



**County of Brant (Elementary) Boundary Review
Wednesday, October 18, 2023 at 6:00 pm**

**Gymnasium, Sacred Heart Catholic Elementary School
180 Grandville Circle, Paris**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Blessed Sacrament School:	Lisa Henrique, Kailey Keresturi, Erin Smith
Holy Family Catholic Elementary School:	Allison Langille, Rachael Morton, Shelley Vlasic
Sacred Heart Catholic Elementary School:	Julie Rosbrugh, Jessica Ryan
St. Theresa School:	Alix Consorti, Amanda Sanderson

RESOURCE PERSONNEL:

Administration:	Scott Keys, Lorrie Temple, Phil Wilson, Jack Ammendolia, Sara Lees
Principals / Vice-Principals:	Bill Acres, Kerrie Chartrand, Kim Spencer, Mark Finocchio, Rachel DeDominicis
Recording Secretary:	Katherine Reddicliffe

1. Land Acknowledgement

Superintendent Temple gave thanks and acknowledged the land that we are gathered on today.

Superintendent Keys introduced resource personnel to the public. Superintendent Keys noted that parent representatives are the initial voice for the parents of their school regarding feedback, suggestions for boundary changes, etc. until the Committee can obtain feedback from the larger parent community.

2. Opening Prayer

Kerri Chartrand opened the meeting with prayer.

3. Presentation

Michael McDonald, Director of Education welcomed and thanked everyone for attending and speaking up in the voice of catholic education. Director McDonald was setting up the context of the meeting, stating that the boundary review is technically a math problem, but the students are and will be the forefront of our decisions. This is early on in this process and the dialogue from this evening will be taken back to the table.

3.1 Why Attendance Boundary Review?

Jack Ammendolia noted that boundary reviews are conducted to create a balance as a result of one or more of the following:

- Enrolment imbalances.
- Ultimately the opening of a new school.
- To relieve enrolment pressures.
- To review program changes.

Mr. Ammendolia noted that in Brant County, especially the schools in Paris, have experienced high enrollments and utilizations, relative to the schools' capacities. Therefore, it becomes



increasingly difficult to alleviate enrollment pressures at one school, when the surrounding schools are experiencing these pressures as well.

The purpose of a public meeting is to present the Ministry with proof that the Board is looking at every possible scenario. The purpose of the Committee is to try and balance all the needs.

3.2 **Possible Outcomes, Limitations and Considerations**

Mr. Ammendolia noted that some of the possible outcomes of the review are to balance and improve the school utilizations, to make the best use of spaces and improve overall student outcomes.

The Board will need capital (new school(s)) and has submitted business cases to the Ministry in hopes to receive funding for a new school(s). However, if the Board is approved for capital funding, it could take as long as four to five years before a school is opened. The Committee must determine what can be done in the interim; considering school size, location relative to existing and future students, travel time, walking distance, property size and bussing, which scenarios are the least disruptive to families, the school community, student friendships, etc.

Additional considerations to staffing and parking requirements; transitional provisions and legacy agreements with their associated impacts.

3.3 **Current Situation: Demographics, Projections, Maps**

Mr. Ammendolia reviewed historical, current, and projected demographics regarding enrolments and utilizations. He briefly touched on the existing attendance boundaries, the student distribution, and student's boarder-crossing.

3.4 **Possible Scenarios**

Mr. Ammendolia provided a review of the existing boundaries and noted that the boundary review is not a long-term solution to rectify the issues at Blessed Sacrament and Sacred Heart (Paris) Schools. The Committee must also resolve short-term and interim issues. He reviewed the following:

Ideas for Consideration: French Immersion

Program relocated from Sacred Heart (Paris) CES.

Ideas for Consideration: Grade Configuration Change

Grade 7/8 students from Sacred Heart (Paris) CES and Holy Family CES moved to one of the Brantford secondary schools.

Ideas for Consideration: Boundary Changes

Option 1 (Committee Option 1A)

- Extend the existing Our Lady of Providence's catchment into the Sacred Heart's (Paris) catchment.
- Extend the existing St. Theresa's catchment into Sacred Heart's (Paris) catchment.

