

## **Pupil Accommodation Review – FAQ’s**

**Revised December 5, 2016**

The Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario will update “Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ’s)” as questions arise from the community through the trustees and staff related to the Cornwall Pupil Accommodation Review process. Points of clarification will also be addressed in the FAQs.

### **Q. What is an Accommodation Review Committee?**

A. An Accommodation Review Committee (ARC) is an advisory committee established by the Board that represents the affected schools identified as being part of a pupil accommodation review. The ARC acts as an official conduit for information shared between the Board and the affected school communities.

### **Q. Why is my school part of the Accommodation Review?**

A. An accommodation review occurs after a school board considers the current and projected enrolment at a group of schools, as well as the current physical condition of the school(s) and repairs or upgrades required. Public consultation is a big part of this process. 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)

### **Q. How does an Accommodation Review work?**

A. 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), as well as a number of additional working group meetings. The goal is to engage a wide range of school and community groups to participate in the consultation in order to make recommendations to the Board of Trustees. Committee members include principals, parents, and Board staff.

**Q. Does this mean our school will close?**

A. The inclusion of your school in an 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, the final decision by the Board of Trustees to move forward with a recommendation will not take place until after the consultation period.

**Q. Should students still register at the schools?**

A. Yes. While we understand there may be speculation throughout the process, we will continue to inform students and parents about all new developments from the accommodation review.

**Q. Does an Accommodation Review mean a school will close?**

A. We know that facility needs and neighbourhoods change over time. School boards are responsible for providing schools and facilities for their students and for operating and maintaining schools as effectively and efficiently as possible to support student achievement. Sometimes accommodation reviews do recommend a school(s) closure.

**Q. Why was as “preferred option” included in the Initial Staff Report?**

A. As per the Ministry of Education’s Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline, school boards are required to include an accommodation option in the Initial Staff Report. In instances where there is more than one option identified, school boards are required to identify a “preferred option”. The staff recommendation would be presented to each of the area review committees at the first public meeting. 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.

**Q. How do I get involved with the Accommodation Review Committee?**

A. Accommodation review committees have representation from parents, principals and staff, all working towards one goal, which is to provide feedback on the proposed accommodation options, developed by staff, to present to the Board of Trustees for their consideration. Talk to your school principal about how you can get involved.

**Q. How is the information from the Accommodation Review Committee shared with the Public?**

A. All committee meetings are open to the public and materials such as meeting dates, agenda, minutes, and all information shared with ARC members are available through the Board's website at [www.cdsbeo.on.ca](http://www.cdsbeo.on.ca).

**Q. When can individuals present their views if they aren't on the Committee?**

A. All meetings are open to the public. Each ARC also has two public meetings that provide the opportunity for individuals and groups to review the information, ask questions of Board staff and provide written feedback. Additionally, individuals that are not on the ARC are always welcome to submit their questions and/or comments via email to [PAR@cdsbeo.on.ca](mailto:PAR@cdsbeo.on.ca).

**Q. Who makes the final decision in the Accommodation Review process?**

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

**Q. What impact does the proposed options have on class sizes?**

A. The larger the enrolment in a school the easier it is to optimize class sizes and minimize split classes. Although split grade classes are common in all schools, often they can be minimized in schools with larger student populations.

**Q. Does the Board know the cost of building new schools?**

A. New construction is based on Ministry of Education benchmarks. The total cost of a facility can change based on many variables.

**Q. Is the cost of a new school taken into consideration when the estimated renewal savings are determined?**

A. The cost of new construction is considered in terms of what renewal savings would be realized and construction cost would be requested of the Ministry of Education through a Business Case submission.

**Q. Why are there school boundaries?**

A. School boundaries are very important in planning both for the enrolment and capacity of the school, without it the board would not be able to project future enrolment or future capacity needs at a school.

**Q. What are the transition plans if the recommendations move forward?**

A. Once the Board makes a final decision regarding the Pupil Accommodation Review for Cornwall, planned for May 2017, at that time a Transition Committee will be formed. The main goal will be to keep the public informed.

**Q. What are the timelines for implementation?**

A. The Board still has to complete the Pupil Accommodation Review process to arrive at recommendations to present to the Board of Trustees. There will be a 2<sup>nd</sup> Public Meeting on February 15, 2017 to gather additional feedback. There is also an opportunity for Public Delegations to the Board of Trustees in April 2017. Following a decision of the Board of Trustees in May 2017, the board will submit a Business Case to seek funding with the Ministry of Education.

