

REPORT TITLE: **NORTH BARRIE PUPIL ACCOMMODATION REVIEW – RECOMMENDATIONS**
REPORT NUMBER: 8.1)05-2013
DESTINATION: Board Meeting # 05
DATE: Wednesday, February 27, 2013
AUTHOR OF REPORT: Brian Beal, Director of Education
TYPE OF REPORT: **ACTION**

NORTH BARRIE PUPIL ACCOMMODATION REVIEW AREA (NB PAR)

St. Monica's Catholic School - SMO
Monsignor Clair Catholic School -MCL
Sister Catherine Donnelly Catholic School -SCD
St. Marguerite d'Youville Catholic School –MDY
St. Mary's Catholic School -SMB
The Good Shepherd Catholic School –GSH

Background:

1. Due to declining enrolment in the North Barrie Area, there were 545 excess pupil spaces across the six North Barrie Schools in September 2011. In an attempt to improve efficiency and to maintain optimum service to students, a Pupil Accommodation Review (PAR) was conducted in which there was extensive community consultation and comprehensive analysis of the related issues. Many reports were completed during the Pupil Accommodation Review process and include:
 - a. The Pupil Accommodation Committee's (PAC) March 14, 2012 report to the Director of Education;
 - b. Board staff's reports to the Board in April and May 2012; and
 - c. The Recommendations Report to the Board on June 20, 2012.
2. The PAC recommendations were divided between two options:
 - a. Utilizing surplus space for Board office staff services either within individual surplus classrooms or within an amalgamated school; and
 - b. Close one school and re-distribute students amongst other five schools.
3. Board staff's report recommended the option to Close one school and re-distribute amongst other five schools with the proposed closure of St Marguerite d'Youville Catholic School .
4. As a result of the input from the school communities, the June 20, 2013 Board report proposed a hybrid concept that could include the use of the second floor of Monsignor Clair Catholic School for Board offices with meeting room space being accommodated at St Joseph's Catholic High School. The recommendation approved at the June 20, 2012 Board meeting deferred a decision pending reviews of the hybrid concept with the following motions:

1. *That the Board defer a decision on the North Barrie Pupil Accommodation Review pending reviews as follow:*
 - a) *That Board staff further explore the hybrid concept whereby the Bell Farm – Academic Services building is closed, Board office staff are relocated to Monsignor Clair Catholic School and additional meeting room space is completed at St. Joseph’s Catholic High School.*
 - b) *That Board staff initiate two north Barrie boundary reviews, one for The Good Shepherd Catholic and St. Marguerite d’Youville Catholic Schools, and the other for Monsignor Clair Catholic and St. Monica’s Catholic Schools in the fall/winter of 2012-2013 to better balance the student enrolment and report to the Board no later than the last Board meeting in February 2013.*
 - c) *That Board staff provide a report with the following additional information which will allow the Board to make the decision on the accommodation plans for north Barrie Catholic elementary schools:*
 - i) *office staff to be relocated to MCL and the office / meeting room requirements;*
 - ii) *operational needs including, but not limited to: school access, parking, HVAC, municipal zoning, Ministry of Education approvals.*
 - iii) *facility retrofits;*
 - iv) *a project implementation plan;*
 - v) *project costs for the above; and*
 - vi) *boundary review recommendations from the two north Barrie boundary reviews.*
2. *That Board direct staff to provide information to the North Barrie Catholic school community advising of these recommendations and that staff share the Board meeting date for the consideration of the accommodation decision, when that meeting date is confirmed.*

Comments:

Analysis and Reports

5. Staff have been working on the additional information and requirements since the June 20, 2012 meeting including analysis, reviews and presentations on the following:
 - a) Boundary Reviews for:
 - North East Barrie Boundary Review MCL and SMO, and
 - North West Barrie Boundary Review MDY and GSH.
 - b) Board Office Relocation to Monsignor Clair Catholic Elementary School Facility Viability Analysis including cost estimates, municipal approvals and Ministry of Education approvals for this concept.
 - c) Design concept reviews for St Joseph’s Catholic High School (SJO) for additional meeting room space.
 - d) Update on Enrolment Projections related to the 2011 Final Census release and the Midhurst Secondary Plan.