Ideas for Consideration: Boundary + Grade Changes

Option 2 (Committee Option 2)

- Extend Our Lady of Providence's catchment into Sacred Heart's (Paris) catchment.



- Extend St. Theresa's catchment into Sacred Heart's (Paris) catchment.
- Relocate grade 7/8s from Sacred Heart (Paris) and Holy Family to St. John's College

3.5 **Holding Zones**

Mr. Ammendolia noted that holding zones could be developed where significant development is expected. Holding zones would hold students at a school(s) with existing surplus space. For example, a boundary review would identify that School A is your home school. However, until a new school is built, students will attend School B, which is a school that has space.

3.6 **Out of Boundary / Cross Border Students**

Mr. Ammendolia reviewed the cross border / out of boundary scenarios for each school.

If, due to boundary changes, it becomes necessary for a student to move from their current school to another school, parents can apply for an Out of Boundary Exemption and administration will examine the circumstances surrounding the request on a case-by-case basis.

3.7 **Next Steps**

Mr. Ammendolia noted that:

- A survey will be emailed to parents within the next few days. Please complete the survey and provide the Committee with as much feedback as possible, especially the on-the-ground truths, suggestions for other scenarios, school facilities, legacy, what you feel strongly about, etc.
- Parents are welcome to provide feedback to brantcounty@bhncdsb.ca as well.
- A third Committee meeting and feedback will be scheduled.
- A report will be taken to the Board of Trustees for a decision, outlining the recommended boundary changes.

3.8 **Questions**

Boundary Changes

- It is the intention of the Board to minimize, to the greatest extent possible, boundary changes that affect students now and if a new school is built.
- The current boundary scenarios attempt to keep clusters of students together to minimize the impacts of the changes, i.e., if students are already travelling to and from school on a bus, this may be a consideration when changing boundaries as the students will be accustomed to riding the bus, have their routines in place, etc.
- The Board has done everything they can do to avoid changing boundaries, i.e., submitting business cases to the Ministry for a new school(s), the addition of portable classrooms on school sites, etc. However, the circumstances dictate that there is no other choice but to consider boundary changes to alleviate enrollment concerns.
- Out of Boundary requests should be submitted to the school principal for students with special circumstances or unique situations. The school superintendent will review the requests, on a case-by-case basis, and contact parents regarding their decision.
- Portable classrooms will become a more permanent type of fixture for accommodation.

Community / School

- Trustees will make decisions regarding parent legacy requests. Administration is aware of the importance of school milestones and will make appropriate recommendations to trustees, i.e., Grade 8 students remain at their current schools, can family units remain at their current school, etc.



- The Board has a process for families who are non-Catholic and want their children to attend a faith-based system. The process is similar to the Out-of-Boundary process. Some parents felt strongly about non-Catholic students enrolled at their schools. They felt that, in some cases, it was unfair that non-Catholic students could remain at their current school, when their Catholic children were not able to remain.
- Students have been through a lot lately and are just starting to gain stability. The boundary changes could possibly jeopardize our students again.
- When students move from one school to another, the support for the schools are moved with those students, i.e., budgets, number of classroom supports, staffing, facility considerations, etc.

Transportation

- Student Transportation Services Brant Haldimand Norfolk (STSBHN) takes into consideration the safety of students and the length of time on the bus.
- STSBHN will make every effort to configure bus routes and evaluate the best course of action with transportation changes.

Other

- Superintendent Keys provided background information on how the committee was established from the beginning of the process and the role of those involved. Board goes out and seeks volunteers to join the committee to represent each school. The Committee has the initial information and the developments.
- Another survey will be sent to all parents/guardians in the next few days. The Board will use the data collected from the surveys to assist with decision making.
- About building new schools in the region; the BHCNDSB has done in-depth assessments on projections and submitted business cases over the last 15 years. The rapid growth/enrolment projects have been prepared long in advance. Submission for a new school is currently sitting with the Ministry for a decision to be made. Public advised that this is a government decision and to remember the roles of local government officials.
- Parents were asked, if possible, to remove yourself from their own personal situations and try to look at what is best / equitable for all the students in the boundary review.

4. Future Meetings

- TBD

5. Adjournment

The Meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm

Next Meeting: TBD