board and the affected school communities. Please speak with your principal about how you can get involved.

And, you do not have to be a member of the ARC to express your opinion and provide feedback. You are always welcome to submit your comments directly via email to PARinfo@dpcdsb.org.

The Board of Trustees makes the final decision on all recommendations related to the accommodation review.

We are aware that this is a lot of information to consider. As indicated, all information related to the process, including Policy documents, Board reports, Q and As, and other data will be posted on the website through a link on the left side of our main page at www.dpcdsb.org.

We will continue to keep parents and guardians updated as we move through the process by way of regular Update Bulletins.

If you have any questions, please contact your principal for assistance or email us at PARinfo@dpcdsb.org.

Sincerely,

Daniel Del Bianco
Superintendent – Planning and Operations