



ST. CLAIR CATHOLIC
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

REPORT

SUBJECT: ACCOMMODATION REVIEW (ST. IGNATIUS CATHOLIC SCHOOL AND ST. PAUL CATHOLIC SCHOOL) – PARENT SURVEY RESULTS

SUBMITTED TO: BOARD OF TRUSTEES

DATE OF MEETING: November 9, 2004

PREPARED BY: GEORGE CYRENNE, Consultant

PRESENTED BY: JIM MCKENZIE, Associate Director – Corporate Services

SUBMITTED BY: MARGARET NELSON, Director of Education

**REPORT:
ACCOMMODATION REVIEW (ST. IGNATIUS CATHOLIC SCHOOL AND ST. PAUL
CATHOLIC SCHOOL) – PARENT SURVEY RESULTS**

BACKGROUND:

Board policy 7.4 requires that a report and analysis be made that outlines the results of a parent survey concerning the accommodation issues for St. Ignatius Catholic and St. Paul Catholic schools.

RESULTS OF SURVEY:

Attached are the following:

- a) a summary of St. Ignatius Catholic / St. Paul Catholic School survey results
- b) survey results including comments
- c) letter to catholic school supporters
- d) survey

GENERAL OVERVIEW:

- 150 surveys were distributed, 54 returned or 36%.
- St. Ignatius School parents returned 71% of surveys, St. Paul School parents returned 19% and the communities of Bothwell & Thamesville returned 20%.
- If St. Ignatius & St. Paul schools were to consolidate, only 18% of parents from St. Ignatius School & Bothwell community are in favour of moving students to Thamesville. However, 93% of the respondents from Thamesville are in favour of consolidation.
- 74% of St. Ignatius School parents who responded said they would consider sending their children to a public school. Only 30% of the others who responded said they would also consider this alternative.
- 74% of parents who responded from St. Ignatius School said that their children would be inconvenienced by not having the ability to walk to school, come home for lunch or walk with parents to & from school. Only 35% of the others surveyed agreed with this statement.
- 94% of the parents who responded from St. Ignatius School felt the community would lose its economic viability and property values would decrease. About 65% of the others feel this would occur.
- 62% of St. Ignatius parents who responded felt that they should be involved in the development of a newly consolidated catholic school community in Thamesville. Also 65% of all others expressed a similar concern.
- In addition to the above, many Bothwell respondents are concerned with the long bus trip to Thamesville. Most individuals agreed that renovations would be required to the building in Thamesville should consolidation occur.

This report, *Accommodation Review (St. Ignatius Catholic School and St. Paul Catholic School) – Parent Survey Results*, has been provided to trustees for information.

SUMMARY OF ST. IGNATIUS / ST. PAUL SCHOOLS SURVEY RESULTS

	<u>St. Ignatius</u>	<u>St. Paul</u>	<u>St. Ignatius</u>	<u>St. Paul</u>	
	<u>Parents</u>	<u>Parents</u>	<u>Community</u>	<u>Community</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
DISTRIBUTED	48	62	20	20	150
RESPONDED	34	12	6	2	54
% RESPONDED	71%	19%	30%	10%	36%

2 If the St. Clair Catholic District School Board consolidates schools, students would most likely be moved to Thamesville. Is this acceptable to you?

YES	21%	92%	0%	100%	37%
NO	79%	0%	100%	0%	61%
N/A	0%	8%	0%	0%	2%

3 Would you consider sending your child to a nearby public school?

YES	74%	0%	50%	50%	54%
NO	24%	83%	0%	0%	33%
N/A	3%	17%	50%	50%	13%

4 If the St. Clair Catholic District School Board consolidates schools in Thamesville, all students now attending St. Ignatius Catholic School would be bussed. Please include your comments on bussing.

5 Do you feel that the children would be inconvenienced by not having the ability to walk to school, come home for lunch, or walk with you to and from school?

YES	74%	17%	67%	50%	59%
NO	12%	42%	17%	0%	19%
N/A	15%	42%	17%	50%	22%

6 Do you feel that the community would lose its economic viability and that property values would decrease should St. Ignatius Catholic School be consolidated in Thamesville?

YES	94%	42%	100%	100%	83%
NO	3%	25%	0%	0%	7%
N/A	3%	33%	0%	0%	9%

7 Do you believe parents should be involved in the development of a newly consolidated Catholic school community in Thamesville? (i.e., helping to name it, make suggestions for renovations, etc.)

