

ARC MEETING NOTES

Tuesday, February 8, 2011
St. Michael Catholic School, Turnerville

TIME	ITEM
7:02 pm	<p>Welcome/Opening Remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deb Crawford, Superintendent of Education, introduced herself as Chair of the Accommodation Review Committee (ARC) and welcomed everyone to the committee's third meeting.
7:04 pm	<p>Opening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mrs. Crawford led an opening prayer.
	<p>Introductions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mrs. Crawford introduced the members of the ARC, along with Board staff and Trustees in attendance. ▪ Ministry of Education guidelines and Board policy, as it relates to the accommodation review process, were reviewed. ▪ The question before the ARC, "How do we best address the problem of vacant space in our school?" was restated.
	<p>Rules of Order</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All meetings will begin at 7:00 pm at St. Michael Catholic School, Turnerville. ▪ Accurate attendance records are important and therefore all in attendance are asked to register on the sign-in sheet at the doors. ▪ An agenda will be provided for each meeting. ▪ The role of the chair is to ensure that the agenda is followed; Rules of Order are met and all questions are answered. ▪ The role of the ARC is to consider the facts and to make recommendation to the Board of Trustees. ▪ All meetings, deliberations and recommendations by the ARC will be in public. ▪ All meeting notes will be posted on the board website within ten working days. This is the third of four meetings. ▪ There will be a question period in which members of the audience may address the ARC, or members of Board administration. Individuals will have registered their attendance prior to asking their question. ▪ It is a prerequisite of the appeal process that those wishing to appeal must demonstrate that they have attended meetings; therefore, attendance is being recorded. ▪ The final decision rests with the elected Trustees of the Board who will consider the recommendations of the ARC and any recommendations from the Director of Education. <p>Attendance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All attendees will be asked to register their attendance at the beginning of each meeting. <p>Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Microphones are available to those who wish to ask questions at appropriate times during the meeting. ▪ For the benefit of the audience and the recording secretaries, please begin by stating your name and your relationship to the process. ▪ The Chair will determine the order of questions.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A maximum of one hour will be devoted to the question period. If questions remain at the conclusion of the meeting, the Chair will close the meeting and invite those with questions to submit their question(s) in writing. The question(s) along with the answer(s) will be posted on the Board website. <p>Notes of the meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Notes will be taken by two recording secretaries and will be placed on the website within 10 working days of the meeting. These are not minutes; however, for an accurate record of each meeting an audio recording is being produced. <p>Protocols</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All ARC meetings will be held in public. ▪ If an appeal is to occur, those wishing to appeal must be able to demonstrate that they were in attendance. All audience members should register their presence on the sign-in sheets located outside the meeting room. ▪ The meeting falls under the direction of the Chair and the Chair shall maintain order during the meetings. ▪ Anyone who is hearing impaired should please notify the Chair two weeks in advance of the meeting and accommodations will be made.
<p style="text-align: center;">7:08 pm</p>	<p>ARC Mandate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The purpose of this ARC is to consider the issue of excess pupil places at St. Michael Catholic School, Turnerville, which is the result of declining enrolment. ▪ The decline has impacted program, extra-curricular activities, budget, staffing, transportation, and facility management. ▪ The ARC is mandated to make a viable recommendation(s) to the Board with respect to the future of St. Michael, and with regard to current students, transportation, boundaries and the site. <p>Committee Mandate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ As directed by Board policy, the written recommendations of the ARC will be delivered to the Director of Education who will make them known to the Board of Trustees at a public meeting. ▪ The ARC is mandated to consider the problem, not just from the perspective of 2010-2011 but through 2015-2016 because another ARC cannot be established for this review area for another five years. Thus the ARC must have “the long view”. While the ARC’s establishment was triggered by the present circumstances, the future must be a primary component in considering the actions the ARC will recommend. ▪ The ARC is encouraged, but not required, to come to consensus with respect to its recommendation(s). ▪ The ARC will meet a minimum of four times and will follow the timelines outlined in Board policy. ▪ The Trustees will give the ARC’s recommendations due consideration and they will decide on a course of action that best serves the needs of the Board.
<p style="text-align: center;">7:10 pm</p>	<p>Decision/Recommendation from the ARC Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Accommodation Review Committee made the following preliminary recommendation: The Accommodation Review Committee recommends that St. Michael Catholic School, Turnerville, be closed as of June 30, 2011.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mrs. Crawford reviewed information points from previous ARC meetings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning department predictions - Safety and co-curricular activities - Grade sizes and impacts - Financial considerations over the next 5 years - Staffing, facilities and student transportation - School boundaries and viable school options - Recommendation of the Director of Education ▪ Mrs. Crawford reviewed comments put forward by members of the ARC, which assisted with the formation of their recommendation at the meeting of January 11, 2011. ▪ Goals set by the committee were reviewed. ▪ On January 14th, 2011, parents participated in a bus tour to visit St. Vincent and Good Shepherd Catholic Schools, and meet the principals. Members of the ARC were asked to share their thoughts following the school tours. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cathie Vanek commented she attended both school tours. She said 8-10 families were represented at St. Vincent and not quite that many at Good Shepherd. She noted a few families have gone back again taking their children for a tour. She also mentioned some families have arranged school tours on their own. - Colleen Janssens commented that a couple of families have shown interest in attending Holy Family. - Mrs. Crawford invited parents to phone the principal and arrange school visits at any time.
7:20 pm	<p>What happens to the property and building? <i>(Presentation by Jim McKenzie, Associate Director)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mr. McKenzie presented his report, which can be viewed by clicking on report.
7:25 pm	<p>Creating a Legacy Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mrs. Crawford reviewed the process of creating a Legacy Committee. ▪ She explained this process takes place outside of the ARC. ▪ The ARC members may take the lead at the school in helping to form the committee ▪ Shirley Churchill commented that Parent Advisory Council (PAC) members are very active at St. Michael School. A letter could be sent home to parents, inviting anyone interested to join the committee. Mrs. Churchill offered to Chair the committee. <p>Questions from ARC Members</p> <p>Mrs. Vanek Question: Can consideration be given outside the current school community? This would include past Parent Council members who may have items in the school that mean a lot to them. Families with past students at the school should be included to ensure all the items are distributed fairly.</p>

