



REPORT TO BOARD OF TRUSTEES

August 29, 2017

Dan Parr, Director of Education

SUBJECT: Location of New Elementary School in North Chatham

PREPARED BY: Amy Janssens, Executive Superintendent – Corporate Services & Treasurer

BACKGROUND:

The Ministry of Education has confirmed benchmark funding for two elementary schools; one in North Chatham and one in South Chatham. This evening's report to the Board of Trustees provides information for the recommended location of the new elementary school in North Chatham.

To assess potential locations senior administration has referred back to the Long-Term Capital Plan (LTCP) Guiding Principles and additional considerations that were identified by the Pupil Accommodation Review Committee members.

The LTCP Guiding Principles were created to provide guidance for the Board to ensure equitable, affordable and sustainable learning facilities.

- 1) The Board is committed to providing and maintaining quality learning and teaching environments that support student achievement (Board Strategic Plan 2015-2016)
- 2) Optimal utilization rates for school facilities is in the range of 90-110%
- 3) Facilities reflect the program strategy that all students need personalized learning, pathways, schools with specialization and cluster and community support
- 4) The scheduled length of time on a vehicle provided through CLASS shall not exceed 60 minutes one-way (elementary)
- 5) School facilities meet the needs of each of our students in the 21st century
- 6) Accessibility will be considered in facility planning and accommodation
- 7) School facilities provide neighborhood and community access that supports the well-being of students and their families (Child Care, Community Partnerships, Community Use of Schools)
- 8) School facilities have flexible learning environments including adaptive and flexible use of spaces
- 9) Specific principles related to the elementary panel include:
 - a) *School Capacity* – optimal school capacity would be 400 to 600 students, which creates two to three classes for each grade;
 - b) *School Grade/Organization* – Kindergarten to Grade 8 facilities;
 - c) *School Site Size* – optimal elementary school site size would be approximately 6 to 8 acres;
 - d) *French Immersion* – single track schools preferred; in dual track schools a balance between French Immersion and English track students is ideal for balanced program delivery.

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Additional considerations were identified by PARC members. For the purpose of this report, considerations related to the selection of property are noted below.

- Adequate staffing and resource support for students with special learning needs.
- Ensure that there is a transition plan for all students with special education needs, mental health, physical and medical needs.
- Provide “calming rooms” (i.e., tactile, Snoezelen rooms).
- Student safety and wellbeing must be primary concern – during and after the transition to new schools.
- Ensure that there are additional opportunities for students to participate in clubs and sports (i.e. robotics, dance, chess clubs).
- Create a multi-level sports organization at the schools that will allow greater participation in competitive sports, as well as intermural sports.
- Provide funds to the schools to cover the cost of busing the students to their parish church 3 times per year.
- Grandfather current students and future siblings who might be outside of any new boundaries to attend new schools.
- Allow the students and families in the current St. Vincent boundary area to attend the new school or the new boundary school.
- Develop strategies to address transportation needs of parents who do not own cars, so that they can attend school presentations, meetings etc.
- Better climate-control and air quality with air conditioning in all schools.

Based on an extensive review of available properties in north Chatham senior administration is recommending the location of the new elementary school in north Chatham be at 801 McNaughton Avenue West. The following information is relevant to the selection of this location.

- 1) Strong partnership opportunities are available to the Board at this location including:
 - a) The future new Chatham Children’s Treatment Centre will be located on an adjacent property on McNaughton Ave. The school and treatment centre staff will be able to connect more easily and more frequently for face-to-face meetings, which will lead to enhanced communication and better planning. Joint educational opportunities can occur more easily and there is potential for sharing of facilities. This location would also make it easier for special needs students to use the centre’s adapted pool and outdoor learning spaces, including an adapted playground.
 - b) Being close to St. Clair College makes participation in a number of programs such as Trades on Tour, Amazing Skills Challenge, Open houses, First Nation Open House, Build a Dream, Robotics programs and World of Choices (Junior Achievement partnership) much easier. Also there is hands on placement opportunities for St. Clair College ECE, DSW and CYW students.
- 2) The location is adjacent to a soccer pitch, baseball fields and an arena to provide more options for activities in close proximity to the school.
- 3) The ride times to a parish church for Mass will be minimal.

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- 4) Given the new boundaries, including the current St. Vincent boundary, the scheduled length of time on a vehicle provided through CLASS will not exceed 60 minutes one-way.
- 5) Based on the students in north Chatham today, 151 students would be able to walk to this location.
- 6) This location is on a current Chatham transit line to help in addressing transportation needs of parents who do not own cars.
- 7) To properly address student and pedestrian safety and movement of vehicles a Traffic Study will be completed and shared with the Municipality of Chatham-Kent to confirm required sidewalks, crosswalks, paths, etc. The Municipality of Chatham-Kent has expressly committed their time to discuss the safety and well-being of the students as it relates to the Traffic Study.
- 8) This property is 8 acres and is suitable for a school with a 564 per pupil loading capacity, 3 child care rooms, parking, bus lanes and green space.
- 9) This property is currently owned by the Board. Funds will not be required for the following items: appraisal, legal, negotiations or planning consultants that would be required to purchase and re-zone another property. Instead the Board can use all funds received from the Ministry of Education in the design and build of the new school.
- 10) The Board will not request funding for land purchase from the Ministry of Education, a process that can take 6 months for approval.
- 11) The Board can meet the proposed construction date of September 2019.
- 12) This property is in the Chatham urban boundary near a large residential area with future growth in residential housing planned.
- 13) This property is easily serviced by the existing urban storm sewer, sanitary sewer and water main along McNaughton Ave.
- 14) This property is zoned Institutional and therefore does not require re-zoning.
- 15) There is no concerns with the air quality at this location nor in the surrounding area.

From concept to completion, administration has planned for a timeline of two years from the date that the Board of Trustees approves a property location and architect is selected.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the St. Clair Catholic District School Board receive the report: *Location of New Elementary School in North Chatham*, for information.

That the St. Clair Catholic District School Board approve the location of the new elementary school in North Chatham to be 801 McNaughton Avenue West in Chatham.