YES	62%	67%	50%	100%	63%
NO	15%	25%	17%	0%	17%
N/A	24%	8%	33%	0%	20%

8 What features do you believe should be included in the newly renovated school building? (i.e., gymnasium, day care, community centre)

9 What additional information do you need to know in order to be comfortable in supporting this initiative?

10 Please feel free to make any additional comments that you wish.

ST. IGNATIUS / ST. PAUL SCHOOLS SURVEY RESULTS

2 If the St. Clair Catholic District School Board consolidates schools, students would most likely be moved to Thamesville. Is this acceptable to you?

	<u>St. Ignatius Parents</u>	<u>St. Paul Parents</u>	<u>St. Ignatius Community</u>	<u>St. Paul Community</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
DISTRIBUTED	48	62	20	20	150
RESPONDED	34	12	6	2	54
YES	7	11	0	2	20
NO	27	0	6	0	33
N/A	0	1	0	0	1

- COMMENTS:**
- St. Ignatius** Not interested in St. Ignatius being closed.
 - St. Ignatius** Hope they do not consolidate as my children have a tough time adjusting.
 - St. Ignatius** My children will be going to Zone Central.
 - St. Ignatius** Too far to drive or bus students.
 - St. Ignatius** Our church is in Bothwell, also our grocery store, arena & community.
 - St. Ignatius** If Board closes school then can't support them by enrolling children or directing my taxes.
 - St. Ignatius** My children are too young to be on the bus for such a long time.
 - St. Ignatius** We also support that children need to stay and be educated in their own community.
 - St. Ignatius** We moved here because of the fact they were close to the school.
 - St. Ignatius** Why can't things stay as is?
 - St. Ignatius** If its not about \$ then our kids better stay at St. Ignatius, its better for them.
 - St. Ignatius** Yes, we only have 2 more years of elementary left.
 - St. Ignatius** Yes, I believe the children are receiving a valuable education as well as spiritual growth.
 - St. Ignatius** Yes, ideally I would like the new school in Bothwell but realize geographically is difficult.
 - St. Ignatius** Its acceptable but of course not the choice we would want.
 - St. Ignatius** This is a big decision for our family, daughter has many friends in Bothwell.
 - St. Ignatius** I'm unsure, not happy having to bus daughter but she is in grade 7 & she can decide herself.
 - St. Ignatius** Would prefer my child to have a Catholic education but not in a different community.
 - St. Paul** Yes, my child already attends St. Paul's but if I lived in Bothwell my response would be no.
 - St. Ign. Comm.** We have a great school here already. This is the 2nd time through this frustrating process.
 - St. Ign. Comm.** Want child to go to Bothwell school, close to home.
 - St. Ign. Comm.** Will not put my 4 year old child on a bus when there is a school in town.
 - St. Ign. Comm.** I live in town so my children don't have to ride the bus.
 - St. Ign. Comm.** Necessary for children in Bothwell to stay in order to keep community viable.
 - St. Paul Comm.** Yes, surely a consolidation would provide the same attention & resources.

3 Would you consider sending your child to a nearby public school?

	<u>St. Ignatius Parents</u>	<u>St. Paul Parents</u>	<u>St. Ignatius Community</u>	<u>St. Paul Community</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
DISTRIBUTED	48	62	20	20	150
RESPONDED	34	12	6	2	54
YES	25	0	3	1	29
NO	8	10	0	0	18
N/A	1	2	3	1	7

