



Special Meeting of the Board
(Board By-Laws S. 6.3.3)
Thursday, March 23, 2017 ♦ 7:00 p.m.
Boardroom

Members: Rick Petrella (Chair), Dan Dignard (Vice Chair), Cliff Casey, Bill Chopp, Carol Luciani, Bonnie McKinnon, Rosalin Dubois (Student Trustee)

Senior Administration:

Chris N. Roehrig (Director of Education & Secretary), Thomas R. Grice (Superintendent of Business & Treasurer), Patrick Daly, Michelle Shypula and Leslie Telfer (Superintendents of Education)

1. Opening Business

1.1 Opening Prayer

1.2 Attendance

1.3 Approval of the Agenda

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1.4 Declaration of Interest

2. Committee and Staff Reports

2.1 Pupil Accommodation Review: Norfolk County – Final Staff Report
Presenter: Chris N. Roehrig, Director of Education & Secretary

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3. Adjournment

REPORT TO THE BRANT HALDIMAND NORFOLK CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Prepared by: Chris Roehrig, Director of Education & Secretary
Presented to: Board of Trustees
Submitted on: March 23, 2017
Submitted by: Chris Roehrig, Director of Education & Secretary

PUPIL ACCOMMODATION REVIEW – NORFOLK COUNTY FINAL STAFF REPORT

Public Session

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

In October 2006, the Ministry of Education issued the *Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline*, which outlined procedures that school boards must abide by when school closures are being considered. The Guideline was revised by the Ministry and re-issued in June 2009, March 2011, and revised once more in March 2015. In accordance with the most recent guideline, the Board revised its *Pupil Accommodation Review Policy and Administrative Procedures* to include Terms of Reference that describe the Accommodation Review Committee's (ARC) mandate as well as a School Information Profile. The Board of Trustees approved the revised Pupil Accommodation Review Policy and Administrative Procedures on October 27, 2015.

In May 2016, staff of Watson & Associates Economists Ltd. presented a Long-Term Capital Plan to the Board, which outlined demographic trends, enrolment projections and observations for all schools within the jurisdiction of the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board (BHNCD SB).

This Final Staff Report is a requirement of the Ministry of Education's *Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline* and the Board's *Pupil Accommodation Review Policy and Administrative Procedures*. This report outlines the background information and pupil accommodation options developed by both Board staff and the ARC. It also includes a Community Consultation section that contains feedback from the ARC and any public consultations, as well as any relevant information obtained from municipalities and other community partners prior to and during the pupil accommodation review. This report details the work completed by the ARC and Board staff throughout the entire accommodation review process.

On September 27, 2016, the Board of Trustees approved the commencement of a Pupil Accommodation Review (PAR) in Norfolk County. For the purpose of the PAR, the Norfolk County review area was approved to include the following schools: Our Lady of La Salette School, St. Frances Cabrini School and St. Bernard of Clairvaux School.

An Accommodation Review Committee (ARC), which included one parent/guardian representative from each of the schools under review, chosen by their respective Catholic School Advisory Council (CSAC), one teaching representative from each school under review and one community member with no child/ward currently attending BHNCD SB schools from each of the three schools was fully constituted on October 11, 2016. The ARC also had resource support available to provide information, when requested, or to provide expertise not already within the ARC.

The ARC was to review the current situation in Our Lady of La Salette School, St. Frances Cabrini School and St. Bernard of Clairvaux School and develop accommodation options, which would ensure suitable learning environments for all students.

As of September 2015, the Board was operating at 80% of its permanent capacity in the elementary panel and 100% of its permanent capacity in the secondary panel. Assuming no accommodation changes are implemented (i.e., status quo), overall, elementary enrolment is projected to increase to 7,140 students from 6,331 students (a 13% increase from existing figures) by the end of the 15-year forecast period (2015-16 to 2029-30). Secondary enrolment is projected to decline to 3,308 students by 2029-30 from 3,396 students, which represents a 3% decrease. By the end of the forecast period, the elementary panel is projected to have approximately 749 surplus spaces and the secondary panel will have approximately 94 surplus spaces.

Table 1 below details elementary enrolment, surplus space and utilization where the utilization rate is the school's (or group of schools) enrolment relative to their On-The-Ground Capacity (OTG) capacity for each of the geographic areas of the Board.

Table 1

Based upon the Watson & Associates Long-Term Capital Plan Demographic Trends, Enrolment Projections and Observations Report May 2016

Review Area	OTG	2015-16 Enrolment	Surplus Space	Utilization	2029-30 Enrolment	Surplus Space	Utilization
Brant County	1,027	782	245	.76	881	146	.86
Brantford	3,692	3,151	541	.85	3,942	-250	1.07
Haldimand County	1,270	885	385	.69	951	319	.75
Norfolk County	1,900	1,513	387	.80	1,366	534	.72
Total	7,889	6,331	1,558	.80	7,140	749	.91

For Norfolk County Schools, the OTG capacity is 1,900 students, which represents the available student spaces within the schools. The enrolment on September 2015 for these schools was 1,513 students. The overall excess capacity of student space in Norfolk County is 387 spaces. This represents an 80% utilization rate. Over the 15-year forecast period, beginning in 2015-16, the utilization rate of Norfolk County schools is anticipated to decline to 72%; representing 534 available spaces in elementary schools within Norfolk County.

Looking specifically at the three schools within the PAR, Our Lady of La Salette School, St. Frances Cabrini School and St. Bernard of Clairvaux School, the OTG for the three schools equals 665 students. The actual enrolment in these schools at September 2016 totals 459 students; resulting in a utilization rate of 69% (See Table 2).

Table 2

Based upon the Watson & Associates Long-Term Capital Plan Demographic Trends, Enrolment Projections and Observations Report May 2016

Program	2016-17 Watson Projected	2016-17 Actual	2019-20 Watson Projected	2022-23 Watson Projected	2025-26 Watson Projected
Our Lady of La Salette School Total Enrolment:	69	52	61	57	57
OTG: 187 Utilization:	.37	.28	.33	.30	.30
Excess Capacity:	118	135	126	130	130
St. Bernard of Clairvaux School Total Enrolment:	168	160	162	173	175
OTG: 210 Utilization:	.80	.76	.77	.82	.83
Excess Capacity:	42	50	48	37	35
St. Frances Cabrini School Total Enrolment:	242	247	255	258	247
OTG: 268 Utilization	.90	.92	.95	.96	.92
Excess Capacity:	26	21	13	10	21
Total Schools Combined Enrolment	479	459	478	488	479
OTG: 665 Utilization	.72	.69	.72	.73	.72
Excess Capacity	186	206	187	177	186

OTG - On the Ground School Capacity

Table 3.8.8 from the Watson & Associates Long-Term Capital Plan, Demographic Trends, Enrolment Projections and Observations Report, shows a list of the Facility Condition Index (FCI) of each of the Norfolk schools. It also lists the percentage of Full Operational Cost that the Board receives for each school listed.

The FCI examines the cost of renewal needs, which in the case of the Watson Report is ten years, against the cost of replacing the facility. If the FCI is above 65%, the Ministry of Education typically considers the facility *prohibitive to repair*.

Table 3.8.8 depicts the facility condition, renewal and projected operations cost funding for each school within this review area.

Table 3.8.8 Condition and Renewal by School

Based upon the Watson & Associates Long-Term Capital Plan Demographic Trends, Enrolment Projections and Observations Report, May 2016

School	Facility Replacement Value	10-Year Renewal Costs	Facility Condition Index	% of Full Operational Costs (2017-18)
Our Lady of Fatima School	\$3,908,050	\$1,844,704	47%	100%
Our Lady of La Salette School	\$5,183,020	\$3,413,814	66%	38%
Sacred Heart School	\$6,574,190	\$3,403,352	52%	100%
St. Bernard of Clairvaux School	\$5,564,520	\$2,934,837	53%	100%
St. Cecilia's School	\$5,266,170	\$2,049,421	39%	100%
St. Frances Cabrini School	\$6,281,990	\$2,889,517	46%	92%
St. Joseph's School	\$9,135,310	\$4,166,092	46%	99%
St. Michael's School	\$4,545,530	\$2,209,078	49%	100%
Review Area Total	\$46,458,780	\$22,910,815	49%	93%
Board-Wide Elementary Total	\$186,670,750	\$71,412,101	38%	86%

The table above is based upon student enrolment at Our Lady of La Salette School of 69 students as projected for 2016-17. Applying the actual 2016-17 enrolment would alter the Our Lady of La Salette School % of Full Operational Cost to equal 28%.

