

TRANSCRIPTION OF COMMENTS – QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
Board Information Session
February 15, 2011 - Regiopolis-Notre Dame

Ten (10) comments forms received from nine (9) individuals.

#1 School Affiliation: **St. Paul** (Kingston)

Question: Why do you have to close our school just because we don't have lots of people?

Answer: *The Board has not made any decisions to close any schools. The release of the Long Term Capital Plan will enable public consultation to begin on the proposed recommendations, developed to this stage by Watson & Associates Economists Ltd. These consultations will follow the Accommodation Review Committee (ARC) process. Each ARC will review the recommendations for their area, study the enrolment, facility condition and other data and formulate recommendations back to the Board for their consideration and decision.*

Q: Why do you want to close our school we have a nice one I don't want a bigger one.

A: *Refer to Answer above.*

#2 School Affiliation: **St. Paul** (Kingston)

Q: How can we stop the closure of St. Paul's? Is the decision already firm? When would a definite decision be made?

A. *Refer to Answer above. A proposed calendar for the six proposed ARC reviews over the next 3 school years is included in the report.*

Comment: We live north of Kingston, outside of the catchment area and specifically chose St. Paul's for our children. It is a strong school, lead by an energetic principal and surrounded by an incredibly supportive community. We sincerely value the catholic education but if the school closes we will be forced to consider the public board. It would be a sad day for everybody. Please save St. Paul's.

#3 School Affiliation: **St. Paul** (Kingston)

C: St. Paul's is a vibrant school and very much needed in our community. Evidence of this would be the many community (not fundraising) events that we hold and the many groups that rent our gym in the evenings. The playground, tennis court and soccer field are used during the summer by the community. The ice rink is also a big hit in the winter, partly funded by the school and greatly due to student

volunteers. Having a great catholic school is a plus for the community as it will bring in new families to our area.

Q: Why move our students to a school that has "problems," parents there may not want a larger enrollment to take away from the current student population.

A: *Each Accommodation Review Committee, with representatives from all school communities in the review area, will review the recommendations for their area, and will study a School Information Profile for each school in the review area to help formulate recommendations back to the Board for their consideration and decision.*

Q: Did the consultants enter the schools or was all the information gathered from "paper"? We all know things may look good in black and white but not so go in the real world.

A: *The Long Term Capital Plan prepared by Watson and Associates is a study of demographics, enrolment projections and facility condition data. The Ministry of Education requires boards to prepare capital plans in this format. It was not necessary for the consultants to visit the schools to obtain data for this analysis. The Accommodation Review Committee process, however, must study the value of the school to the students, the community, the board and local economy. Visits to the schools will be an important part of this process and will influence the recommendations from the ARC that the Board will ultimately consider.*

C: I look forward to hearing more and will join the parent community at St. Pauls to SAVE OUR SCHOOL.

#4 School Affiliation: St. Paul (Kingston)

Q: I would like to know how much did this all cost to present this?

A: *The Public Information Sessions on February 15th & 16th, 2011 were presented by Board staff and are an important first step to provide the public with information about the Long Term Capital Plan and to advise them of the consultation process that will be followed before any decisions are made by the Board.*

Q: Why not rezone so more kids can come to St. Paul's?

A: *The ARC may study this option*

Q: 25,000.00 playground equipment what is happening to it?

A: ***No decisions will be made regarding the future of any schools until the ARC process provides recommendations to the Board for their consideration. The ARC may consider the playground equipment.***

C: I was very disappointed with this form [forum]. We need to ask question openly and you need to answer them.

#5 Kingston Community Health Centres: Community Development Worker

Q: What's the enrollment in St. Pat's and St. Pete's?

A: ***This information is contained in the Long Term Capital Plan report prepared by Watson & Associates Economists. The complete report is available online by following the "Capital Plan" link at www.alcdsb.on.ca***

Are you considering:

Q: Long term costs i.e. bussing?

Q: Environmental impact?

