



ST. CLAIR CATHOLIC
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
Lighting the Way ~ Rejoicing in Our Journey

Pupil Accommodation Review – Chatham Elementary Schools ***Questions & Answers***

The following are answers to questions, which have been asked by parents and guardians regarding the Chatham Pupil Accommodation Review, either through the Pupil Accommodation Review Committee, or the website.

Students and Sense of Community

WHAT WILL BE THE PROCESS TO HELP CHILDREN TRANSITION FROM A SMALLER SCHOOL TO A LARGER, NEW SCHOOL?

If the Board of Trustees approves a motion to close or amalgamate a school, clear details around school closure dates and boundary revisions will be provided to all affected school communities. A transition committee will be established to address the transition of students and staff. A superintendent will work with the principal and school council to facilitate a smooth transition process. The principal will ensure that student learning remains the focus in the months following the decision to close the school. The principal will arrange visits and orientation activities with the principals of the receiving schools. There will be a commitment to student learning throughout the entire process.

WILL SCHOOL TRIPS STILL TAKE PLACE IN A LARGER SCHOOL?

Yes. Extra-curricular activities such as school trips will continue to be arranged in collaboration with the classroom teachers and the school administration. The size of the school does not determine this.

HOW WILL SCHOOL CONSOLIDATIONS AFFECT EXTRA-CURRICULAR ATHLETICS?

Various scenarios are possible, such as: Schools having more than one team in league play; schools having more opportunity for intramurals, in addition to their participation in league play. Because extracurricular activities are voluntarily run by our teachers and staff, final decisions will be made by the staff of the school; however, since larger schools have more staff, there is the potential for more extra-curricular opportunities for students, in sports as well as clubs and arts.

WHAT WILL BE THE IMPACT ON EQAO SCORES?

EQAO scores are not affected by the size of the school. All classes are limited by Ministry guidelines in terms of teacher/pupil ratio. The ability of the principal to organize the students into a greater number of straight grades will allow additional focus on EQAO preparation for students. In addition, the increased number of students in a cohort may help to improve the results for schools, because there will be more opportunities for staff to collaborate.

WHAT WILL THE STRUCTURE OF THE SCHOOL DAY LOOK LIKE?

The school day will continue to consist of 300 minutes of instructional time. Whether the day is traditional or balanced would be part of the transition plan, which includes consultation and discussion between teachers and school administrators.

WHAT WILL BE THE EFFECT ON STUDENT SAFETY AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE TIMES (eg: EPIPENS, DEFIBRILATORS, ETC.) IN A BIGGER SCHOOL?

Student safety is of the highest concern for all staff of the St. Clair Catholic District School Board (the Board). As well, the Ontario Ministry of Education has mandated a comprehensive, thorough approach to student safety in all schools in the province. Student safety and emergency response plans are based upon the individual needs of the student and are developed by the principal of the school in consultation with Board personnel (and community support when appropriate). All schools in the Board, regardless of size, adhere to Sec. C Policy – Health Support and Sec. C Policy – Lockdown, Hold & Secure, Shelter in Place and the accompanying procedures, which are fully compliant with provincial legislation and regulations pertaining to student safety.

HOW CAN YOU ENSURE SAFETY IN LARGE BUILDINGS (ie, LOCKED DOORS)?

New schools will be equipped with the latest security and safety features. Board policies, procedures and guidelines with respect to school safety protocols are reviewed annually with school staff.

WHAT IS THE EFFECT OF A LARGER SCHOOL ON STUDENT BULLYING?

There is no objective data to indicate that school size affects rates of bullying. The increased opportunity for social interactions in a larger student population may assist students to find new friends and to socialize with a larger and more diverse group of students. With increased numbers of staff, there is a greater potential for more extra-curricular activities and clubs, giving students more opportunities for positive social interactions.

HOW DO WE BUILD A HEALTHY AND SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY IN A NEW SCHOOL?

The transition process to a new school begins in the year(s) prior to the actual change. This allows students and their families time to identify and address any concerns that impede the development of a healthy and supportive community. Working with the school, parish and families – the transition committee will implement strategies to build community and support learning for students.

Religion

HAS THERE BEEN CONSIDERATION FOR PROXIMITY OF SCHOOL LOCATIONS TO A CHURCH?