- COMMENTS:**
- St. Ignatius** My children are in a catholic school so that they may say the Lord's Prayer.
 - St. Ignatius** Maybe you should think of what Brooke-Alvinston School has done, would help bussing.
 - St. Ignatius** I will support my community.
 - St. Ignatius** Son's father would want him to move to Chatham with him so he can attend catholic school.
 - St. Ignatius** It will be the only school in our community.
 - St. Ignatius** This isn't easy, as we wish to have our children educated in the catholic school system.
 - St. Ignatius** Why wouldn't I, we can see the public school from our house.
 - St. Ignatius** While I value & prefer a Catholic education, we are committed to our Bothwell community.
 - St. Ignatius** Maybe, kids now on bus for 40 min, 8 kms away, how long to go 20kms to Thamesville.
 - St. Ignatius** I support only the Catholic board.
 - St. Ignatius** Would probably send my son to school in Glencoe.
 - St. Ignatius** I would consider another school only if my children were not allowed to follow their classmates.
 - St. Ignatius** We might have to if we can't make arrangements for bus ride to Thamesville.
 - St. Ignatius** If it means keeping a school in our community, I would support that.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
69			St. Paul		No, not if catholic school in Thamesville remains open.					
70			St. Ign. Comm.		If we had any children at home they would go to the Zone school.					
71			St. Ign. Comm.		We live in town so my children walk to school so why would I bus them?					
72			St. Ign. Comm.		Let children go to school in own community or send to another town, dumb question to ask.					
73			St. Paul Comm.		Yes, this is due to the fact that one parent is a teacher in the public system.					
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82			<u>St. Ignatius</u>	<u>St. Paul</u>	<u>St. Ignatius</u>	<u>St. Paul</u>				
83			<u>Parents</u>	<u>Parents</u>	<u>Community</u>	<u>Community</u>				<u>TOTAL</u>
84			48	62	20	20				150
85			34	12	6	2				54
86										
87			COMMENTS:							
88			St. Ignatius		Do not feel it is safe for children to be bussed all the way to Thamesville.					
89			St. Ignatius		This will be hard on my child.					
90			St. Ignatius		I will not send him on the bus when there is a school within walking distance.					
91			St. Ignatius		The bussing system this year has been ridiculous, problems would escalate.					
92			St. Ignatius		Not feasible for my family.					
93			St. Ignatius		I want my children going to school in their community/town.					
94			St. Ignatius		I want the catholic school to stay open in Bothwell in some capacity.					
95			St. Ignatius		My little boy will be entering JK and he will not be able to handle it.					
96			St. Ignatius		Needs some common sense planning.					
97			St. Ignatius		Is closer for us to go to St. Paul's, but think it is bad that schools have to close.					
98			St. Ignatius		With bussing the way it is, not sure whether I'd like the idea of sending my son on the bus.					
99			St. Ignatius		Bus ride now is 55 minutes, ridiculous, she only lives 5 minutes from the school.					
100			St. Ignatius		Extra distance during bad weather is too dangerous considering there is a school in Bothwell.					
101			St. Ignatius		My children are already bussed and this will be an issue for most town children.					
102			St. Ignatius		I believe in safety on the bus and currently many busses are overcrowded.					
103			St. Ignatius		Bussing now, that's a joke. When you get that figured out try asking again.					
104			St. Ignatius		Children are currently bussed, they are first on & last off requiring 45 minutes each direction.					
105			St. Ignatius		Don't like the idea of my daughter going to school in another town and have to be bussed.					
106			St. Ignatius		Bussing is not a concern for me, just a fact of rural life.					
107			St. Ignatius		If they go to Thamesville they will be on a bus for over an hour each way.					
108			St. Ignatius		Not happy with current bussing situation & would like it to go back to what it was.					
109			St. Ignatius		Hope its not too early in the a.m.					
110			St. Ignatius		My biggest concern would be missed days due to inclement weather.					
111			St. Ignatius		Would like to know possible routes & amount of time on bus.					
112			St. Ignatius		Due to our jobs, can't get son on bus earlier in the morning & this poses a problem for us.					
113			St. Ignatius		Too many things happen on bus, that why I'm a town resident.					
114			St. Ignatius		Do we really have a choice.					
115			St. Paul		Bussing would need to be better organized than it is now. Still "bugs" in the changes this yr.					
116			St. Paul		Please return to "old" system - it worked much better & made parents lives easier.					
117			St. Paul		Concern regarding length of time on bus, kids don't get to school on time this year.					
118			St. Paul		New changes may help with families lives next yr. - old system scheduling more predictable.					
119			St. Ign. Comm.		Could things get any worse? Yes.					
120			St. Ign. Comm.		Children on the bus too long. New system looked better on paper than when set in motion.					
121			St. Ign. Comm.		Talked to some parents & bus drivers, all comments on the new routes extremely negative.					
122			St. Ign. Comm.		If something is not broken, don't fix it.					
123			St. Ign. Comm.		We don't like sending a small child on a bus for a long time, is not acceptable.					
124			St. Ign. Comm.		This year's bussing is a disaster - another subject!					