Q: Bus travel times?

Q: Safety of kids walking to school?

Q: Impact on working parents?

Q: Child care?

Q: Kid's academic success scores?

A: ***The ARC will study all of the above***

C: KCHC [Kingston Community Health Centre] really wants to go with the direction of the community. We want what's best for the wellness of the kids and their families.

C: Please email me! I'd love to help before and after decisions are made!

#6 Q: Deleted as inappropriate.

#7 School Affiliation: **St. Paul** (Kingston)

C: Kingston West is thriving as is Kingston east. My concern is that the core of Kingston will suffer further if our individual neighbourhoods are left with empty pockets of space, empty schools and empty fields. The loss of our school will negatively impact the values of our neighbourhood both financially and physically.

C: It was my understanding that the Ministry of Education was aiming for smaller class sizes. I don't see how this came to fruition when the populations of the three schools – whose class sizes already approach if not exceed these mandated numbers – merge. A simple addition featuring three or four or five extra classrooms cannot accommodate the needs of our students.

- C: I also feel for those students who require more individual help. How will they feel as they enter a larger, more populated facility? My guess is lost.
- C: Every neighbourhood is populated with families whose needs depend on localized services. It is important that we keep schools alive in our neighbourhoods to meet the needs of our community. While the charts and graphs presented here tonight are impressive, they fail to address the socio-economic needs of the families in our school. Children should be able to walk to school; parents should be able to walk to the schools to pick up their children. We should be promoting a healthier, active and greener lifestyle.
- C: Should this plan proceed we will see our children loaded onto buses which would null out any attempt at teaching our children how to be independent, strong, community minded individuals as they have no choice but to depend on others for transportation and a livelihood not in keeping with our neighbourhood dreams of what a childhood should encompass.

#8 School Affiliation: **St. Paul** (Kingston)

Q: How much of the past board budgets have gone to upgrade/improve the school?

A: *This data will be made available for study during the ARC process*

Q: How much was spent on the report that is essentially the same as the one obtained by Limestone Board?

A: *The Ministry of Education requires all School Boards to develop long term enrolment forecasts to support their capital planning. Watson and Associates Economists provide demographic analysis and enrolment projections for most school boards in Ontario. They provide similar analysis for 100's of Municipalities in Ontario. Watson and Associates Economists Ltd. has provided these services to the Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic District School Board for the preparation of 3 long term capital plans and 2 education development charge background studies over the past 11 years. The cost for this analysis and reporting is included in the Board's annual budget.*

Q: Why was the same firm used in the study?

A: *See answer above*

Q: Did they take into account the new subdivision of Purdy Mills?

A: *The proposed "Purdy Mills" development is in the attendance area for St. Marguerite. The railway corridor forms the natural school boundary between St. Paul and St. Marguerite. Watson and Associates reviewed Municipal development data and this is reflected in the enrolment projections contained in the report. The enrolment projections are calculated as the sum of the Requirements of the Existing Community (predicted enrolment from the existing housing stock in an area) plus Requirements of New Development (predicted number of pupils that would occupy new housing developments).*

Q: What are the costs of transportation needed to bus our kids to St. T. M.?

A: *The ARC will study this*

#9 School Affiliation: St. Paul (Kingston)

Q: First of all, where's the meeting?

A: *Senior Administration of the Board were present to discuss the Long Term Capital Plan at Public Information Sessions held on February 15th and 16th in Kingston and in Belleville.*

C: What have you presented to us is the exact information already posted on the website and directed through the schools to homes. This has the same information only on larger paper.

Q: Why can't Board Members stand up to the parents and concerned citizens rather than hide behind this sort of display?

A: *Trustees and Senior Administration were present to discuss the Long Term Capital Plan the Public Information Sessions as noted above. They were standing in front of the displays.*

C: We can certainly see that the plan here was transparent – keep it quiet!

C: This presentation is costly; wasteful of time and resources.

C: Please meet with us out in the open – we have much to say.