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	<p>Answer: Mrs. Churchill said this could be arranged.</p> <p>Mrs. Vanek commented she wanted to ensure the Legacy Committee would include a previous PAC member as a resource to the committee.</p> <p>Mrs. Vanek Question: Are there guidelines stating what items can be addressed by the legacy committee and what items are Board property, such as playground equipment and fencing? Answer: Mrs. Churchill stated that the Legacy Committee would oversee the disposition of items which are considered to be memorabilia. The playground equipment and fencing would not fall into that category; however, the peace garden would be within the committee’s mandate. Items such as trophies and banners are also good examples of memorabilia.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">7:32 pm</p>	<p>Transition Plans for Students (<i>Presentation by Lisa Demers, Principal – Special Education</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mrs. Demers presented her report, which can be viewed by clicking on report. <p>Questions from ARC Members</p> <p>Mrs. Vanek Question: How long does the plan take? Answer: Each plan is determined on an individual basis. It is specific to meet the needs of the student and the parent(s).</p> <p>Mrs. Vanek Question: You quoted there are 10-15 IEP students at our school. Does that include our current Grade 8 students? Will that number drop next year? Answer: Yes, there would be fewer next year as some of those students will move on to Grade 9.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">7:38 pm</p>	<p>Survey Response from Parents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mrs. Churchill commented that a survey was sent home to parents by the ARC. Fifty percent of parents responded. One third of the respondents chose multiple options. ▪ Mrs. Crawford explained that as no clear choice emerged, the ability of the transportation department to address each survey response was limited.
<p style="text-align: center;">7:41 pm</p>	<p>Boundaries for Present Families and Future Families (<i>Presentation by Karen Dolson, Manager of Planning Services</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mrs. Dolson presented her report, which is available by clicking on report. <p>Questions from ARC Members</p> <p>Mrs. Janssens Question: For students who are out of boundary, will there be any exceptions?</p>

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Answer: Parents will need to complete an out of boundary application, and this will be done on a yearly basis. (Note: This is in reference to future students.)

Mrs. Janssens

Question: If the class sizes are too big to accept the student, would they have to attend the school in their current boundary?

Answer: Each application is individually considered at the time.

Mrs. Vanek

Question: Can you please review the maps and explain what they are showing?

Answer: The maps in the presentation reflect the proposed new boundaries that would be in place for the **students of future families.**

Mrs. Vanek

Question: The students shown on the map are the 39 students for September 2011?