125			St. Ign. Comm.		I was raised in Zone twp. & bussing was simple, yet to meet parent happy with new system.					
126			St. Paul Comm.		This will not affect my children because they'll go to Zone before being bussed to Thamesville.					
127			St. Paul Comm.		Make no changes to times of arrival & departure, they should not vary dramatically.					
128			St. Paul Comm.		Bussing must not be burdensome such as having children up earlier or home later.					
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	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
137	5	<u>Do you feel that the children would be inconvenienced by not having the ability to walk to school, come home for lunch, or walk with you to and from school?</u>								
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139										
140			<u>St. Ignatius</u>	<u>St. Paul</u>	<u>St. Ignatius</u>	<u>St. Paul</u>				
141			<u>Parents</u>	<u>Parents</u>	<u>Community</u>	<u>Community</u>			<u>TOTAL</u>	
142		DISTRIBUTED	48	62	20	20			150	
143		RESPONDED	34	12	6	2			54	
144										
145		YES	25	2	4	1			32	
146		NO	4	5	1	0			10	
147		N/A	5	5	1	1			12	
148										
149		COMMENTS:	St. Ignatius	Feel children that have to walk would be inconvenienced by being bussed to Thamesville.						
150			St. Ignatius	I am available for my children to come home if they choose. Like being close to the school.						
151			St. Ignatius	My son enjoys getting the exercise when riding his bike to and from school.						
152			St. Ignatius	A lot of rural students do this all the time.						
153			St. Ignatius	With fog cancellations they would miss more school because we could not drive them.						
154			St. Ignatius	Children and parents are greatly inconvenienced.						
155			St. Ignatius	My children never had that option before.						
156			St. Ignatius	Sitting on a bus is much less ideal than physical activity, or family time.						
157			St. Ignatius	Kids are able to walk with their friends to school and home for lunch.						
158			St. Ignatius	Unfair question because Board will use this as only reason parents don't want school to close.						
159			St. Ignatius	This has nothing to do with our household.						
160			St. Ignatius	When son gets older he could ride his bicycle to Bothwell but not to Thamesville.						
161			St. Ignatius	This is important for physical fitness, bussing will eliminate this opportunity.						
162			St. Ignatius	Major adjustments for parents & children will be required.						
163			St. Paul	Would be huge change to current routines that Bothwell families are currently accustomed to.						
164			St. Paul	Yes, but the education of children should come first.						
165			St. Paul	I don't know, perhaps.						
166			St. Ign. Comm.	No, children at home. Mine were always bussed.						
167			St. Ign. Comm.	No, we live in the country.						
168			St. Ign. Comm.	A bit of inconvenience, but not as much as having child's schoolyard friends in another town.						
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172	6	<u>Do you feel that the community would lose its economic viability and that property values would decrease should St. Ignatius Catholic School be consolidated in Thamesville?</u>								
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174										
175			<u>St. Ignatius</u>	<u>St. Paul</u>	<u>St. Ignatius</u>	<u>St. Paul</u>				
176			<u>Parents</u>	<u>Parents</u>	<u>Community</u>	<u>Community</u>			<u>TOTAL</u>	
177		DISTRIBUTED	48	62	20	20			150	
178		RESPONDED	34	12	6	2			54	
179										
180		YES	32	5	6	2			45	
181		NO	1	3	0	0			4	
182		N/A	1	4	0	0			5	
183										
184		COMMENTS:	St. Ignatius	This question is lacking in common sense.						
185			St. Ignatius	Absolutely, because who would move here with no Catholic school or church.						
186			St. Ignatius	Parents feel comfortable when they know kids are close and safe.						
187			St. Ignatius	Traveling now a days is not so safe (anywhere) the less, the best.						
188			St. Ignatius	Parents will certainly choose the community where schools are viable.						
189			St. Ignatius	Current residents would see a decrease in property value.						
190			St. Ignatius	Potential residents would not even consider living in Bothwell.						
191			St. Ignatius	For sure this will happen.						
192			St. Ignatius	If 1/3 of Bothwell's students parents work in Chatham why would they stay in Bothwell?						
193			St. Ignatius	Closing this school threatens the viability of many small businesses we've come to rely on.						
194			St. Ignatius	For families working in nearby businesses, that would be a great impact.						
195			St. Ignatius	People would not be so quick to purchase a home in a small community with only 1 school.						
196			St. Ignatius	Catholic parents with small children would not come to live in Bothwell anymore.						
197			St. Ignatius	Who wants to live in a community without a school which supports our businesses.						
198			St. Ignatius	Absolutely, it would destroy our community & our church.						
199			St. Ignatius	Bothwell has lost a lot of homes & business.						
200			St. Ignatius	Property values are already low & will only decrease.						
201			St. Ignatius	We own 500 acres & if it closes maybe we will change our taxes to the public school.						
202			St. Paul	Would definitively be affected by this change.						
203			St. Paul	Bothwell would be losing a facility that would be a drawing factor for luring new residents.						
204			St. Paul	Thamesville would benefit from consolidation.						