With respect to costs and benefits, in general, Board staff have thoroughly reviewed costs on a per-pupil basis in comparison to other schools of the Board and in comparison to the Board average per pupil cost. The per pupil cost for the schools within the PAR are shown on Pages 57 and 58 of the October 11, 2016 Working Committee Agenda package as part of the School Information Profiles (SIP). In the case of Our Lady of La Salette School, using enrolment at September 2016, the Per Pupil Cost is \$13,108. The Board average per pupil cost is \$7,368. The differential is \$5,740 on a per pupil basis. This higher cost differential is directly related to lower student enrolment at Our Lady of La Salette School.

Please note that the figures above do not include transportation costs. In addition, minor variances in school support staff have been excluded as well as overhead costs, which would normally be distributed to all schools on a per pupil basis.

Looking at Cost Savings to the Board and to the Ministry of Education, the following items typically represent savings that may be realized through school closure:

- Principal salary, including benefits.
- Custodian salary, including benefits.
- Secretary salary, including benefits.
- Teacher salary, including benefits (if applicable).
- Operating Costs such as heat, hydro, water (if applicable).
- Maintenance and Contractual Services, such as grass, snow, supplies, services, insurance.
- Future School Renewal Needs.
- Future Capital Needs.

It should be noted that in addition to costs associated with a school, there are also revenue losses for under-utilized, non-isolated space (when a school is within ten kilometres of another elementary school). For these schools, top-up operations and renewal funding is eliminated.

OPERATIONS FUNDING ANALYSIS – OUR LADY OF LA SALETTE SCHOOL

The Operations Grant is used to support the costs of operating and maintaining the Board's facilities. Operating costs include items such as heating, lighting and cleaning of school facilities. The Operations Grant is based on a per pupil benchmark, which means the Board receives funding for each student enrolled at that school.

Historically, the Operations Grant had a *top-up* component associated with it, which was applied to schools that were under-utilized or that were considered rural by way of postal code identifiers. Beginning in 2015-16, the Ministry of Education changed the grant structure for operations funding and has removed the *top-up* component for all schools; except those identified as isolated (based on geographic distance requirements). In essence, the new grant structure has eliminated funding for under-utilized space in schools that are not isolated.

Under the old funding structure, and based on its postal code, Our Lady of La Salette School was identified as a *rural* school, and as such, received 100% of its Operation grant. Based on 2015-16 enrolment figures, the operations funding would have totaled approximately \$147,000 annually. Under the new funding structure, which is phasing-in the removal of top-up funding over three years, Our Lady of La Salette School will receive an Operation Grant, which is consistent with its utilization rate. Under the new isolated / enhanced school requirements, Our Lady of La Salette School is no longer identified as an isolated school as it is situated within ten kilometres of the next closest elementary school.

Based on 2015-16 Funding Model	2015-16 OTG	2015-16 ADE	2015-16 Utilization	Operations No Top-up	Total Operations	Maximum Operations	% of Maximum
Our Lady of La Salette School	187	81	44%	\$64,083	\$147,198	\$147,198	100%
Based on 2017-18 Funding Model	2017-18 OTG	2017-18 ADE	2017-18 Utilization	Operations No Top-up	Total Operations	Maximum Operations	% of Maximum
Our Lady of La Salette School	187	52	28%	\$42,561	\$42,561	\$153,057	28%

This means that if Our Lady of La Salette School would have been eligible to receive 100% of its Operations funding, the entitlement based on 2017-18 enrolments and funding benchmarks would total approximately \$153,000 per year. However, because operations funding for Our Lady of La Salette School will be consistent with utilization, the school is projected to receive approximately \$42,500 per year in Operations funding, which amounts to approximately 28% of what its maximum entitlement would have been. The resultant loss in revenue after the three-year phase-in period will be approximately \$110,500 per year.

Other grants that are being phased-out over the next several years include the Rural and Small Community allocation and the Declining Enrolment Adjustment grants. Additionally, funding for staff such as principals and vice-principals is also changing. Under the old funding rules, regular schools with Average Daily Enrolment (ADE) above 50 students were entitled to one full-time principal. With the funding changes, a regular school must have an ADE enrolment of 150 students, or greater, to be eligible for a full-time principal. In the case of Our Lady of La Salette School, this means that the principal will be funded at 35% (52/150) of what would have been received under the old funding model.

On April 5, 2016, the Board scheduled a meeting at Holy Trinity Catholic High School and invited a range of community partners, including child care providers, municipalities, school boards, colleges and universities, public health boards, local health integration networks and children’s mental health centres, to discuss under-utilized space needs in Norfolk County and those specifically at Our Lady of La Salette School. The partner response was low and of the community partners in attendance (YMCA Western Ontario and Haldimand-Norfolk Reach); none expressed an interest in space at Our Lady of La Salette School. Prior to the writing of the Initial Staff Report, the Board did not receive relevant information from Norfolk County or the municipal government regarding under-utilized space needs in their jurisdiction. As well, the Board did not receive relevant information from Norfolk County prior to the writing of the Final Staff Report.

DEVELOPMENTS:

Over the course of four Working Committee Meetings (two located at Holy Trinity Catholic High School and two at Our Lady of La Salette School), three public meetings (one located at Holy Trinity Catholic High School and two at Our Lady of La Salette School), a community partner meeting, as well as countless hours spent reviewing background information, Board staff and the ARC developed a total of eight possible accommodation options.

Timeline of Meetings

Meeting	Action	Date / Location	Time
Community Partner Consultation Meeting		Tuesday, April 5, 2016 Holy Trinity Catholic High School	4:00 pm
Working Committee Meeting #1	1st Working Committee Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of Pupil Accommodation Policy and Procedures • Mandate of the Accommodation Review Committee • Terms of Reference for the Accommodation Review 	Tuesday, October 11, 2016 Holy Trinity Catholic High School	5:30 pm
Public Meeting #1	1st Accommodation Review Committee Public Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of Pupil Accommodation Policy and Procedures • Role of the ARC • Operation of the ARC • Pupil Accommodation Review – Norfolk County Initial Staff Report and School Information Profile • Receiving Public Input • Issues to be Addressed 	Wednesday, November 9, 2016 Holy Trinity Catholic High School	7:00 pm

Working Committee Meeting #2	2nd Working Committee Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of Pupil Accommodation Policy and Procedures • Role of the ARC • Operation of the ARC • Pupil Accommodation Review – Norfolk County Initial Staff Report and School Information 	Wednesday, November 23, 2016 Holy Trinity Catholic High School	5:30 pm
Working Committee Meeting #3	3rd Working Committee Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of the Minutes from Working Committee Meeting #1 • Presentation and Review of Questions Arising from the Working Committee Meeting of October 11, 2016 and Public Meeting #1 – November 9, 2016 • Accommodation Review Options • Additional Working Committee Meetings 	Monday, December 12, 2016 Our Lady of La Salette School	6:00 pm
Public Meeting #2	Public Meeting #2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of the Minutes from Public Meeting #1 • Presentation • Meetings Held to Date • Review of the Initial Staff Report • Review of Initial Accommodation Options • Review of Final Accommodation Options 	Wednesday, January 18, 2017 Our Lady of La Salette School	7:00 pm
Working Committee Meeting #4	4th Working Committee Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of the Minutes from Working Committee Meeting #3 • Response to <i>For the ARC Committee</i> – December 12, 2016 • Draft Final Staff Report • Response to <i>Notes for January 18, 2017 ARC Meeting</i> • Response to ARC Public Meeting – January 18, 2017 	Wednesday, January 25, 2017 Our Lady of La Salette School	6:00 pm
Final Public Meeting	Final Public Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of the Minutes from Public Meeting #2 • Presentation of Draft Final Staff Report • Review of Delegation to the Board Process • Review of Questions Arising from the Public Meeting #2 of January 18, 2017 	Wednesday, February 1, 2017 Our Lady of La Salette School	7:00 pm

Special Meeting of the Board of Trustees	Delivery of Final Staff Report to Board of Trustees for Receipt	Wednesday, February 15, 2017 Catholic Education Centre	7:00 pm
Special Meeting of the Board of Trustees	Public Delegation	Thursday, March 2, 2017 Catholic Education Centre	6:00 pm
Special Meeting of the Board of Trustees	Delivery of Final Staff Report to Board of Trustees for Approval. Notice of Decision by Trustees on School Accommodation Review	Thursday March 23, 2017 Catholic Education Centre	7:00 pm

The following table lists the eight possible accommodation options developed within the PAR with discussions on the options taking place at Working Committee Meetings #2 and #3 and Public Meeting #2.