The Board is in possession of a plot of land in North Chatham at 801 McNaughton Avenue, W.; however, other property locations will be considered as well. The Board does not own any vacant land in South Chatham. Locations for new schools will be finalized if the Board of Trustees approves consolidation(s) of Chatham schools. Locating new schools near a Catholic church is appealing to the Board, but would be dependent on land being available and affordable.

HOW WILL THE PRIESTS AND PARISH STAFF MINISTER TO SCHOOLS IF THEY ARE NO LONGER NEIGHBOURS?

The school principals and senior administration of the Board have close and constructive relations with all Chatham parishes and with the Diocese of London and will continue to collaborate to ensure that our students are served by the parishes and that students will have access to the parish churches. Our

Priests and parish staff will continue to provide pastoral ministry to our Catholic schools, just as they do with our schools that are not located beside our churches.

HOW WILL THE PARISHES BE INVOLVED IN DECISIONS ABOUT NEW SCHOOLS?

The Board of Trustees has the responsibility to make final decisions about the closure and/or consolidation of schools. As they consider this decision, they rely on the Pupil Accommodation Review Committee (PARC) to be the official conduit of information from school communities. As well, Father Jim Higgins of Blessed Sacrament/St. Agnes parish cluster will serve as a resource to the PARC through the Pupil Accommodation Review process; and Father Matthew Kucharski of St. Joseph/St. Ursula parish cluster has offered to support the Board and the school communities throughout this process.

WILL PARISHES CHANGE BOUNDARIES? HOW DO PARISHES FOLLOW SCHOOLS AND LOCATION?

This would be a decision of the Chatham-Kent Deanery in consultation with the Diocese of London. Since there are many areas in the diocese where school catchment areas do not correspond with parish boundaries, we should not expect parishes to change their boundaries as a result of school consolidations or new school locations.

WILL STUDENTS BE BUSSED TO MASS?

Board and school leadership recognize the importance of school celebrations of Mass to prepare and support our students' participation at Sunday Eucharist with their families. We will work with the parish to ensure that students participate in the Eucharist – at their schools and/or at the parish church. The decision to bus students to Mass will be made in consultation with the parish if needed to enhance the students' access to Mass.

IS THERE ENOUGH ROOM IN THE CHURCHES FOR THE INCREASED STUDENT POPULATION?

Most of the churches in Chatham can hold +500 people.

WILL THERE BE A SCHOOL CHAPEL OR SACRED SPACE?

The design of the school is not yet determined. The Ministry of Education does not fund the construction of chapels in schools; however, many schools have libraries, vestibules and gymnasiums that are utilized very effectively as sacred space, within flexible usage of space design.

Special Education

WILL THERE BE MORE RESOURCE TEACHERS?

The number of resource teachers is determined by the student population; therefore, a larger school would have more resource teacher support on a per-pupil basis.

WILL THERE BE FEWER SUPPORT STAFF? HOW WILL LARGER NUMBERS OF STUDENTS AFFECT RESOURCE STAFF?

The allocation of resource teachers to a school is determined by a process of assessing a number of factors – most notably, enrolment and student needs. Accordingly, this process will guide the allocation of resource teacher(s) to a new school. Since the Board does not expect the consolidation of schools to result in significant changes to enrolment and student needs, the allocation of resource teachers is not expected to change significantly.

HOW WILL ACCESSIBILITY NEEDS BE CONSIDERED FOR STUDENTS IN A LARGER SCHOOL?

Accessibility will be considered in all facility planning and accommodation projects. None of the seven elementary schools currently under review meet accessibility standards. Accessibility features are easier to incorporate in a new design, than in a retrofit.

Classes / Class Size

WILL THERE CONTINUE TO BE SPLIT GRADES (OR FEWER SPLIT GRADES) BASED ON PROJECTION OF 2-3 CLASSROOMS PER GRADE? WHAT WILL BE THE RESTRICTIONS FOR CLASS SIZES (BEYOND GRADE 3)? CURRENTLY PRIMARY CLASS SIZES ARE RESTRICTED TO 20 STUDENTS PER CLASS – WILL THIS CHANGE AND HOW WILL THIS AFFECT THE JUNIOR AND SENIOR GRADES?