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
205			St. Ign. Comm.		Since you can forecast enrollment you're able to know results of this decision on a small town.					
206			St. Ign. Comm.		Our town is struggling as it is since Chatham-Kent took over.					
207			St. Ign. Comm.		Definitely, why move to an area that is unable to meet your needs.					
208			St. Ign. Comm.		We feel people will move away.					
209			St. Ign. Comm.		A community without a school will become a dead community.					
210			St. Ign. Comm.		Each family that remains in Bothwell contributes to town & church community.					
211			St. Ign. Comm.		Feel that our church will suffer from a consolidated school.					
212			St. Paul Comm.		Parents may decide to relocate.					
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214										
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7 Do you believe parents should be involved in the development of a newly consolidated Catholic school community in Thamesville? (i.e., helping to name it, make suggestions for renovations, etc.)

		<u>St. Ignatius</u> <u>Parents</u>	<u>St. Paul</u> <u>Parents</u>	<u>St. Ignatius</u> <u>Community</u>	<u>St. Paul</u> <u>Community</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
220						
221						
222	DISTRIBUTED	48	62	20	20	150
223	RESPONDED	34	12	6	2	54
224						
225	YES	21	8	3	2	34
226	NO	5	3	1	0	9
227	N/A	8	1	2	0	11
228						

- COMMENTS:**
- St. Ignatius** Believe parents from Bothwell shouldn't be involved in Thamesville, only Thamesville parents.
 - St. Ignatius** If we have to then yes, we want to be involved.
 - St. Ignatius** Not huge concern, the welfare, emotional needs are far more important to our family.
 - St. Ignatius** Feel the Board will choose to do whatever they feel, whether parents make suggestions.
 - St. Ignatius** We will not care what happens because our children will not be going there.
 - St. Ignatius** Changes to St. Paul may not be necessary with loss of catholic students to public school.
 - St. Ignatius** It should still remain the same name, but parents should have a say in development.
 - St. Ignatius** Don't agree that parents should be involved in the name as well as suggestions for renovations.
 - St. Ignatius** Can't answer this question, because it is set up to support anything the Board wishes.
 - St. Ignatius** Parents should be involved in any school community activity.
 - St. Ignatius** If there is unity we need all families to make decisions on any matter involving the children.
 - St. Ignatius** If we are making sacrifices we should have input.
 - St. Paul** If consolidating is out of our control, parents should be involved in consolidation procedures.
 - St. Paul** I think the school will make the right decisions.
 - St. Paul** The school belongs to the teachers, students & parents. Parental input is important.
 - St. Ign. Comm.** You're forcing us to accept this, least you could do was hold public meetings to allow input.
 - St. Ign. Comm.** If you decide to close the school and children go to local public school, then taxes will follow.
 - St. Ign. Comm.** No, this is solely a Thamesville project, and let them shoulder the burden.
 - St. Ign. Comm.** Anything offered by St. Ignatius would be rejected anyway.
 - St. Ign. Comm.** It sounds like your decision is already made.