Answer: Yes.

Mrs. Janssens

Question: Are the students obligated to go to the new boundary as shown?

Mrs. Vanek

Question: Will they not be grandfathered? What was the purpose of the survey?

Answer: Mrs. Crawford stated that the problem with the survey was the multiple responses and that no clear options emerged. She explained that as ARC members, they can recommend boundaries for current students, for example recommending they all be grandfathered. These proposed new boundaries are **specific to future students;** they need to be in place for any **future families** that may move into the current St. Michael area.

Mrs. Janssens

Question: Are these boundaries made by the Board and how are they decided?

Answer: The decisions are made taking into consideration where people live, with the goal that they are attending the nearest school.

Wendy Vercauteren

Question: This is a lot for parents to take into consideration; it's hard to get all the information. It is understandable that there are issues around the survey. How are these boundaries going to work? There are still misunderstandings about the boundaries.

Answer: These proposed new boundaries are for **future students.** The committee can recommend that the entire current population of St. Michael Catholic School be grandfathered at Good Shepherd. Of course, any family that chooses to attend a school that is within the new boundary in which they reside may do so with transportation provided. Otherwise, it

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	<p>is our process that out of boundary students would apply yearly. (Note: once again, the ARC may make recommendations regarding grandfathering out of boundary students.)</p>
<p>8:02 pm</p>	<p>Transportation <i>(Presentation by Frank Vergunst, General Manager of “CLASS” – Chatham-Kent Lambton Administrative School Services)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mr. Vergunst presented his report, which can be viewed by clicking on report. <p>Mrs. Janssens Questions: In the event of an out of boundary student, would the rides times change? Answer: Mrs. Dolson answered that there is one out of boundary student, who currently attends St. Michael and who is not included in the estimated ride times. Out of boundary students would have to apply for a courtesy seat and typically meet a bus at a nearby stop.</p> <p>Mrs. Janssens Question: Does the ride time limit still apply for out of boundary students? Answer: Mrs. Dolson explained the application would have to be considered each year, as well as the availability of a courtesy seat on a bus.</p> <p>Mrs. Janssens Question: When would the decision have to be made? Answer: Mr. Vergunst said May 1st all the information is received from both the St. Clair Catholic District School Board and the Lambton Kent District School Board, and then the bus routes are planned accordingly.</p> <p>Mrs. Vanek Question: Is this an exception to the normal times, would we get priority to know the ride times? Can they ask to be prioritized? Answer: Mrs. Crawford replied that many other students besides the students at St. Michael will affect the ride times. The transportation department needs to gather all the information for students attending each school, and then accurate ride times and bus routes can be determined. Mrs. Churchill commented that all 39 families would have to make that decision. If five families do not choose right away, then ride times cannot accurately be provided.</p> <p>Mrs. Janssens Question: The trustees do not make a decision until the end of June. What happens if parents don't like the results, and they change their decision, would the ride times change again? Answer: Mr. Vergunst directed the committee to look at averages for both option A and option B. Average and maximum ride times are provided for both options. The committee was encouraged to look at the times, and note there is little difference. Therefore it can be assumed that the ride times for either St. Vincent or Good Shepherd would not vary much from the average and maximum times listed. It is safe to assume each family's ride time will fall between the average and maximum that are listed in the presentation.</p>

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8:18 pm

Agenda for March 29, 2011 Meeting

- Mrs. Crawford reviewed the ARC Mandate with the committee. She reminded them they have the opportunity as the ARC committee to make suggestions to put forward in their recommendations. She asked if there were any other key implementation issues they would like to put forward.

Mrs. Vanek

Question: At what level do we determine the transition of students to new schools?

Answer: Mrs. Churchill commented this takes place at the school level. She stated she has already had conversations with principals regarding planning events for students to visit their new schools. Mrs. Crawford said as committee members they could recommend that transition plans be put in place for all students who will be attending our Catholic schools, in cooperation with St. Michael and principals from the receiving schools.

Mrs. Churchill commented it will be very similar to the transition process for Grade 8 students to UCC. The Grade 8 students participate in numerous activities and visit UCC at different times. Similar activities and trips would be planned for the students at their receiving schools.

Mrs. Janssens

Question: When are you anticipating these activities to take place? The final decision takes place June 29th.