Ontario Regulation 132/12 (Ed. Act) outlines class size requirements. The Ministry requires that 90% of a school board's primary classes (Grades 1-3) not exceed 20 students, and the remaining classes must not exceed 23 students. The Ministry requires that the Board's average class size for Grades 4-8 shall not exceed 24.5 students. Larger schools do not necessarily mean that there will be no split grades, but it is likely that there will be fewer across the Board overall.

Technology

IS PHYSICAL STRUCTURE IMPORTANT TO THE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF 21ST CENTURY SKILLS?

The need to integrate technology within the classroom has increased significantly over the past several years, due in large part to the pervasive nature of the internet and mobile devices among today's youth. No one can predict how educational technologies will evolve given the dynamic nature of technology. Physical building structure plays an important role in facilitating essential 21st Century learning experiences. The infrastructure of older buildings cannot be modified in some cases to provide the strong and reliable signal strength needed to support learning through the use of Chromebook, tablets, laptops and other mobile technologies.

WILL NEW SCHOOLS HAVE BETTER TECHNOLOGY?

Across the Board's elementary schools, there are fewer than two students per device. The Board strives to standardize devices across all schools in order to support the devices effectively. New schools allow for infrastructure to make more effective use of technology.

School Organization and Planning

IS THERE ANY CONSIDERATION OF PRIMARY / JUNIOR SCHOOL AND AN INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL INSTEAD OF K -8 SCHOOLS?

As stated in the Guiding Principles section (page 4) of the *Initial Staff Report*, the Board is committed to K-8 schools as its preferred model for elementary facilities.

HOW ACCURATE ARE THE PROJECTIONS FOR FRENCH IMMERSION? WILL SOME STUDENTS OPT TO MOVE TO A NEW (ENGLISH) SCHOOL?

The determination of enrolment projections is described in the *Initial Staff Report* on page 10. The projections for French Immersion are based on the most accurate data that the Board has at the current time.

CAN FAMILIES BUY HOMES OUTSIDE CURRENT PROJECTED BOUNDARIES AND STILL REMAIN AT CURRENT SCHOOL UNTIL NEW SCHOOL COMES INTO EFFECT?

Sec. C Policy – Admission of Students and the accompanying procedures guide the Board’s process for Out-of-Boundary applications. A student who moves out of a school boundary area must register at the school in their new boundary area or complete an out-of-boundary request. Approvals will be based on whether space within the class is available without creating staffing or space repercussions.

An application to attend a school outside of the school boundary, if granted, extends for a maximum of one school year only. Re-application must be made prior to the beginning of the next school year. The parent(s) or legal guardian(s) must accept responsibility for timely transportation to and from the school.

WHAT HAPPENS IF IN 10 YEARS WE EXCEED CAPACITY?

The Board's current enrolment projections do not indicate that student enrolment will exceed the capacity that has been reported in the *Initial Staff Report*. The Board recalculates enrolment projections each year and plans accordingly for future years. As noted in the *Initial Staff Report*, optimal utilization rates for school facilities falls in the range of 90-110%.

WILL PORTABLES NEED TO BE ADDED TO NEW SCHOOLS IF AN INFLUX OF STUDENTS FROM OTHER BOARDS HAPPENS?

The Board’s *Long Term Capital Plan* was presented at the Regular Board Meeting of February 23, 2016. As stated on page 40 of this document, portable classrooms will be used to address temporary enrolment pressures. The Board does not consider portable classrooms as a permanent or long-term solution. Additionally, the Board is not considering changing its *Sec. C Policy – Admission of Students*, which permits non-Catholics to enrol in our elementary schools only on the approval of a stringent application process, and only if space is available. Finally, the Board’s enrolment projections are not expected to exceed the capacity of our proposals for school consolidation.

WILL WE LOSE STUDENTS TO CO-TERMINUS BOARD?

We have no evidence to support this presumption.

ARE THERE MORE DETAILED MAPS OF THE PROPOSED NEW BOUNDARIES?

If a new school is approved by the Board of Trustees, detailed maps and boundaries for the new school attendance area will be developed in consultation with transportation staff. This work happens during transition planning for a new school.