8 What features do you believe should be included in the newly renovated school building? (i.e., gymnasium, day care, community centre)

		<u>St. Ignatius</u> <u>Parents</u>	<u>St. Paul</u> <u>Parents</u>	<u>St. Ignatius</u> <u>Community</u>	<u>St. Paul</u> <u>Community</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
255						
256						
257	DISTRIBUTED	48	62	20	20	150
258	RESPONDED	34	12	6	2	54
259						

- COMMENTS:**
- St. Ignatius** If school is renovated it should have all the amenities listed above.
 - St. Ignatius** You'll need community centre to keep supporting that community.
 - St. Ignatius** If both schools in Bothwell closed, I'd have to send them to Thamesville, & I'd like daycare.
 - St. Ignatius** Believe St. Ignatius supplies everything my children need for a great start in their education.
 - St. Ignatius** Where is the new school you talked about 7 years ago?
 - St. Ignatius** Gym, library, computer rooms, cafeteria.
 - St. Ignatius** Gymnasium.
 - St. Ignatius** You had two schools built and paid for, common sense, common sense, common sense.
 - St. Ignatius** Renovating a school to accommodate more students is a waste of money.
 - St. Ignatius** A community centre.
 - St. Ignatius** Central air, bigger classrooms, more computers, etc.
 - St. Ignatius** Day care would be a great benefit.
 - St. Ignatius** St. Ignatius has all the features and is all paid for.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
273			St. Ignatius							
274			St. Ignatius							
275			St. Ignatius							
276			St. Ignatius							
277			St. Ignatius							
278			St. Ignatius							
279			St. Paul							
280			St. Paul							
281			St. Paul							
282			St. Paul							
283			St. Paul							
284			St. Paul							
285			St. Ign. Comm.							
286			St. Ign. Comm.							
287			St. Ign. Comm.							
288			St. Ign. Comm.							
289			St. Ign. Comm.							
290			St. Paul Comm.							

Bigger gym with stage, daycare would be excellent, community centre available for funerals.
 Air conditioning, large resource centre, a prayer room & a full kitchen.
 Why don't we save the money we would spend & keep both schools open with that money.
 We should have all the features that a school in Chatham would have.
 Anything that the kids need, ask the children, its their time spent there
 Why should Thamesville get the school, why not Bothwell?
 All three examples should be included in the newly renovated building.
 Bigger gym.
 Gymnasium, day care.
 More classrooms.
 Extra classroom for resources; larger/ separate computer room from library
 Computer room, library, good size gymnasium - state-of-art day care, music.
 We all have before and after school sitting and a day care would be wasting money.
 Library, computer room & gym.
 Day care and community centre.
 All of the above.
 If St. Ignatius is sacrificed, Thamesville should have everything the Board can do and more.
 Gymnasium, day care.

9 What additional information do you need to know in order to be comfortable in supporting this initiative?

	<u>St. Ignatius</u>	<u>St. Paul</u>	<u>St. Ignatius</u>	<u>St. Paul</u>	
	<u>Parents</u>	<u>Parents</u>	<u>Community</u>	<u>Community</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
DISTRIBUTED	48	62	20	20	150
RESPONDED	34	12	6	2	54

301					
302	COMMENTS:	St. Ignatius	It's going to cost big money, don't need more information.		
303		St. Ignatius	Cannot imagine sending our 4 year old all the way to Thamesville.		
304		St. Ignatius	Would like you to help us find ways to increase enrollment.		
305		St. Ignatius	Need positive information in the paper about our school.		
306		St. Ignatius	Actual specific cost, not formula costs.		
307		St. Ignatius	A tour of the school and how long of a bus ride would there be?		
308		St. Ignatius	At St. Ignatius, students would be welcomed, not strangers/invaders.		
309		St. Ignatius	I don't support it.		
310		St. Ignatius	You need to comfort us, I thought you only dictated to us.		
311		St. Ignatius	I suppose if you are worthy of us you would give us more information.		
312		St. Ignatius	There's no information that would make me support this consolidation.		
313		St. Ignatius	If schools consolidate, does this guarantee St. Paul's to stay open?		
314		St. Ignatius	I never will support this initiative.		
315		St. Ignatius	Need the dollar figures. What will happen to St. Ignatius School?		
316		St. Ignatius	If schools are consolidated, what programs would we have that are not available now?		
317		St. Ignatius	What provisions will be added for children wanting to be on sports teams?		
318		St. Ignatius	Transition plans, future plans for catholic education in our area?		
319		St. Ignatius	What will happen to our teachers, our building, bus times, our community, our kids?		
320		St. Paul	To be sure parents of both schools will be heard & be active in this new school community.		
321		St. Paul	I would like to know if we are going to lose our existing teachers.		
322		St. Paul	Will there still be split grades? If so will they still be small at 25 and under?		
323		St. Paul	Parents need to be involved in the process of consolidating the school.		
324		St. Paul	How long until consolidated school is up for review?		
325		St. Paul	Keeping a school in a community is important for families, business, etc.		
326		St. Paul	Events need to be planned & closure needs to take place for the St. Ignatius School.		
327		St. Ign. Comm.	As a tax payer there is nothing you can offer to make one comfortable.		
328		St. Ign. Comm.	I'm not comfortable about supporting the closer of St. Ignatius School.		
329		St. Ign. Comm.	That Zone Public School won't close.		
330		St. Paul Comm.	Will they close Thamesville in 5 years if enrollment declines?		