Option	
1	Our Lady of La Salette School closes and all students from Our Lady of La Salette School are accommodated at St. Frances Cabrini School
2	Our Lady of La Salette School closes and all students from Our Lady of La Salette School are accommodated at St. Bernard of Clairvaux School
3	Our Lady of La Salette School closes and the existing boundary is split between St. Frances Cabrini School and St. Bernard of Clairvaux School
4	Our Lady of La Salette School closes and the existing Our Lady of La Salette School student population is permitted to attend either St. Frances Cabrini School or St. Bernard of Clairvaux School with no change to existing boundaries
5	St. Frances Cabrini School to become a Primary / Junior (ELKP – Grade 5) School and Our Lady of La Salette School to become an Intermediate (Grade 6 – Grade 8) School
6	A moratorium for the Accommodation Review Process
7	A moratorium until the Ministry makes a decision regarding rural schools
8	Our Lady of La Salette School to become a French Immersion School for Norfolk County

As a result of conversations between Board staff and the ARC at Working Committee Meeting #3 on December 12, 2016, Options 4 and Option 5 were eliminated. Further, Options 6, 7 and 8 were consolidated into one option regarding a moratorium on the accommodation review process. The rationale for the consolidated option was that decisions regarding government direction on rural schools, French Immersion being offered at Our Lady of La Salette School and the time needed to attract additional partners that could lease space at Our Lady of La Salette School could be made during the time that the moratorium would be in effect.

The resulting options are presented individually below.

Option # 1

Our Lady of La Salette School Closes and All Students from Our Lady of La Salette School Are Accommodated at St. Frances Cabrini School

The Board would consider requests for students to enroll at St. Bernard of Clairvaux School. In this situation, transportation would be grandfathered for existing Our Lady of La Salette School students and any current siblings, between 0-4 years of age, for the balance of their elementary academic career. The grandfathering of siblings would affect seven students from five families, should these families choose to attend St. Bernard of Clairvaux School.

Assuming that all students chose to attend St. Frances Cabrini School and no grandfathering occurs, the following table depicts the utilization and excess capacity at St. Frances Cabrini School.

Based upon the Watson & Associates Long-Term Capital Plan Demographic Trends, Enrolment Projections and Observations Report, May 2016

Program	2016-17 Watson Projected	2016-17 Actual	2019-20 Watson Projected	2022-23 Watson Projected	2025-26 Watson Projected
St. Frances Cabrini School Total Enrolment:	311	299	316	315	304
OTG: 268 Utilization	1.16	1.11	1.18	1.18	1.13
Excess Capacity:	-43	-31	-48	-47	-36

In this Option, a two-room addition would be required at St. Frances Cabrini School. It should be noted that the table above was created using Watson & Associates projections. In 2016-17, the Watson & Associates projections for Our Lady of La Salette School will be greater than the actual enrolment, which is 17 students less than projected. This will result in the excess capacity data in all other years being overstated.

Projected Transportation Impact

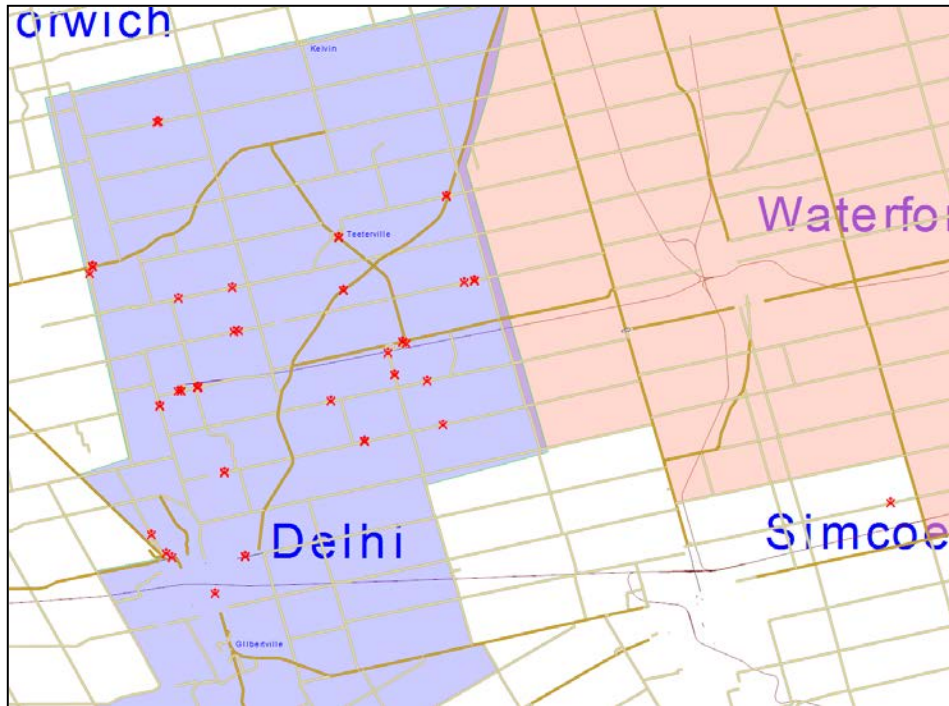
Current Ride Times (am and pm) for Our Lady of La Salette School Students

Component	0-15 Minutes	16-30 Minutes	31-45 Minutes	46-60 Minutes	61-75 Minutes	> 75 Minutes
AM	2	12	10	10	5	0
Noon	0	0	0	0	0	0
PM	11	5	14	5	6	0
Total	13	17	24	15	11	0

Projected Future Ride Times (am and pm) for Our Lady of La Salette School Students to St. Frances Cabrini School

Component	0-15 Minutes	16-30 Minutes	31-45 Minutes	46-60 Minutes	61-75 Minutes	> 75 Minutes
AM	4	15	13	6	0	0
Noon	0	0	0	0	0	0
PM	4	17	13	6	0	0
Total	8	32	26	12	0	0

This option would necessitate the addition of a mini-bus to the existing compliment serving Our Lady of La Salette School students to St. Frances Cabrini School.



Option # 2

Our Lady of La Salette School Closes and All Students from Our Lady of La Salette School Are Accommodated at St. Bernard of Clairvaux School

The Board would consider requests for students to enroll at St. Frances Cabrini School. In this situation, transportation would be grandfathered for existing Our Lady of La Salette School students and any current siblings between 0-4 years of age, for the balance of their elementary academic career. The grandfathering of siblings affects seven students from five families, should these families choose to attend St. Frances Cabrini School.

Based upon the Watson & Associates Long-Term Capital Plan Demographic Trends, Enrolment Projections and Observations Report, May 2016

Program	2016-17 Watson Projected	2016-17 Actual	2019-20 Watson Projected	2022-23 Watson Projected	2025-26 Watson Projected
St. Bernard of Clairvaux School Total Enrolment:	237	212	223	230	232
OTG: 210 Utilization:	1.13	1.00	1.06	1.10	1.10
Excess Capacity:	-27	-2	-13	-20	-22

In this Option, a one-room, or possibly, two-room addition would be required at St. Bernard of Clairvaux School.

It should be noted that the table above was created using Watson & Associates projections. In 2016-17, the Watson & Associates projections for Our Lady of La Salette School will be greater than the actual enrolment, which is 17 students less than projected. This will result in the excess capacity data in all other years being overstated.