WITH PROPOSED CHANGES TO BOUNDARIES, IS GRANDFATHERING AN OPTION FOR STUDENTS TO CONTINUE ATTENDANCE IN CHATHAM SCHOOLS INSTEAD OF IN COUNTY SCHOOLS?

Options A, B, and C of the *Initial Staff Report* include a proposal to make some minor changes to boundaries, which would result in approximately twenty of our current students being relocated to county schools. However, the Board will consider implementing boundary changes on a “grandfathered” basis, provided doing so does not add unreasonable costs or extend bus route times.

LOCATION IDEAS?

Locations for new schools will be finalized if the Board of Trustees approves the consolidation of Chatham schools. Currently the Board owns vacant property at 801 McNaughton Avenue, W.; however, other property locations will be considered as well.

WHERE WILL THE SOUTH SIDE SCHOOL BE LOCATED?

Locations for new schools will be finalized if the Board of Trustees approves the consolidation of Chatham schools. Administrative staff are currently investigating location options for a south school.

SHOULD WE CONSIDER BUILDING THE SOUTH SIDE SCHOOL BIGGER TO ACCOMMODATE PROJECTED NUMBERS – APPEARS TO BE OVER CAPACITY?

The final capacity of any new school(s) will be determined based on the most current enrolment projections available at the time business cases are being finalized for submission to the Ministry of Education for capital funding support.

Facilities

IS THERE ENOUGH SPACE FOR THE STUDENTS ENROLING?

The final capacity of any new school(s) will be determined based on the most current enrolment projections available at the time business cases are being finalized for submission to the Ministry of Education for capital funding support.

DOES GEORGES P. VANIER REALLY NEED THAT MUCH MAINTENANCE WORK? HOW ARE THE COSTS OF EACH SCHOOL'S MAINTENANCE NEEDS CALCULATED? \$3M OVER 5 YEARS – WHAT DOES THAT INCLUDE FOR OUR LADY OF FATIMA SCHOOL?

School renewal needs are based on assessments conducted by VFA Canada on behalf of the Ministry and represents those building components reaching the end of their useful life. Board staff have identified some additional renewal needs not addressed by VFA, such as the introduction of air conditioning into schools, where it currently doesn't exist. This is explained in detail on pages 8-10 and 14-15 of the *Initial Staff Report*. As well, detailed information on renewal needs are found in the School Information Profiles, included as attachments to the *Initial Staff Report*.

WILL THE NEW SCHOOLS INCLUDE A CAFETERIA?

Cafeterias are not identified in the approved Ministry space templates for elementary schools. That being said, Board staff work closely with project architects to include multi-functional/flexible spaces in the final design of a new school.

WILL THE NEW SCHOOLS INCLUDE A STATE-OF-THE-ART LIBRARY?

The new schools will include a library/resource space designed to meet 21st Century learning needs and equipped with current technology.

SIZE OF GYM IS A CONCERN – WILL IT BE LARGE ENOUGH TO ACCOMMODATE CONCURRENT SPORTS ACTIVITIES?

The Ministry does not include funding for over-sized or double gyms in elementary schools. In its standard space templates, elementary schools in the 500-student range will include a gym, which is considered by the Ministry of Education to be adequate for schools of this size.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THE OLD SCHOOL BUILDINGS AND WHAT IS THE LONG-TERM REPLACEMENT PLAN FOR ANY OF THE OLD SCHOOLS?

School Boards must follow the requirements set out in Ontario Regulation 444/98 – Disposition of Surplus Real Property (Ed. Act). When schools are closed, school boards can declare these properties surplus to the Board's needs. Following that, school boards can offer these properties for sale or lease. Under this regulation, school boards are required to first offer surplus property for purchase or lease to

a list of preferred organizations. This has to happen before the property can be sold or leased on the open market, and helps to facilitate the property remaining within the public sector, where there is a need and a financially viable proposal.

IS THERE ANY CONSIDERATION FOR A NEW FRENCH IMMERSION SCHOOL NOW, OR IN THE FUTURE?

The Our Lady of Fatima site is assessed with needs that can be met with some updates/renovations. The school will be appropriately equipped to meet the needs of all students. The *Initial Staff Report* proposes a renovation of between \$3.5 and \$4 million to Our Lady of Fatima School, to prepare this site as the new French Immersion school in Chatham. Given such an extensive and costly renovation and modernization, there would be no need for a new French Immersion school in the foreseeable future.