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	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
341	10	<u>Please feel free to make any additional comments that you wish.</u>								
342										
343			<u>St. Ignatius</u>	<u>St. Paul</u>	<u>St. Ignatius</u>	<u>St. Paul</u>				
344			<u>Parents</u>	<u>Parents</u>	<u>Community</u>	<u>Community</u>		<u>TOTAL</u>		
345		DISTRIBUTED	48	62	20	20		150		
346		RESPONDED	34	12	6	2		54		
347										
348		COMMENTS:	St. Ignatius	We've had many kids graduate from St. Ignatius who have excelled in secondary school.						
349			St. Ignatius	We love the amount of one on one with our kids, why uproot us now?						
350			St. Ignatius	What happened to the (super) school of Dresden, Thamesville, Bothwell?						
351			St. Ignatius	Now it's only 2 schools, maybe if we protest enough it will be only Thamesville.						
352			St. Ignatius	Based on track record of Board, there's no decision that could possibly benefit the children.						
353			St. Ignatius	Has Board considered St. Ignatius being school for grades 7 & 8 & St. Paul for lower grades?						
354			St. Ignatius	I have no problem with grades being combined if necessary.						
355			St. Ignatius	This is a huge move for a child and it is hard for them.						
356			St. Ignatius	Alvinston-Brooke School is a great school, why not take from this excellent example?						
357			St. Ignatius	Because of the many negative comments from the press that we lost many possible students.						
358			St. Ignatius	Parents and students need a solid commitment from the Board to support the school.						
359			St. Ignatius	We prefer that St. Ignatius and Zone P.S. integrate, this is our #1 choice.						
360			St. Ignatius	New bussing schedule will be messed up, due to the long bus rides, ie: high school.						
361			St. Ignatius	Bothwell should not be closed, this is the students school, their home & everything is paid for						
362			St. Ignatius	I feel there is no need for this & the renovations will be a waste of money.						
363			St. Ignatius	There will be more students than you think that will go to our public school.						
364			St. Ignatius	Bigger is not better. Our community's viability depends on our school staying open.						
365			St. Ignatius	If we lose our school we lose our community, our church & our people.						
366			St. Ignatius	It will be very heart breaking to see you split these kids up, they are like one big happy family.						
367			St. Ignatius	Am disappointed, have always appreciated the care & concern of teachers & staff.						
368			St. Ignatius	Since I work in Newbury, it would be more difficult to get my son in Thamesville if he gets sick.						
369			St. Ignatius	I was happy about the meeting on October 6th, parents & others bonded & did a great job.						
370			St. Ignatius	We love our R.C. Christian community, our school needs to stay in Bothwell.						
371			St. Ignatius	Who decided Thamesville gets to keep their school?						
372			St. Ignatius	Kids won't get that little extra help in a class of 30 kids & no one will care.						
373			St. Paul	Would like to see single grade classes if sizes exceed over 25 students.						
374			St. Paul	I believe split classes only work with small numbers of students.						
375			St. Paul	The school needs to strive for improved communication between teachers and parents.						
376			St. Paul	What resources will be available to assist the teachers with children with special needs?						
377			St. Paul	How will the staff maintain the supportive atmosphere within the community rural school?						
378			St. Paul	You didn't listen when we shared our concerns about bussing, how is this any different?						
379			St. Paul	The democratic process was sidestepped and promises broken. Re: bussing issue.						
380			St. Paul	Despite strong objections from parents, it's a money issue above all else.						
381			St. Paul	I'm sure the decision re: St. Ignatius was made long ago. Our opinions are irrelevant.						
382			St. Paul	If schools are not consolidated we feel new gym & kitchen areas are needed.						
383			St. Paul	Schools will eventually have to join so start renovations now while funds available.						
384			St. Ign. Comm.	Children receive a good education at St. Ignatius, if I had to I would send to public school.						
385			St. Ign. Comm.	Our taxes will switch to public schools.						
386			St. Ign. Comm.	You've left us no choice but to support the public school system.						
387			St. Ign. Comm.	I don't believe big is better. Please leave St. Ignatius School alone.						
388			St. Ign. Comm.	With cost of refurbishing St. Paul's & additional bussing costs I don't see any real savings.						
389			St. Ign. Comm.	If we can't keep our school, then lets send our children to Zone & keep one school in town.						
390			St. Ign. Comm.	How long will it be before the Board says lets consolidate St. Paul's & St. Vincent?						
391			St. Ign. Comm.	There's something about going to school in the community you live that bonds you there.						
392			St. Ign. Comm.	I want my children to learn about George Brown who founded Bothwell & named the streets.						
393			St. Ign. Comm.	Feel Board is putting too much emphasis on numbers & forget we are dealing with children.						
394			St. Paul Comm.	Closing of schools is never easy, but having them run under capacity is not practical either.						
395			St. Paul Comm.	Tough decisions need to be made for the betterment of education & savings of tax dollars.						
396										