Answer: Mrs. Crawford explained to the committee that they have put forward a recommendation, and it is similar to the recommendation put forward by the Director. She commented that the Trustees are present at all the ARC meetings, and receive all the notes, therefore they are fully informed. It would be considered being pro-active to begin transitioning the students in advance of the decision. As members of the ARC, they need to do what is best for the students.

Mrs. Vercauteren

Question: Is it okay for us to be doing these activities before a decision is made by the Board?

Answer: Planning needs to take place ahead of time. It is important for everyone to have information and part of your recommendation can include being pro-active.

Mrs. Vercauteren

Question: Can we ask at the April 12th meeting for permission to move ahead and be pro-active?

Answer: I think it's key that you incorporate that into your recommendation.

Mrs. Vercauteren

Question: Can we start establishing timelines for things to take place prior to June 29th?

Answer: Yes, you need to take a step-by-step approach addressing the biggest issues first. There are some decisions that are harder than others.

Mrs. Vanek

Question: What are our biggest issues? Current students, boundaries, and transportation.

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Answer: Mrs. Crawford commented that these recommendations are not just for the present, but for the future as well. Members of the ARC raised the following questions: Can all students all go to Good Shepherd? Yes. Can all the Grade 7s stay together for Grade 8? Yes. As a committee – you can form these into your recommendations. Some parents toured the schools, but you cannot make a decision for every family. As a committee member, you can recommend all students go to Good Shepherd, but not every family might want that recommendation. Mrs. Churchill commented that many families are undecided. Mrs. Crawford reminded the committee that there are many factors to consider. When making a recommendation, the committee can recommend more than one option. Parents are going to be making decisions that best suit their family. Ride times will not vary too much as Mr. Vergunst has shown in his presentation. As the ARC members, you need to make viable recommendations that are best for the entire school community.

Mrs. Vercauteren

Question: Our community is losing a Catholic school. We are recommending going to Good Shepherd, but if it works better for a family, can they go to St. Vincent?

Answer: Families will live in different school boundaries including Good Shepherd and St. Vincent. And they may want their child to attend that school. If they do not want to attend the school in the new boundary, they can be grandfathered per your recommendation. There may be a family in the Good Shepherd boundary area that may want to go to Holy Family and they can apply through an out of boundary application.

Mrs. Janssens

Question: How will the boundaries work for all the families based on what we recommend? What options are available for the students?

Answer: Mrs. Crawford invited Mrs. Dolson to join the discussion. Mrs. Crawford commented that the boundaries would be in place moving forward for any future families.

Mrs. Vanek

Question: What if a family has a student not yet in the system and one already in the system?

Answer: Mrs. Dolson stated that the committee may want to include that as part of its recommendation. She commented that another recommendation could be that all the Grade 8 students stay together. That gives students who want to stay together the option of doing so with transportation. They can leave options open, recommendations do not have to be specific. Mrs. Dolson reminded committee members that they are not making definite decisions for everyone; rather, the ARC's mandate is to make general recommendations for the Board to consider. Mrs. Crawford explained that if all students wanted to go to Good Shepherd, the existing St. Vincent community would have the option to be grandfathered. Mrs. Dolson said timelines can be built into the recommendations as well.

Mrs. Crawford and Mrs. Dolson suggested that parents could submit their information to the Board around their choice of school by late April, in order to be proactive. They also informed the committee that a recommendation could be made that consideration be given to students who live outside the St. Michael community.

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Mrs. Vanek

Question: Our last and final meeting is March 29th. Our recommendation is April 12th. Can we see the recommendations in writing prior to these upcoming dates?

Answer: Mrs. Crawford explained the wording of the recommendations will be refined and posted as notes on the website. The committee will have an opportunity to review their recommendations in preparation for the March 29th meeting.

Mrs. Crawford reviewed recommendations that have been considered as part of the on-going discussion:

- All students within the current St. Michael boundary have the option to go to Good Shepherd with transportation provided.
- All students in Grade 8 in September 2011 have option to remain together with transportation provided.
- Students within a new boundary (as shown in the diagram for proposed new boundaries for future students) have the option to attend that school with transportation provided.
- The boundaries as proposed are the new boundaries for future students.

Mrs. Vanek

Question: Are the roads shown on the boundary lines split?

Answer: Mrs. Dolson answered that the roads are not split; otherwise two buses would go down the same road. 40 Highway is the exception. This is done so that there are no students crossing the highway.