Projected Transportation Impact

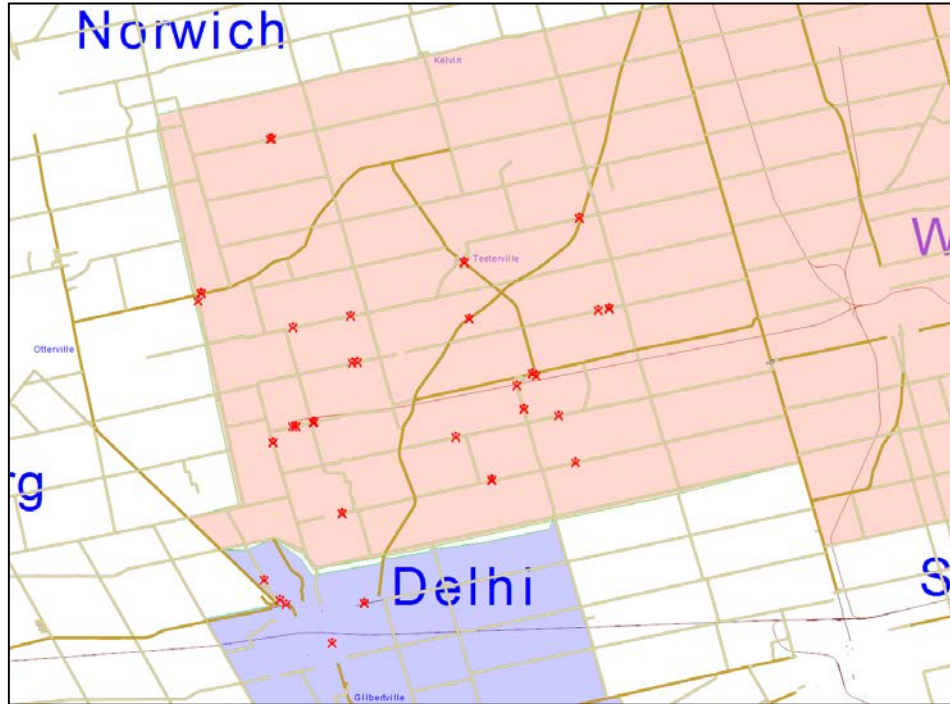
Current Ride Times (am and pm) for Our Lady of La Salette School Students

Component	0-15 Minutes	16-30 Minutes	31-45 Minutes	46-60 Minutes	61-75 Minutes	> 75 Minutes
AM	2	12	10	10	5	0
Noon	0	0	0	0	0	0
PM	11	5	14	5	6	0
Total	13	17	24	15	11	0

Projected Future Ride Times (am and pm) for Our Lady of La Salette School Students to St. Bernard of Clairvaux School

Component	0-15 Minutes	16-30 Minutes	31-45 Minutes	46-60 Minutes	61-75 Minutes	> 75 Minutes
AM	1	16	15	6	2	0
Noon	0	0	0	0	0	0
PM	1	11	18	12	0	0
Total	2	27	33	18	2	0

This option would necessitate the addition of a mini-bus to the existing compliment of busses serving Our Lady of La Salette School students.



Option # 3

Our Lady of La Salette School Closes and the Existing Boundary is Split between St. Frances Cabrini School and St. Bernard of Clairvaux School

This option resulted in 24 students being accommodated at St. Bernard of Clairvaux School and 28 students being accommodated at St. Frances Cabrini School; based on current year enrolment. Enrolment was proportionately extrapolated in all other years.

Based upon the Watson & Associates Long-Term Capital Plan Demographic Trends, Enrolment Projections and Observations Report, May 2016

Program	2016-17 Watson Projected	2016-17 Actual	2019-20 Watson Projected	2022-23 Watson Projected	2025-26 Watson Projected
St. Bernard of Clairvaux School Total Enrolment:	200	184	190	199	201
OTG: 210 Utilization:	.95	.88	.90	.95	.96
Excess Capacity:	10	26	20	11	9
St. Frances Cabrini School Total Enrolment:	279	275	288	289	278
OTG: 268 Utilization	1.04	1.03	1.07	1.08	1.04
Excess Capacity:	-11	-7	-20	-21	-10

In this Option, a one-room addition would be required at St. Frances Cabrini School. Consideration for an additional Early Learning Kindergarten Program classroom would also require review.

It should be noted that the table above was created using Watson & Associates projections. In 2016-17, the Watson & Associates projections for Our Lady of La Salette School will be greater than the actual enrolment, which is 17 students less than projected. This will result in the excess capacity data in all other years being overstated.

Projected Transportation Impact

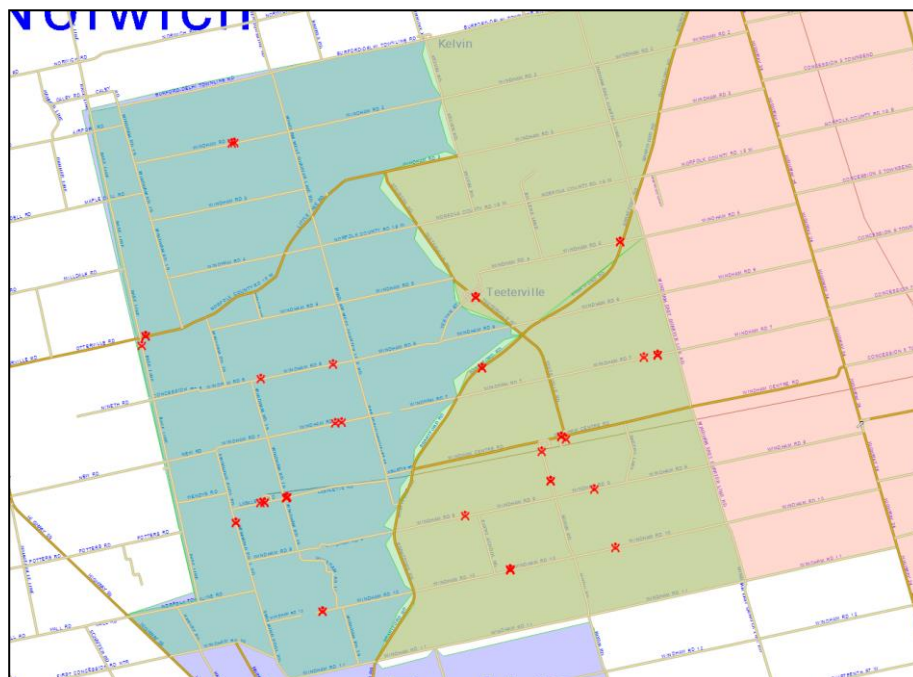
Current Ride Times (am and pm) for Our Lady of La Salette School Students

Component	0-15 Minutes	16-30 Minutes	31-45 Minutes	46-60 Minutes	61-75 Minutes	> 75 Minutes
AM	2	12	10	10	5	0
Noon	0	0	0	0	0	0
PM	11	5	14	5	6	0
Total	13	17	24	15	11	0

Projected Future Ride Times (am and pm) for Our Lady of La Salette School Students to St. Frances Cabrini and St. Bernard of Clairvaux Schools

Component	0-15 Minutes	16-30 Minutes	31-45 Minutes	46-60 Minutes	61-75 Minutes	> 75 Minutes
AM	4	18	11	7	0	0
Noon	0	0	0	0	0	0
PM	6	13	17	6	0	0
Total	10	31	28	13	0	0

This option would necessitate the addition of a mini-bus to the existing compliment of busses serving Our Lady of La Salette School students to St. Frances Cabrini and St. Bernard of Clairvaux Schools.



Option # 4

A Two-Year Moratorium for the Accommodation Review Process

Our Lady of La Salette School remains open. Status quo.

Option #4 has been consolidated from the original Options 6, 7 and 8 as presented at Working Meeting #3. The rationale for the consolidation was that decisions regarding government direction on rural schools, decisions regarding French Immersion being offered at Our Lady of La Salette School or the time needed to attract additional partners who might lease space at Our Lady of La Salette School could be pursued during the time that the moratorium would be in effect.

The ARC felt that with a time moratorium in effect, Norfolk County parents could be surveyed to determine interest levels, should a French Immersion Program be offered at Our Lady of La Salette School, in addition to the French Immersion Program, which has been established at St. Joseph's School in Simcoe.

The ARC felt that while the moratorium was in effect, additional direction may be forthcoming from the Government concerning keeping schools in rural communities open and that it may be possible to attract a community partner to utilize space within the building, such as a licensed daycare.

Considerations:

- Typically, when considering a Dual Track School (English and French Immersion instruction) a robust English stream of students already exists in the school. For example, the Board currently has one Dual Track French Immersion School in Brantford, which is offering programming in both French and English Kindergarten to Grade 8. There is an enrolment variance of approximately 40 students. This school continues to have robust enrolment in both English and French classrooms. Historical data reveals that students continue to register in both French Immersion and English programs. Our Lady of La Salette School does not have sufficient enrolment in the English stream to support the French Immersion model.
- By offering French Immersion in a larger school like St. Joseph's School, where there exists a large English stream of student enrolment, parents are given a choice between enrolling their children in an English program or a French program. Often, an English classroom collapses and it is replaced with a French classroom.
- French Immersion Schools usually add one grade per year and the process takes at least eight years to establish the program in all grades.
- A French Immersion School offers parental choice for their child's education; however, if the students that are attracted to the French Immersion School are not new to the system, this solution does not solve the enrolment issue as students are coming from other schools within the system; potentially weakening the enrolment at these other schools.
- When selecting a French Immersion school location, centrality of location, the length of time students would be travelling by bus and the cost of bussing, should be considered.
- As per Ministry of Education [Memorandum 2016:B19, Request for School Consolidation Capital Funding Submissions](#), dated December 1, 2016, which deals with funding provisions for school consolidations, there is no mention to exclude rural schools when undertaking a Pupil Accommodation Review (PAR) or making a school consolidation capital request.