September 30, 2004

Dear Catholic School Supporters,

The St. Clair Catholic District School Board is in the process of an accommodation review at St. Ignatius Catholic School and St. Paul Catholic School, with a possible consolidation of the two school communities at Thamesville, for September 2005.

Although student enrolment is in decline across the entire district, the Board has been acutely aware for some time that extremely low student numbers at these two schools in particular threaten program viability. To remedy this, the Board is prepared to invest in the future of Catholic education, with a stronger, more viable newly consolidated Catholic school to serve the Thamesville and Bothwell areas.

In an effort to obtain as much input as possible from our Catholic school communities, two public meetings have been scheduled. Trustees and the Board's senior administration welcome the opportunity to hear your views at these meetings. The public meeting for the St. Ignatius Catholic School community will be held on Wednesday, October 6, 2004 at 7:00 p.m. at the school in Bothwell. The St. Paul Catholic School community public meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 13, 2004 at 7:00 p.m. at the school in Thamesville.

In addition, several important reports related to school consolidation will be presented at regular meetings of the Board. The dates, locations and reports being presented are listed on the Board's website at www.st-clair.net. Click on *Schedule of Reports* under *Accommodation Review* on the main page.

A survey is also attached for your response. The survey is to be completed both by parents who have children in Catholic schools, and by Catholic school supporters who do not have children attending school. The survey is to be returned as soon as possible, but no later than **Friday, October 15, 2004.**

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Margaret Nelson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Margaret Nelson
Director of Education



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

**Community Survey
concerning the
Consolidation of St. Ignatius and St. Paul Catholic Schools**

Name

Address

Please respond only to the questions that pertain to you. You may include extra paper if additional space is required.

1. I am a

- parent/guardian with children at St. Paul Catholic School
- parent/guardian with children at St. Ignatius Catholic School
- other (please specify) _____

2. If the St. Clair Catholic District School Board consolidates schools, students would most likely be moved to Thamesville. Is this acceptable to you?

- Yes No

Comments: _____

3. Would you consider sending your child to a nearby public school?

- Yes No

Comments: _____

4. If the St. Clair Catholic District School Board consolidates schools in Thamesville, all students now attending St. Ignatius Catholic School would be bussed. Please include your comments on bussing. _____

5. Do you feel that the children would be inconvenienced by not having the ability to walk to school, come home for lunch, or walk with you to and from school?

Yes

No

Comments _____

6. Do you feel that the community would lose its economic viability and that property values would decrease should St. Ignatius Catholic School be consolidated in Thamesville?

Yes

No

Comments: _____

7. Do you believe parents should be involved in the development of a newly consolidated Catholic school community in Thamesville? (i.e., helping to name it, make suggestions for renovations, etc.)

Yes

No

Comments: _____

8. What features do you believe should be included in the newly renovated school building? (i.e., gymnasium, day care, community centre) _____

9. What additional information do you need to know in order to be comfortable in supporting this initiative? _____

10. Please feel free to make any additional comments that you wish. _____

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Please return to your child's school as soon as possible, but not later than Friday, October 15, 2004