Based on the on-going discussions of the ARC, the following recommendations are proposed for further discussion at the March 20, 2011 meeting:

- 1) The Accommodation Review Committee recommends that St. Michael Catholic School, Turnerville, be closed as of June 30, 2011.
- 2) The ARC recommends that a Legacy Committee be formed and that the Legacy Committee be school-based and exist outside of the ARC.
- 3) The ARC recommends that transition plans be put in place for all students at St. Michael Catholic School, who will be attending our Catholic Schools. The transition activities should support students' transition to their new Catholic school in a proactive and timely manner, allowing the students opportunities to become familiar with their new Catholic school communities.
- 4) The ARC recommends the proposed new boundaries for the St. Michael Turnerville area (refer to map) be adopted as presented.
- 5) The ARC recommends that all current students living in the St. Michael Catholic School area have the option of attending Good Shepherd Catholic School with transportation provided for the remainder of their elementary school education.

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	<p>6) The ARC recommends that all students in Grade 8 as of September 2011 have the option of attending Good Shepherd Catholic School with transportation provided from their current address.</p> <p>7) The ARC recommends that all current and future students will have the option to attend school according to the new proposed boundaries with transportation provided.</p> <p>8) The ARC recommends that current students of St. Michael Catholic School requesting to attend a school outside of the new boundary structure, other than Good Shepherd Catholic School, will apply through the Out of Boundary process. Approved applications may be extended for the duration of the student's elementary education.</p>
<p>8:55 pm</p>	<p>Questions from the floor</p> <p>Name: Billy McGuire Relationship to the Process: Parent and Parent Advisory Council Member Question: Can all the students attend the same school with busing provided? Answer: Yes, transportation will be provided for all the students that live within the St. Michael's school boundary.</p> <p>Name: Mr. McGuire Relationship to the Process: Parent and PAC Member Question: Are there different rules for parents and staff during the ARC meeting? Why was Mr. Wubben permitted to speak at the last ARC meeting yet parents in the audience are not? Answer: All staff members are in attendance as a resource to the ARC committee. They are permitted to speak when necessary. Mr. Wubben therefore attends as a resource to the ARC Committee. Parents and the audience are permitted to ask questions after the formal meeting has closed, during the question period.</p> <p>Name: Jeff Vercauteran Relationship to the Process: Parent Question: Is it conceivable that two buses would go down the same road to accommodate students? An example would be two students that live in the St. Vincent boundary. One student is grandfathered to Good Shepherd and the other student is attending the school in their current boundary. Answer: Yes, students will be accommodated accordingly.</p> <p>Name: Mr. Vercauteran Relationship to the Process: Parent Question: How can parents gather together outside the ARC to discuss options so parents can make an informed decision?</p>

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	<p>Answer: The ARC is making recommendations for the present and for the future, looking down the road. The mandate of the committee is to make recommendations for students of <u>current and future families.</u></p> <p>Name: Kylie Coffin Relationship to the Process: Parent Question: If my child is grandfathered to a school, will I need to complete an out of boundary application each year for my children who are not in the school system yet? And do I need to apply for each child? Answer: Mrs. Crawford replied the recommendation put forward by the ARC could include due consideration for families with children not in the school system yet. Mrs. Dolson answered that applications are per family, not for individual students. It should also be noted that all families with out of boundary applications are supplying their own transportation.</p> <p>Name: Nortina Bell Relationship to the Process: Guardian Question: If the transition process for students has begun, yet the final decision is different, how do we transition the students as it will be summer? Answer: It is safe to begin transitioning the students as this would be considered pro-active. Mr. Wubben commented that if recommendations are the same between the committee and the director, and they are in the best interest of the students, it is obvious that the process of transitioning students can move ahead.</p>
9:27 pm	<p>Closing Prayer</p> <p>Mrs. Crawford thanked everyone for attending and led the closing prayer. The meeting was adjourned at 9:27 pm.</p>
	<p>Future ARC Meeting Dates - All meetings will be held at St. Michael Catholic School, Turnerville, unless otherwise stated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Tuesday, March 29, 2011</i> ▪ ARC Recommendations will be made public: March 29, 2011 ▪ Board Meeting Dates: April 12, 2011 - Presentation of ARC report to Board of Trustees June 29, 2011 - Decision by Board of Trustees