Community Consultations

As per the Ministry of Education *Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline*, March 2015, school boards must ensure that individuals from the school(s) under review and individuals from the broader community are invited to participate in the pupil accommodation review consultation. This participation has been achieved in a number of ways in the current PAR. The Accommodation Review Committee (ARC) was established with representation, which included one parent/guardian representative from each of the schools under review, chosen by their respective Catholic School Advisory Council (CSAC), one teaching representative from each school under review and one community member with no child/ward currently attending BHNCD SB schools from each of the three schools. These individuals became conduits between the school, the community at large and the discussions taking place at meetings of the PAR. Questions were posed and statements were read during Working Committee Meetings, which originated from ARC members as well as the larger school community. During Public Meetings, questions were posed and statements were read, which originated directly from the larger school community. Refer to the hyperlinked agenda documents found on Pages 6 and 7 of this report within the *Timelines for Meetings*.

As mentioned earlier, on April 5, 2016, the Board invited a range of community partners including child care providers, municipalities, school boards, colleges and universities, public health boards, local health integration networks and children's mental health centres to discuss under-utilized space needs in Norfolk County and those specifically at Our Lady of La Salette School. The partner response was low and of the community partners in attendance (YMCA Western Ontario and Haldimand-Norfolk Reach), none expressed an interest in space at Our Lady of La Salette School. Prior to the writing of the Initial Staff Report, the Board did not receive relevant information from Norfolk County nor from the municipal government regarding under-utilized space needs in their jurisdiction. When Norfolk County staff were contacted requesting comment on the Initial Staff Report, they advised the Board of a pending application for a small development in the southwest area of Waterford, but did not have any comment on either St. Frances Cabrini School, Our Lady of La Salette School or the recommended option within the Initial Staff Report. The Board did not receive any comment from the two community partners who attended the Community Consultation Meeting on April 5, 2016 with respect to the recommendation within the Initial Staff Report.

Board staff were made aware, via an email from a parent of Our Lady of La Salette School, that the Mayor of Norfolk County had written to Premier Kathleen Wynne with a concern for rural schools in rural communities. The Norfolk County Council approved a resolution on December 13, 2016, urging the Minister of Education to rewrite the Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline (PARG) to take into consideration community and economic value considerations of rural communities, provide a more democratic process and, until such time as the PARG is rewritten, that the Province place a moratorium on more rural school closures. A similar letter was provided by Bruce Grey County to the Premier on December 2, 2016.

Three Public Meetings were held as part of the PAR schedule of meetings. Public Meeting #1 was held on November 9, 2016 at Holy Trinity Catholic High School and was well attended by members of the public and from Our Lady of La Salette School. The [Agenda](#) and [Minutes](#) containing responses to questions can be found on the BHNCD SB website. Public Meeting #2 was held on January 18, 2017 at Our Lady of La Salette School and, again, a large turnout of members involved in the local school community attended. The [Agenda](#) and [Minutes](#) containing responses to questions can also be found on the BHNCD SB website. Members of the public attended each of the Working Committee Meetings #2 through #4. A Final Public Meeting was held on February 1, 2017 at Our Lady of La Salette School. During the Final Public Meeting, numerous statements were given by members of the public. The written statements are included as Appendix 2 and Appendix 3.

The majority of public input focused on Option 4; whereby a two-year moratorium would be placed on the PAR, and Our Lady of La Salette School would remain open, status quo in the meantime.

In addition to the reasons given within the PAR by the Working Committee regarding a moratorium on the process (refer to Option #4, Page 14 above), a submission to the Board requesting a moratorium be put in place was provided by a parent and the moratorium request excerpt is included below:

- *New data is available from the Census (released spring 2017) and facility condition assessments from the Ministry (Our Lady of La Salette School is scheduled to be reviewed in 2017). This will provide up-to-date information for decision-making.*
- *This would allow time for the Board to make a long-term plan for Norfolk County Catholic schools.*
- *Time for the Ministry to correct flaws in the funding model and PARG.*
- *Time for the Board and Trustees to gather research on the effects on students of school consolidation. If the current models persist, there will be more PARs and likely more consolidations. The effects on students are important and relevant to the discussion.*
- *Allow time for the Board and Trustees to consider a broader plan that addresses the under-utilization in Norfolk Schools. The reality of declining enrollment is that schools may have to close. Perhaps a school is no longer located close to where students live. Maybe a new school is needed in an area with new population growth. These decisions are more well informed when reviews are done on a broader basis.*
- *Cost saving measures could be implemented during the moratorium: the loss in top-up funding totals roughly \$100,000. This difference could be partially recovered by use of a part-time custodian, part-time principal or by allocating the principal's salary to the other Board responsibilities already in her portfolio (ARC Meeting #3, Page 25), shared teachers, etc.*

As a result of the discussions at Working Committee Meeting #3, a survey was sent home with each individual student of Our Lady of La Salette School for their parents to complete regarding the four options, as presented in this report (Appendix 1). The surveys were returned and tabulated with the results shown in the table below:

Option		Individual Student Survey Results
1	Our Lady of La Salette School closes and all students from Our Lady of La Salette School are accommodated at St. Frances Cabrini School. The Board would consider requests for students to enroll at St. Bernard of Clairvaux School in Waterford. Transportation would be grandfathered for existing Our Lady of La Salette School students and any current siblings for the balance of their elementary academic career.	0
2	Our Lady of La Salette School closes and all students from Our Lady of La Salette School are accommodated at St. Bernard of Clairvaux School in Waterford. The Board would consider requests for students to enroll at St. Frances of Cabrini School in Delhi. Transportation would be grandfathered for existing Our Lady of La Salette School students and any current siblings for the balance of their elementary academic career.	0

Option		Individual Student Survey Results
3	Our Lady of La Salette School closes and the existing boundary is split between St. Frances Cabrini School and St. Bernard of Clairvaux School.	3
4	Request a two-year moratorium to provide time to create a plan in an attempt to increase enrolment and, through a cost recovery model, possibly utilize more physical space at Our Lady of La Salette School.	29

It should be noted that 32 of 37 possible surveys were returned.

With respect to the additional survey question regarding where parents would send their child(ren) should Our Lady of La Salette School close, parents chose to send 21 children to St. Frances Cabrini School in Delhi, 12 children to St. Bernard of Clairvaux School in Waterford and 17 children to Other School.

Final Public Input

Members of the public were provided a final opportunity for consultation and feedback on the PAR and the Final Staff Report during a Public Delegation to the Board of Trustees, which was scheduled on Thursday, March 2, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. Approximately 40 community members attended the meeting to support delegations from five school / community members. The unofficial Minutes from the Public Delegation to the Board of Trustees are included as Appendix 4.

Staff Considerations and Options

School board staff are charged with the responsibility of ensuring that the Board is fiscally prudent in making recommendations that will affect the system as a whole. They reviewed and considered all information gathered throughout the PAR process. They considered the reduction of pupil places, student impact, keeping school communities together, the location of schools to each other, site and building configuration; including constraints and the ability to accommodate additions and/or portables, age of building and Facility Condition Indexes (FCI) and any boundary change(s) that may be required as a result of the option recommended to the trustees.

Based on the preceding, staff in consultation with the ARC presented four options to reflect the feedback received from the community:

Recommendation

Staff are recommending Option 3, which includes the closure of Our Lady of La Salette School. The existing Our Lady of La Salette School boundary will be split between St. Frances Cabrini School and St. Bernard of Clairvaux School. Board staff are recommending this option to the Board of Trustees.

This recommended option serves to benefit the students of Our Lady of La Salette School and the Board in the following ways:

- It reduces the number of grade combinations for curriculum delivery.
- It provides greater student access to extra-curricular activities and events.
- It provides students with greater access to a broader range of peer relationships.
- It provides students with increased opportunity to be exposed to different teachers and teaching styles.
- It provides a solution to the under-utilization of student space at Our Lady of La Salette School.
- It provides funding to the Board such that revenue grants are being maximized.