6. Further studies on the MDY Driveway project have also been completed and shared with the Board, including a further update at Appendix 10.
7. From the June 20, 2012 Board meeting recommendation #2, staff have sent out a notice to the NB PAR school communities (see attached notice at Appendix 11) advising of the Board meeting on 27 February 2013 which will consider a decision on the NB PAR.
8. The following reports are referenced as background and supporting information to this report:
 - a) Appendix 1 – March 14, 2012, PAC Report
 - b) Appendix 2 – April 11, 2012, Staff Report
 - c) Appendix 3 – June 20, 2012, North Barrie PAR Recommendations
 - d) Appendix 4 – November 28, 2012, North East Barrie Boundary Review
 - e) Appendix 5 – January 16, 2013, North West Barrie Boundary Review
 - f) Appendix 6 – February 6, 2013, North Barrie PAR – Board Office Relocation to Monsignor Clair Catholic Elementary School
 - g) Appendix 7 – February 6, 2013, North Barrie PAR – Retrofit Project – St. Joseph’s Catholic High School
 - h) Appendix 8 – February 6, 2013, North Barrie PAR – Update on Enrolment Projections
 - i) Appendix 9 – February 6, 2013, North Barrie PAR – St. Marguerite D’Youville Catholic Elementary School Driveway Retrofit Project
 - j) Appendix 10 – February 27, 2013, MDY Driveway Retrofit Project Costs
 - k) Appendix 11 - February 11, 2013, Notice sent to School Communities

Summary of Reports for the Hybrid Option

9. Facility Retrofits
 - a) The facility retrofit analysis for both MCL and SJO appear to support the office space needs for the relocation of the Academic Services staff in the Bell Farm facility.
 - b) The retrofit of MCL space would allow for the relocation of the Bell Farm staff. Since the Bell Farm leased space would no longer be required, there would be an annual operational savings of \$200,000. As well, there would be a reduction of 184 pupil places at MCL with the classroom closure on the second floor.
 - c) The MCL retrofit is estimated to cost approximately \$1,316,000. The funding for this work could be allocated from the Proceeds of Disposition from a portion of our current surplus properties.
 - d) Staff have had preliminary discussions with the City of Barrie staff. Changes to the current zoning at MCL would be required which would include the associated public process. Reviews of the design concepts indicate that there are no issues pertaining to the Ontario Building Code or municipal Official Plans or Site Plan Agreements. Approval from the Ministry of Education will be required to implement this change in school use, and this request has been sent to the Ministry for comments.

10. Retrofit work at SJO

Life cycle retrofit work is planned for this summer at SJO and would include the retrofitting of four surplus classroom spaces for one large and one small meeting rooms. This would reduce the surplus permanent spaces at SJO by 84 pupil places.

11. Boundaries

Staff proceeded with Boundary Review processes for each of the GSH/MDY and the MCL/SMO school community areas.

The boundary reviews demonstrated that balancing of the enrolments within these school communities is reasonable and can occur. As noted in the reports for each of the reviews, there was significant school community participation in the reviews and there was interest in the communities to minimize the impacts to existing families.

12. Enrolment Projections

Staff have received additional information from our demographic consultants confirming that with the 2011 Census Final Release, there is no change to the enrolment projections that were considered as part of the North Barrie PAR. Additionally, we have reviewed further the potential impact of the Midhurst Secondary Plan and can also confirm that the enrolment projections that were considered as part of the NB PAR are applicable.

13. Site Work at MDY

The site retrofit work for MDY has been further developed and the costing is currently estimated at approximately \$975,000. This project would provide significant enhancements for the school property similar to the standards at other elementary schools. The funds for this project would be from the Education Development Charges.

14. Direction from the June 20, 2012 Board meeting has been acted upon by Board staff over the fall and winter period with several reports having been completed and presented to the Board. Implementation of the hybrid plan is achievable, however, there is a requirement for approvals from the Ministry of Education for the change in space use at MCL and from the City of Barrie for the rezoning at MCL and MDY.