WHAT IF THE SCHOOLS ARE NOT READY FOR SEPTEMBER 2019?

Actual project completion and school opening dates will be determined once final Ministry approval for capital funding is received. Since the proposal calls for the construction of new facilities, regardless of when these dates might be, our existing schools will accommodate our students until the new school(s) are ready to receive them.

HOW DO WE MAKE SURE THE NEW SCHOOLS ARE KEPT UP, SO NEW SCHOOLS ARE CONTINUOUSLY UPGRADED?

The Board has access to annual operating allocations from the Ministry for repairs and maintenance to support its preventative maintenance programs. In addition, the Ministry has increased its annual capital funding allocations in recent years for school renewal and school condition improvement projects to address major infrastructure projects allowing school boards to keep its facilities up-to-date.

**WILL THE NEW BUILD BE OPEN-CONCEPT, OR WILL YOU ASK FOR TEACHER OPINION?
DO THE STAFF/TEACHERS HAVE A SAY IN WHAT THE SCHOOLS WILL LOOK LIKE?**

The design of the new school(s) will be determined by Board staff in consultation with the project architects, taking into account Ministry guidelines and facility space requirements. With new builds, input sessions will be conducted with all school staff and the parent communities affected, to identify possible design features that could be incorporated. The design of a new school shall be the responsibility of the Board's senior administration, to ensure the building complies with legislative requirements and supports learning environment best practices.

**IF RENOVATIONS ARE TO HAPPEN AT OUR LADY OF FATIMA SCHOOL OVER A NUMBER OF YEARS,
AFTER IT'S DECIDED WILL OUR STUDENTS/STAFF HAVE TO LIVE THROUGH THE RENOVATIONS?**

Every attempt is made to schedule capital project work at times when the facility is closed and unoccupied (ie, summer break, Christmas break or March break). If work has to occur during the school year, access to the section of the school being worked on would be separated and secured to ensure the safety of all students and staff.

**WILL THE BOARD GET STARTED ON RENOVATIONS AT OUR LADY OF FATIMA THIS SUMMER, SO THAT
THE SCHOOL WILL BE FINISHED WITH THE RENOVATION AT THE SAME TIME AS THE NEW SCHOOLS
BEING BUILT WOULD BE READY FOR OCCUPANCY?**

The Board will get started on some aspects of the approved option as soon as possible, with a goal to have all phases of the approved option, including renovations to Our Lady of Fatima, completed by September 2019.

HAS THE BOARD INVESTIGATED COLLABORATING WITH THE MUNICIPALITY TO BUILD A SCHOOL WITH AN ADJOINING LONG-TERM CARE FACILITY, WITH STUDENT PROGRAMMING UTILIZING THE FACILITY? HAS THE BOARD TAKEN STEPS TO ENSURE THAT SPACE IS AVAILABLE FOR COMMUNITY PARTNERS AND THAT SUFFICIENT SPACE REMAINS AVAILABLE FOR ENROLMENT INCREASES?

Senior staff have had meetings with community partners in the municipality, to explore the feasibility of shared-space agreements (eg: child-care, etc). It is up to the municipality to decide if it wants to occupy space in any newly-built schools, and to secure funding to do so. Once the PARC has made its recommendation and the Board has made its decision, staff will work to secure commitments from the municipality in this area, which will be included in our business case to the Ontario government and will be incorporated in the design of new buildings.

WHAT IS INCLUDED IN THE REPAIR/RENOVATIONS EXPENSE LISTED AS “SCCDSB DATABASE”?

A detailed list of renewal items for each school can be found in the School Information Profiles included on the Board’s website, specifically Appendices A12 through G12. The SCCDSB Database Board identified needs amount originally included in the *Initial Staff Report* has been revised to reflect the inclusion of one school’s data originally overlooked in the preparation of the report. Accordingly, the *Initial Staff Report* has been updated and reposted to the Board’s website.

IS THERE ANY OVERLAP BETWEEN THE VFA ASSESSMENTS AND THE BOARD’S LIST OF IDENTIFIED NEEDS?