Survey results suggest that transferring all the Our Lady of La Salette School students to one school is not a desire of the parents should Our Lady of La Salette School be closed.

The following table depicts the forecast utilization and excess capacity of both St. Bernard of Clairvaux School and St. Frances Cabrini School; should the 33 students indicating their choice within the survey attend the school chosen.

Based upon the Watson & Associates Long-Term Capital Plan Demographic Trends, Enrolment Projections and Observations Report, May 2016

Program	2016-17 Projected from Survey	2019-20 Watson Projected	2022-23 Watson Projected	2025-26 Watson Projected
St. Bernard of Clairvaux School Total Enrolment:	172	174	185	187
OTG: 210 Utilization:	.82	.83	.88	.89
Excess Capacity:	38	36	25	23
St. Frances Cabrini School Total Enrolment:	268	276	279	268
OTG: 268 Utilization	1.00	1.03	1.04	1.00
Excess Capacity:	0	-8	-11	0

In this Option, a two-room addition would be required at St. Frances Cabrini School. In addition to regular grade enrolment, the total enrolment of Full Day Kindergarten students warrants an additional purpose built room. This would also provide appropriate space should any of the 17 students surveyed to go to an *Other School* reconsider and choose either St. Bernard of Clairvaux or St. Frances Cabrini Schools. Should this occur, the excess capacity of the respective school in the table above would change.

The survey was released in an anonymous format. As a result, the physical location of the homes of the families responding is unknown. A survey of the families will once again be required such that the actual boundary can be established between St. Frances Cabrini and St. Bernard of Clairvaux Schools. The Board would consider requests for students to enroll at either St. Frances Cabrini or St. Bernard of Clairvaux Schools, if the boundary is placed such that the family is out of bounds to the school of choice. Transportation would be grandfathered for existing Our Lady of La Salette School students and any current siblings for the balance of

their elementary academic career. This school selection request would take place one time only. Should a parent wish to move their child(ren) in any following year, they would be required to do so under normal application to school and transportation procedures.

Trustees should also be aware that as of October 31 for the 2016-17 school year, there were four Grade 8 students, nine Grade 7 students and ten Grade 6 students attending Our Lady of La Salette School. Watson and Associates has provided enrolment forecasts into the future; averaging five students per year enrolling at Our Lady of La Salette School in the Junior Kindergarten level of the Full Day Kindergarten program. This indicates that the School population will increase to 53 students in 2017-18 (exclusive of any in-year enrolments) and then decrease to 49 students in 2018-19 and, once again, decrease to 44 students in 2019-20.

Funding Request for Consolidated Sites

The Ministry of Education provides a number of funding sources to address capital improvements at schools, which have recently undergone an accommodation review to eliminate surplus pupil places. These funding sources include Capital Priorities and School Consolidated Capital programs. As per Ministry of Education [Memorandum 2016:B19, Request for School Consolidation Capital Funding Submissions](#), the Board would be in a position to apply for funding to support projects that address a school board's excess space capacity. The timeline for submission is January 27, 2017 and the Board has submitted a funding application in support of Option 3, which requires a small addition to be built at St Frances Cabrini School. Should the Trustees not approve the recommendation on this report, or choose another option, the Ministry will be notified of the Board's intent to modify or withdraw its submission. The Ministry is aiming to make announcements regarding their School Consolidation Capital funding decisions in early spring 2017.

Timeline and Transition

As stated in the Initial Staff Report and throughout the PAR process, the proposal by staff, and subject to the Board of Trustees' approval, is to close Our Lady of La Salette School at the end of June 2017.

The Board has met all of the requirements of Policy #400.16 and the Ministry of Education *Pupil Accommodation Review Guidelines*.

Should the Board approve the closure of Our Lady of La Salette School such that students would attend both St. Bernard of Clairvaux and St. Frances Cabrini Schools, a School Integration Process would be implemented. The Director, or designate, would establish an Integration Committee immediately following the final decision to close a school. The Integration Committee will plan for and implement the positive integration of students and staff affected by the consolidation into their new school environments. The Chair of the Board will appoint one trustee as the Chair of the Integration Committee and a Superintendent of Education will function as secretary and resource person. Other resource personnel may be called to assist the Integration Committee. Among other responsibilities, the Integration Committee will determine whether a school closing ceremony is appropriate. If a closing ceremony is recommended, the Committee will design the format and program. The Board will provide funds of up to \$500 for the event.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board approves the closure of Our Lady of La Salette School, La Salette, (BSID #745006), on June 30, 2017.

THAT the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board approves the transfer of all Our Lady of La Salette School students to both St. Frances Cabrini School in Delhi and St. Bernard of Clairvaux School in Waterford; beginning September 1, 2017.

THAT an Integration Committee be established, no later than April 6, 2017, to plan for and implement the positive integration of students and staff affected by the consolidation.

TO ALL PARENTS OF OUR LADY OF LA SALETTE STUDENTS

As you may be aware, Our Lady of La Salette (OLOL) is one of three schools currently under an accommodation review. This survey is being sent to you in an attempt to collect the voice and personal choices of Our Lady of La Salette School families.

The ARC Committee has recommended solutions in an attempt to alleviate decreasing enrolment. In order for those solutions to be examined, one of our options is to request a moratorium for 2 years. During this time, we can attempt to increase enrolment at OLOL using some strategies we have come up with. Considerations include opening up a second Norfolk County French Immersion Program at OLOL or renting some school space out to childcare providers (among other things).

Board staff and the Accommodation Review Committee have come up with four viable options. We would like to hear what you think and are asking that you fill out the lower portion of this notice and return it to the school, in the envelope provided, by Monday, Dec. 19 in order to have your voice heard.

ACCOMMODATION REVIEW COMMITTEE OPTIONS

WHICH OPTION WOULD YOU CHOOSE?

- OPTION #1 – Our Lady of La Salette closes and all students from Our Lady of La Salette School are accommodated at St. Frances Cabrini School. The board would consider requests for students to enroll at St. Bernard of Clairvaux School in Waterford. Transportation would be grandfathered for existing Our Lady of La Salette School Students and any current siblings for the balance of their elementary academic career.
- OPTION #2 – Our Lady of La Salette closes and all students from Our Lady of La Salette School are accommodated at St. Bernard of Clairvaux School in Waterford. The board would consider requests for students to enroll at St. Frances of Cabrini School in Delhi. Transportation would be grandfathered for existing Our Lady of La Salette School Students and any current siblings for the balance of their elementary academic career.
- OPTION #3- Our Lady of La Salette School closes and the existing boundary is split between St. Frances Cabrini School and St. Bernard of Clairvaux School. Some students would be accommodated at St. Frances and some students would be accommodated at St. Bernard.
- OPTION #4 – Request a two-year moratorium to provide time to create a plan in an attempt to increase enrolment and, through a cost recovery model, possibly utilize more physical space at Our Lady of La Salette.

IF OUR LADY OF LA SALETTE CLOSES, WHERE WILL YOUR CHILD ATTEND SCHOOL?

- St. Frances Cabrini in Delhi
- St. Bernard of Clairvaux in Waterford
- Other: _____

Number of children in your family attending Our Lady of La Salette _____

For more information about the ARC process and to view supporting documents, please visit the Board's website: <http://www.bhncdsb.ca/page/arc-norfolk>

Linda Luciani

From: bobbiann@kwic.com
Sent: February 3, 2017 3:54 PM
To: Linda Luciani
Subject: Bobbi Ann's presentation from OLOL

Linda, following is my presentation from Wednesday evening.

Have a great weekend.

Bobbi Ann

Good evening my name is Bobbi Ann and I am the mom of Carter, a Grade six student here at OLOL, as well as Addison who is in grade 10 and a graduate of the school.

Our school community has been given just a few months to propose options that would see the doors to this building remain open. With Christmas in the midst of this process, it has simply boiled down to roughly two months. And although short, there have been a number of questions, and ideas thrown on the table.

There are still many questions that have not been satisfied and won't be...but what is truly troubling is that any suggestion or idea that has come out of our school community has been dismissed almost immediately.

I suppose that the board and staff, when their goal is to close a school, wouldn't really find it in their best interest to be helpful. But what I would hope and what our community expects is to be treated fairly. And to this point in time, we have not been treated fairly and we certainly haven't been given enough time.