Summary:

15. The prime reason for the implementation and community consultation with the NB PAR was to address the surplus classroom spaces in the Catholic elementary schools in north Barrie, which present a major cost to maintain. These costs are compounded with the reduced operating grants resulting from the declining enrolments in north Barrie. The increased school operating costs and reduced funding allocation from the Ministry of Education need to be properly addressed as the

status quo is not fiscally viable. From a budgetary viewpoint, the issue can be best managed with the closure of an entire school. However, there is an opportunity to mitigate these costs without the full closure of a school, and this resulted in the consideration of the hybrid proposal for a shared school/ office facility. Considering these conflicting interests, the hybrid option allows for a reasonable balance in that 268 pupil places could be closed at MCL and SJO allowing for operational efficiencies and some fiscal responsibilities.

16. There are two options that are being proposed to the Board:

- Option A: Following from the June 20, 2012 Board report, the first recommendation is that the Board consider the hybrid option which would include in part, the closure of the second floor of MCL;

Or

- Option B: allows for the approval of the school closure option and specifically MDY, in the event that Option A is not approved.

Conclusion:

17. The North Barrie PAR has been a long journey that included a lot of data gathering and analysis by Board staff and our Catholic school communities, including the dedicated efforts of the PAC members. From this information there are a number of considerations in identifying the best solution to our surplus pupil spaces. Impact on our students was a primary factor in this review and a common theme throughout the PAR process was to minimize the impact on our students. The closure of a school has an important and long-term implication on not only the children in the school, but on the area families and school community. The decision to close a school is a very challenging action that needs to be weighed with the other factors presented in the PAR discussions. Through this exhaustive process, the dedicated support for Catholic education will culminate in the best long-term solution to meet the overall educational needs of our students.

Next Steps:

18. Board policy requires a notice to be sent to the school communities once the Board makes the final accommodation decision regarding the recommendations for the North Barrie PAR. This notice is to be provided within one week of the Board's decision and is to be provided to parents/guardians, staff and school Council members and will also be posted on the Board's website.

19. Following the Notice of Decision, there will be a thirty day period from the day of the Board's resolution to allow for requests for an administrative review of the PAR process, based on the Board approving the recommendations on February 27, 2013.

20. If an administrative review is requested by a school community, then staff will need to wait until the completion of the administrative review by the Ministry of Education before proceeding with the recommendation decision.

Recommendations:

Option A. Hybrid Option.

1. That the Board approve the closure of the second floor of MCL with this area being retrofitted for board staff offices effective September 2013, subject to Ministry approval;
2. That the Board approve the closure of the Academic Services building at 80 Bell Farm Road, Barrie and relocate the board offices staff to the second floor MCL upon completion of the retrofit work, subject to the re-zoning approval from the City of Barrie;
3. That the Board approve the retrofit project at SJO with work to take place in 2013-14;
4. That the Board implement the NW Barrie boundary review recommendations effective Sept 2014; and
 - That the Board approve the change of boundaries for St. Marguerite d'Youville and The Good Shepherd Catholic Schools based on Scenario # 3 as recommended by the Boundary Review Committee in the Jan 16, 2013 Board report, at Appendix 5; and
 - That the Board approve the recommendation for confirming the current grandfathering of grade 6 students affected by the change, for their grade 8 year, as recommended by the Boundary Review Committee.
5. That the Board implement the NE Barrie boundary review recommendations effective Sept 2013; and
 - That the Board approve the change of boundaries for Monsignor Clair and St. Monica's Catholic Schools based on Scenario #3 as recommended by the Boundary Review Committee in the Nov 28, 2012 Board report at Appendix 4; and
 - That the Board approve the recommendation for confirming the current grandfathering of grade 7 students affected by the change (both students affected through geographical boundary change and boundary exemptions) as recommended by the Boundary Review Committee.

That the Board approve the re-construction of the MDY driveway and site retrofit works.

OR:

Option B. School Closure.

1. That the Board approve the closure of a Catholic elementary school in north Barrie with the students being assigned to other north Barrie Catholic elementary schools effective September 2014;
2. That the Board approve the closure of MDY effective September 2014.