

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Local School Boards Currently Discussing Property Matters to Serve the Future Needs of the Cornwall Community

Cornwall, ON (Wednesday, January 31, 2018) – The [Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario](#) (CDSBEO) and the [Upper Canada District School Board](#) (UCDSB) are involved in discussions to further their respective commitments to students in the Cornwall area.

Staff from both school boards are exploring future needs that each school district have for offering programs within the City of Cornwall. The Cornwall community will know that both school boards have shared a common site located at 1500 Cumberland Street that is the current St. Joseph Catholic Secondary School, and was the former General Vanier Secondary School. Since the 1990s, this site has been the location of St. Joseph Catholic Secondary School (CDSBEO), as well as the primary program site for the TR Leger School for Adult, Alternative and Continuing Education (UCDSB).

Two key developments have sparked interest in both boards discussing their future interests in sites to support programming. In June 2017, the Upper Canada District School Board received word that the Ministry of Education would fund the building of a new public high school for Cornwall, committing \$39 million for this project. On January 31, 2018, the CDSBEO received word that the Ministry of Education would fund the acquisition of the former General Vanier Secondary School from the UCDSB to accommodate a new consolidated JK-6 Catholic school for Sacred Heart/St. Columban's as well as a grade 7 and 8 program for St. Joseph Catholic Secondary School, taking in all grade 7 and 8 students from Bishop Macdonell, St. Anne, and the consolidated Sacred Heart/St. Columban's Catholic Schools.

"It's great to see both boards working together to solve their pupil accommodation issues in Cornwall," noted CDSBEO Chair, Todd Lalonde. "Ensuring that all students are well served from the CDSBEO and UCDSB is very important, and we are looking forward to continuing our dialogue with the UCDSB to finalize an agreement."

"I am pleased that the possible acquisition of General Vanier Secondary School honours the spirit of the thirty-year old sharing agreement between the CDSBEO and the UCDSB that has served both boards well," explained CDSBEO Vice-Chair, Ron Eamer. "The success of the sharing agreement has been the result of the excellent working relationship of many dedicated members of administration from both boards over the years. Collaborating further on a possible acquisition allows CDSBEO to address the recommendations of our Accommodation Review Committee and will provide CDSBEO students with exceptional learning opportunities while making effective use of available resources."

“The time is right for our two school boards to engage in talks around our future program needs,” stated Second Vice-Chair of the UCDSB and local public school Trustee, David McDonald. “We are certainly well on our way to establishing an agreement in principle to address our respective property needs in the City of Cornwall. These discussions will assist both our boards to clarify what they feel are priorities as we move forward beyond our current program site commitments.”

Through their respective processes, both boards have identified surplus school property that form a focus for board-to-board discussions. For the UCDSB, the General Vanier site is currently declared as a property surplus to the board’s future needs, while CDSBEO has several sites which were declared to be surplus as part of its Pupil Accommodation Review last spring, including the current Immaculate Conception, St. Columban’s and Sacred Heart Catholic Schools.

“The local community, as well as the provincial Ministry of Education, would have a reasonable expectation that school boards engage in a productive dialogue between each other on matters that could enhance how we create and support programs for our respective students,” commented UCDSB Chair, Jeff McMillan. “We have appreciated the current level of support that the Ministry of Education has lent to the staff-level discussions so far and hope we can continue to count on their support as we try to reach an agreement about matters of common interests, to both boards, in the City of Cornwall.”

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