Rumours of closure with regard to OLOL started several years ago and many of us heard them but there was no word from this board – so they remained just as they were...rumours.

In hindsight, it's hard not to believe that his board started these rumours as a means to an end. What family would sign a child up at a school rumoured to be closing? I have been many places over the years and started conversations with parents who ask what school my son goes to...on more than one occasion the other parent has said, "Oh that's the school my kids are supposed to go to!"

A few years back, when enrolment at OLOL was still quite healthy, we shared a principal with Our Lady of Fatima...from a parent's perspective there was no difference in the quality of service being offered at the school. And today, when enrolment is at an all-time low, we have a full-time principal...why is that?

We have tripled grades, which I may add hasn't served us well in attracting students....and I can't help but think that a board with any business sense would have eliminated the full-time principal in order to accommodate the salary of another teacher to prevent at least one triple grade.

This board, in my opinion, has put great strain on the teachers here at the school and they have all done a fantastic job despite the very poor situation they have found themselves thrown into. If I as a parent, and all the parents and grandparents here tonight, felt that our school was inferior in any way, we would have taken them elsewhere.

We are not simple people. Some of our province's brightest people work the land, harvest the crops and help to solve some of biggest problems. You have seen the work of some of the parents and families from our school....they have done a great job pulling apart your falsified numbers. Families from our community have probably inundated your staff with the toughest questions yet that you have seen in an ARC process.

I am confident that if we are given a moratorium, that we can come up with a plan that will save OLOL and this community. The will and the knowledge is here.

This school is run efficiently. It is in good shape, costs minimal dollars to operate on an annual basis. It is my understanding that an addition on St. Frances, which is planned whether our students attend the Delhi school or not, will cost about \$1 million. We all know that's a moving target and by the time shovels are in the ground that number probably grows to about \$1.5 million which is more than 10-years operating costs at OLOL.

This seems a bit strange, perhaps even hare-brained -- much like the Ministry of Education's plan to spend almost \$1.5 billion by election time next year in order to save \$236 million. Imagine if we ran our households in this manner?

We are not against the school board making changes to St. Frances but we don't want it done at the expense of our school and students. Sadly, this process pits communities against one another. The board has heard it said that parents from OLOL will shop around for schools if you shutter these doors. Tax dollars don't have to stay with your

board and that is not a given. Rural folks know how to dig their heels in...the diocese can let you in on what happened when they pit two churches against each other.

I ask, what is the hurry? Why would you rush this process through when you are aware you are working with formulas that are flawed? Why wouldn't you wait to see what next summer's election may bring? Perhaps it will bring a new government that sees the benefit of small and rural schools.... sees the benefit of children attending school in their own community...supporting that community.

The school board is in place to represent what is best for the people it serves. You work for us and yet somehow for the past few months you have us all working for you now in what seems like a futile process.

You present numbers and say the Ministry is short-changing our rural schools. And yet, when I asked you at the first public meeting if you'd write to the Minister asking for more funding, you said "no."

If this was truly a fair process, our board should have told us upfront that this was a foregone conclusion. And if it's not a foregone conclusion then you all owe it to this community to give us more time and when we bring you valid suggestions that you actually digest them instead of spit them out.

You may want to have a look at the Bluewater board whereby an independent review of the Watson report turned up some shoddy work and findings...making schools in Chesley and Paisley look much worse on paper than they are. Funny isn't it??

Keep in mind you all represent a school board that has a slogan of Excellence in Learning...Living in Christ. Has this been a fair process, have you all been telling the truth? Have you all lived in Christ throughout this ARC?

It saddens me to hear the information Mr. Grice presented tonight done so in such a cavalier way. Formality is what it sounds like.

Trustees, you come up for re-election in 18 months...this community can organize as you have seen and we won't forget who was helpful and who wasn't. A two-year moratorium would get you through that election now wouldn't it?

CAROL
 AMANDA



Dear Members of the Review Board:

The Norfolk Federation of Agriculture as part of its parent organization, OFA, represents the interests of 36,000 farm families and their farm businesses across Ontario, and more than 160,000 people that work on farms to support Ontario agriculture. We also speak indirectly for the thousands of Ontarians who live and work in rural Ontario supplying farm inputs and processing and distributing our agricultural products. We are an advocacy organization – working to ensure farm families have a sustainable future in a viable business environment. This means we work on issues that directly affecting farmers, and also issues that affect our rural communities. This means were are deeply affected by the current trend to close rural school like Our Lady of La Salette under current review.

The Norfolk Federation of Agriculture is very concerned with the status of our communities – the departure of our youth and families to opportunities in urban areas is hurting rural Norfolk and presents us all with many challenges. We are working to reverse this trend, but a necessary pre-condition for bringing families to revitalize our communities and to support the families that form our communities is a solid school system. To abuse a farm metaphor, this is a chicken and egg dilemma. However, we believe that we can revitalize our communities and, in turn, fill our schools by maintaining rural schools.

Schools are an important part of every community. But in rural Norfolk, schools play a very big role. They aren't just a place for learning. School buildings are used for community social events, local sports activities, and by service and community groups. When you close a rural school, you close it off for the entire community, not just the students.

Susan MacKenzie, spokesperson for the Ontario Alliance Against School Closures was recently quoted saying: 'We're paying a steep price to cuts in education. It is time to see beyond the boundaries of Toronto and the GTA.' The NFA agrees with the Alliance. A view beyond urban centres is essential for rural economic development and for our school system. In or view, the "steep price" Susan MacKenzie talks about has not be adequately calculated.

The Alliance and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) have both called for additional analysis of the social and economic impact of closing rural schools. We need to account for the full impact and "cost" on students and the entire community when a school closes.

Students will have to travel outside their communities, to go to larger schools in urban areas. This is a cost. The extra time spent on busses means students may not be able to

be part of after school activities, and may not be able to have part-time jobs or take on farm chores. This represents costs. Long bus rides mean our children get home late to try to complete homework on unreliable internet. This is a cost to student success. All schools depends on volunteers, and when you bus students into urban centres, you will have lost the opportunities for local volunteers to support their community.

NFA believes the review process used to determine rural schools closures is flawed. We agree with the Alliance and Association of Ontario Municipalities that the accommodation Review Committee process, and resulting guidelines, need to be redone. We also believe the funding formula must be reviewed. We recognize budgets are tight – so what if we think differently in the short term? What if school buses pick up students in towns and bring them to rural schools. The routes would be much shorter and our new rural students would realize a once in a lifetime experience!

When you close a rural school, you are closing opportunities for the entire community.

Yours truly,

Bob Vogalzung

President

Norfolk Federation of Agriculture



**Special Meeting of the Board
Thursday, March 2, 2017 ♦ 6:00 p.m.
Boardroom**

Trustees:

Present: Rick Petrella (Chair), Dan Dignard (Vice Chair), Cliff Casey, Bill Chopp, Carol Luciani, Bonnie McKinnon

Absent: Rosalin Dubois (Student Trustee)

Senior Administration:

Chris N. Roehrig (Director of Education & Secretary), Thomas R. Grice (Superintendent of Business & Treasurer), Patrick Daly, Michelle Shypula and Leslie Telfer (Superintendent of Education)

1. Opening Business

1.1 Opening Prayer and Welcome

Chair Petrella opened the meeting with prayer. He welcomed members of the public and expressed the Board’s appreciation for the work completed by the Accommodation Review Committee, the community and Board staff.

He noted that the main reason for this meeting was to accept input from the community regarding the Accommodation Review in Norfolk County. He also noted that tonight’s meeting was in compliance with the Board’s *Pupil Accommodation Review* policy. Presentations to the Board are for receipt only and no decision regarding the accommodation review will be made this evening.

Delegates were asked to keep their presentations consistent with the core values of the Board. Delegations were permitted one presentation, with a maximum presentation time of 15 minutes. He informed delegates that Chris Roehrig, Director of Education, will be timing the presentations and an alarm will sound after 14 minutes. Delegates will then have one more minute to summarize their remarks and conclude their presentation. He noted that following their delegation, trustees may ask questions, through the Chair, for clarification regarding their presentation and delegates were asked to respond to any questions through the Chair. Chair Petrella noted that it was his responsibility to preserve order and he reminded delegates that they should remain courteous and keep their remarks to the subject matter.

Chair Petrella noted that following this meeting, a summary regarding the delegations will be compiled and attached to the Final Staff Report, which will be presented at a Special Meeting of the Board on Thursday, March 23rd at 7:00 p.m.