There is no overlap of the renewal information presented. The list prepared by Board staff recognizes those renewal needs not addressed by VFA during the assessment process including such items as the introduction of air conditioning into schools where it currently doesn’t exist.

IS THE VFA DATABASE PUBLIC INFORMATION?

The VFA database is not accessible to the public. It is a Ministry of Education licensed product containing assessment data and life cycle information for every school in the province. Access is provided to school boards to plan and manage their facility renewal projects and to update the database for work that has been completed.

Transportation

BUSSING – WILL WALK DISTANCES REMAIN 1.6 KM?

Student transportation for both the St. Clair Catholic District School Board and the Lambton Kent District School Board is managed by CLASS, an arms-length consortium, which is owned by both school boards. It has its own set of policies and procedures that apply to all bussed students in both boards throughout all of Chatham-Kent and Lambton County. Its policies and procedures may be found on its website at cklass.ca. The policy regarding walk distance will not change.

COULD YOU GIVE A PROJECTION FOR BUS TIMES FOR EACH OPTION? FOR EXAMPLE, IN OPTION C WOULD BUS TIMES BE LONGER FOR SOUTH SIDE STUDENTS?

Eligible ridership is outlined under each option in the *Initial Staff Report*. Accurate ride times cannot be calculated until a location is selected. Other than in exceptional circumstances, students in elementary school will not ride more than 60 minutes on the bus, one way, each day.

HOW WILL YOU ENSURE SAFETY FOR STUDENTS WHILE ON BUSES, CONSIDERING INCREASED RIDE TIMES?

School bus safety is addressed in multiple ways for our students. Firstly, school bus drivers have extensive training as part of their Class B license requirements, as well as regular training to continually enhance their skills. Secondly, we have many safety-focused elements built into our service agreements with school bus operators, addressing everything from vehicles to mandatory driver training requirements. Thirdly, we provide on-site school bus safety programs annually for every elementary school across the district, which includes bus evacuation drills. Some of the other safety-focused initiatives we undertake include having digital video surveillance equipment on all school buses, annual public service announcements on bus safety running local radio stations, a first-time rider program for kindergarten students each summer and a partnership with local police services to address drivers who pass school buses when overhead lights are activated.

WILL THERE BE CONSIDERATIONS FOR INCREASED NUMBERS OF CARS /TRAFFIC AT LARGER SCHOOLS?

In the design of any new school, the Board accommodates anticipated number of buses and traffic from parents and staff.

HOW WILL STUDENTS WHO CURRENTLY WALK TO SCHOOL TRANSITION TO TAKING A BUS?

The Board follows regulations to ensure qualified and trained drivers. Proactively there are in school safety programs conducted for all students every year at all elementary schools, which also includes bus evacuation drills. Every summer a first-time rider program is offered for kindergarten students, which provides a hands-on introduction to riding the school bus and key safety messages for students and guardians. As well, buses are equipped with video surveillance to allow school principals the ability to review any incidents that occur on buses.

DUE TO THE DISTANCE, SOME STUDENTS WILL HAVE TO TRAVEL BY BUS. WILL THERE BE CONSIDERATION TO DIFFERENT START TIMES, SO YOUNGER CHILDREN ARE NOT STANDING OUT IN THE DARK OR ARRIVING HOME IN THE DARK?

For any new schools, start and end times are determined as part of transition planning.

Budget and Costing

WILL THERE BE ADDITIONAL COSTS TO PARENTS (eg. FIELD TRIPS, INCREASED COSTS BECAUSE OF THE LARGE NUMBER OF STUDENTS)?

There will be no additional costs to parents.

WILL THIS IMPACT OR INCREASE TAXES?

The rates for the education portion of property tax are established by the Minister of Finance and help to fund the elementary and secondary education system in Ontario. Education tax rates are set in Ontario Regulation 400/98 (Ed. Act) for all residents of the Province of Ontario. Taxes will not be impacted.

WE'RE ONLY LOOKING AT THE PHYSICAL PLANTS. HOW WILL THIS AFFECT THE OPERATIONAL EXPENSES – WHAT ARE THE SAVINGS AND HOW WILL THEY BE USED? OR, IF THERE IS AN INCREASE, HOW WILL IT BE PAID FOR?

The consolidation of schools does result in operational savings. These savings are being calculated by administrative staff and would be submitted to the Ministry of Education as part of a business case for capital funding.