**Q. With the students from St. Columban's moving to Sacred Heart, which parish will they be attending?**

A. The students of St. Columban's would now be attending Blessed Sacrament Parish as the present location or proposed location would be closer to this parish.

**Q. Will the class sizes increase in the Multiple Exceptionalities Program (MEP) and Self-Contained (SC) classes?**

A. No, the Ministry has set a limit of 16 per class.

**Q. Will the Bishop Assistive Technology and Living and Learning classes move to one of the secondary schools?**

A. It is possible but has not been considered at this time.

**Q. Under the new proposed plan, would the students go to either St. Joseph CSS or Holy Trinity CSS for grades 7 & 8 and then move to St. Matthew CSS for 9-12 where appropriate?**

A. The extra transition could be difficult. At this time, a decision has not been made.

**Q. If a teacher works 0.5 FTE in Junior and 0.5 FTE in Intermediate at the same school, would the teacher be considered junior or intermediate for the transition to the secondary school?**

A. Human Resources and the OECTA teachers union are currently in discussions regarding the impact on affected staff and the process to be followed.

**Q. Are other areas being considered for an Accommodation Review (ARC)?**

A. No, not at this time.

**Q. Is there a projection of job losses CUPE/OECTA for both option?**

A. We are currently reviewing data to determine the possible impact. It's too early at this time to respond, but both options would yield the same results.

**Q. Will transportation still be available for students at St. Matthew CSS?**

A. At this time, no changes are planned for St. Matthew CSS.

**Q. Would it be beneficial to have St. Columban's go to Bishop and realign Bishop's boundary to stop at 9<sup>th</sup> Street East and north on 9<sup>th</sup> Street to go to Sacred Heart? This would enable parents to walk to their child's school more easily if needed.**

A. All requests concerning boundary changes will be discussed with the ARC Committee to determine if further analysis is required.

**Q. What are the benefits in programming when offering a 7 to 12 model?**

A. There are many advantages to having grade 7 & 8 in the secondary school environment. Some of those include:

- The transition from intermediate to secondary is much easier
- Retention is higher – students that are together in the 7/8 wing can remain together moving into the secondary setting (sense of community/family)
- Students have access to a much bigger gymnasium – great opportunities for various sports
- Students have greater access to gym equipment, soccer fields, etc.... Improved programming
- Intermediate teachers use the secondary science labs to do experiments, and further develop their science program – they have access to all secondary equipment
- Intermediate teachers work closely with secondary teachers to plan for Gr.9 EQAO and Gr.10 OSSLT – better preparation for these provincial assessments
- Students have access to specialist teachers – music teacher, construction teacher
- Students are able to take part in the culture and spirit of the school – For example, at Holy Trinity the grade 7/8 students are part of the house system– building leadership skills

- Students get to know some of the secondary teachers before they begin the grade 9 program
- The secondary Student Success team works closely with the intermediate team to plan the transition and to ensure that all needs are met.
- For special education students – the benefits are great – familiarity, similar routines, same environment, familiar faces
- For parents with multiple children from gr.7 to 12 – one parent night, one report card interview night, communication is easier (dealing with the same administration, secretaries, and guidance people). The start time is the same
- With 7/8 students in a secondary school, they are better able to develop leadership skills – camps, excursions, etc.
- St. Joseph's is the only school in the area that still does not have the 7 to 12 model
- Based on data, surveys, etc, the 7 to 12 model at Holy Trinity has been extremely successful
- Anxiety is lessened for students who begin high school because of the elimination of a needed transition.
- Students start wearing uniforms in grade 7 to create a sense of belonging. Parents report that the uniforms simplify decisions in the morning. Equity among students is predominant
- The 7/8 wing is separate from the secondary wing – students are only brought together for spirit activities, masses, special sporting and artistic events. The 7/8 students have their lunch at a different time, recesses are still in place while secondary students are in class, etc
- 7/8 students have access to a cafeteria – they can purchase their lunches, snacks, etc.
- 7/8 students can more easily participate in drama productions – the auditorium is available to them. The secondary drama teacher will often call upon the 7/8 students to have minor roles in a play, etc.