ARE COSTS COMPLETE? DOES IT INCLUDE FURNISHINGS, TECHNOLOGY, etc.; OR, ARE COSTS SOLELY FOR FACILITY?

Capital investment costs relate solely to the facility but would include technology infrastructure requirements (ie, electrical, cabling for data, WIFI connections, etc.) During the planning process, budgets for furniture, equipment and computer technology will be established and funded through Board departmental operating budgets and the annual capital school renewal allocation from the Ministry.

COST OF PROPERTY ACQUISITION IS A CONCERN. WILL PRICE OF LAND INCREASE BECAUSE LANDOWNERS WILL TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE BOARD'S DESIRE TO PURCHASE LAND? IS THERE A POSSIBILITY OF A LAND DONATION BY ANY LANDOWNERS?

Locations for new schools will be finalized if the Board of Trustees approves consolidation(s) of Chatham schools. Administrative staff are currently investigating location options. Cost of land acquisition has been included in the costed proposals in our *Initial Staff Report*. The Ontario Ministry of Education has designated \$60 million for land acquisition, available on a grant basis, to enable school boards to proceed with school consolidations. No land donations have been offered to the Board for this project, to date.

Staff

AMALGAMATION OF STAFF – CAN WE ENSURE A SMOOTH TRANSITION FOR ALL? WHAT IS THE PROCESS?

The transition of staff will be guided by existing staffing practices and defined processes outlined in collective agreements and employment contracts. The Board has constructive, mutually-respectful relationships with the leaders of all employee groups in our system and we will engage those leaders to assist in the facilitation of transitioning staff.

WHAT WILL BE THE PRINCIPAL TO STUDENT RATIO? VICE PRINCIPAL? DOES IT VARY FOR DIFFERENT AGE GROUPS? WILL IT LOOK SIMILAR TO UCC WITH 1 PRINCIPAL AND 2 VICE PRINCIPALS?

As per current practice, there will be one (1) principal assigned to a school. With respect to vice principals, the Ministry of Education allotment of funds for vice principals is on the basis of per pupil funding. The Ministry currently grants the Board funding for approximately three (3) elementary vice principals for the entire board. This funding, in addition to enrolment and student needs, will assist the Board's senior administration in determining the allotment and percentage of a vice principal to a new school. Senior administration strives to provide some allotment of a vice principal to a school if enrolment exceeds 325 students. If enrolment exceeds approximately 500 students, senior administration will strive for increased vice principal allotment.

WILL THE VP HAVE A TEACHING ASSIGNMENT?

Currently, all vice principals at the Board's elementary schools include an assigned teaching component. That said, the decision to assign a teaching component to a vice principal at a new school will be based on the enrolment, student needs and the fairest distribution of vice principal allotment to all elementary schools of the Board, with the limited financial resources described in the answer above.

WOULD SCHOOL STAFF MOVE TOGETHER INTO NEW FACILITIES, SO THAT STUDENTS HAVE FAMILIAR TEACHING STAFF IN A NEW BUILDING?

The transition of staff will be guided by existing staffing practices and defined processes outlined under collective agreements and employment contracts. For that reason, the Board is unable to confirm staffing outcomes at this time; however, the transition of an entire school staff to a new facility is unlikely.

WILL THERE BE FEWER TEACHERS? SUPPORT STAFF?

The allocation of classroom teachers is determined by enrolment and class size provisions set by the Ministry of Education. Since we do not anticipate a decline in enrolment as a result of the Pupil Accommodation Review, we do not anticipate changes to the number of teachers required. With respect to non-teaching support staff, enrolment and student needs will assist in determining necessary staffing levels. Staffing levels and transition of staff will be determined in accordance with collective agreements.

SUPPORT STAFF – WILL THEY BE STRETCHED THIN SINCE MORE STUDENTS WITH NEEDS WILL BE IN ONE ROOM?

No, support staff will not be stretched thin as a result of any outcomes under the Pupil Accommodation Review. As per current practice, support staff allocations will be determined by enrolment and student needs.

HOW WILL PRINCIPALS AND VICE PRINCIPALS BE CHOSEN?

The assignment of principals and vice principals is determined by the Director of Education.

November 18, 2016