1.2 Attendance – as noted above.



1.3 Approval of the Agenda

Moved by: Bonnie McKinnon
Seconded by: Cliff Casey

THAT the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board approves the agenda of the Special Meeting of the Board of March 2, 2017.

Carried

1.4 Declaration of Interest – Nil

2. Delegations – Pupil Accommodation Review: Norfolk County

2.1 Amanda Bakker

Amanda Bakker, the mother of a child who attends Our Lady of La Salette School, asked trustees to reconsider the options for the School. She thanked trustees for the opportunity to speak to this matter and noted that it was an honour and humbling responsibility to talk to them. Ms. Bakker outlined the reasons why, in her opinion, the School should remain open:

- The accommodation review process and the Ministry’s funding model, which were changed in 2015, are flawed, as the process does not consider the school’s value to the community and the local economy. Schools are more than bricks and mortar. The local economy and social aspects of the community should be part of this model.
- The school community was given only a matter of months, two months; with Christmas holidays in the middle, to educate themselves on the accommodation review process, which was not enough time for the school / community to create a plan to keep the school open. Only one out of eight schools in Norfolk County are under an accommodation review. The current process does not allow enough time for meaningful community consultation. The community wants a process where parents and communities do not have to fight to be heard.
- The new funding guidelines are not real. They are flawed. The Auditor General has said that the emphasis on funding should be on renewal needs and maintaining existing schools. The current funding model provides school boards with more funds for new builds rather than fixing old schools. By getting old schools off the books, school boards get more money.
- We are asking the individuals, who have the authority to make decisions, how can we fix the funding model? Trustees can decide if a school will close or they can decide if the process is broken or flawed. We are asking you to make this an election issue. We are asking you for time to address these concerns and address the government. If you decide to close Our Lady of La Salette School and if the accommodation review process and the funding model change to address the above matters, then it will be too late for Our Lady of La Salette School.
- Our Lady of La Salette School is a rural school in a farming community. Farm land is protected and that plays a big part in the School’s declining enrolment. Rural communities are not going to see huge growth. Throughout this process, excess capacity has been raised, but the situations for why this excess capacity exists are not relevant. Only three out of eight schools in Norfolk County were involved in this accommodation process. Why not all the schools? Projections indicate that declining enrolment and underutilization of schools will be an issue across all of Norfolk County. By excluding the broader County from this accommodation review, how can parents and the community have confidence that closing the School is the best solution?



- We can do better. With time and the proper resources, parents can address the bigger picture.
- The proposed solution does not fix capacity issues at the schools included in the accommodation review. Two of the schools are expected to have increased enrolment. Why were they included in the review when they are already full? St. Joseph’s School was not included in the accommodation review and it is closer to Our Lady of La Salette School than St. Bernard of Clairvaux School. The Board will be in the same position again soon. School consolidation will not solve the utilization problem. More school closures in Norfolk County will happen in the future.
- The current accommodation process does not treat everyone fairly. The process must consider all the factors and address the underlying issues. The process needs to be more collaborative, look at the bigger picture and include input from the County, the communities, etc.
- The Initial Staff Report says that the reasons for the closing of Our Lady of La Salette School are that the School is experiencing adverse impacts on learning opportunities for students because of declining enrolment and low per grade population. We have asked what the adverse learning effects are and evidence to support this claim? Another reason is that the consolidation of schools could enhance program and learning opportunities for students. There has been no evidence to support this. There are other ways to improve programming. The options require more consideration, i.e., digital class arrangements. Increased parental involvement is a key factor in student learning. There have been no plans, which support that students would be better off at another school. According to the *Every Voice Counts* survey, the top concerns at St. Bernard of Clairvaux and St. Frances Cabrini Schools are bullying and safety. Are you asking parents to send their children to these big schools with these big issues? Another reason is that three grades have been placed into one class. Parents and teachers asked for fewer grades per classroom and this request was not granted. Other reasons for closure are that combined grades have still resulted in small class sizes and the school is still underutilized. This matter is part of a larger issue of school capacity in all Norfolk County schools.
- Parents have not been given enough time to increase the enrolment at Our Lady of La Salette School and they have not been given enough information to support the closure of the School.

Question: Trustee Casey noted that the presenter referred to a digital class arrangement. He asked if the presenter could explain a digital class arrangement?

Answer The presenter noted that if there are few Grade 5 students in a particular class, a teacher could Skype these students into another classroom with a larger number of Grade 5 students to receive instruction.

2.2 Matthew Malcolm and Jeannine Krupicz

Matthew Malcolm, a community member of the Our Lady of La Salette School community and Jeannine Krupicz is Mr. Malcolm’s mother-in-law and the Community Representative on the Our Lady of La Salette Accommodation Review Committee. Together, they wanted to speak to some of the unanswered questions regarding the accommodation review as they felt it would be catastrophic to close the School:



- What are the impacts of long bus rides on children? The reality and research shows that students participate in few non-essential activities because have to get the bus, they experience lower grades, they have poor levels of fitness, they participate in fewer social activities and they have poor study habits.
- They asked trustees to consider if the proposed bus ride times were fair and reasonable, especially if junior kindergarten students may have to ride the bus for 31 minutes to greater than 75 minutes every day? Some of the impacts of longer bus rides are that students may skip breakfast because they have to catch a bus, parents are more likely to keep a child who is not feeling well home because it may be more difficult to bring the child home during the school day, long bus rides may affect a child's sleep and personal care. Studies show that bussing policies are made without considering the effects of long bus rides on student learning.
- They also asked trustees to consider the distances between Our Lady of La Salette School to St. Frances Cabrini, St. Bernard of Clairvaux and Teeterville Public Schools. They questioned whether the current boundaries were fair, practical and equitable?
- An article in the December 2016 edition of the *Toronto Sun* questioned whether school size was important? The article shows that small schools can work. Parents have shown a willingness for this school to work. Rural communities are speaking up.
- They highlighted some of the positive features of small schools, such as greater sense of belonging, parents and staff working together, higher levels of participation in extra-curricular activities, higher attendance rates and less behaviour problems.
- The impact of the closure of the School on the community was discussed. Most of the major community buildings are on the main street. Children ride their bikes and hang out at the local general store. The church was the staple of the community and the School has become a place for many people to gather for events to support the growth of students and to celebrate. The School has been open for 50 years and neighbouring county students have been welcomed and accepted. Trustees were asked to please keep the community history alive. A major selling point for a rural community is a school nearby. By closing Our Lady of La Salette School, trustees will be eliminating a community-growing feature. Why would a parent purchase a home in La Salette when their children will be bussed outside the community? Schools keep rural communities united. Education is only a small part of why they are there. If the school is closed, what is left to bring students and the community together?
- They noted that population trends in Norfolk County showed population growth for the next 15 years. Single and semi-detached homes will be built throughout Norfolk County and rural communities.
- They asked trustees to take a step back, reflect and determine if closing our Lady of La Salette School is what the Board really needs to do? The Board, the School and community have to work together to remove the label. If the label is removed, students will come out of the woodwork. La Salette is a great community who will work with you to make the School viable for the students and the community.
- A quote from the University of Guelph states that small schools are worth saving. They urged trustees to support a moratorium and undertake a meaningful and fruitful discussion with the community.



2.3 Bernie Byer

Mr. Byer is a business owner in La Salette, who is very concerned about the reckless spending by the Ministry of Education and the Board's willingness to assist the Ministry in this matter. He felt that sometimes you see something that is so wrong and so stupid that you have to speak up:

- Mr. Byers thanked trustees for paying attention. He noted that at some ARC meetings, community members have felt that they have not been given the attention they deserved.
- He noted that he spent 60 years in customer service and returned to La Salette for his children, who attended schools of 300 to 600 students and recess was taken in shifts.
- He noted that trustees have a tough job and asked why there was a big push to close the School, especially when the funding formula and the funding process was stupid?
- He noted that there was a negative atmosphere hanging over Our Lady of La Salette School, which contributed to the decline in enrolment. He noted that the community was only recently informed that the accommodation review process began in April 2016, but only received word about the ARC in September 2016. He commented that the community could have assisted in the April accommodation process had they been informed about it.
- He felt that the funding formula was flawed and did not focus on the differences between urban and rural schools. He was also very concerned about the unnecessary spending of the public's tax dollars. At a recent public meeting, it was noted that there would be an annual operational shortfall of \$110,000 at Our Lady of La Salette School, but the Board was suggesting spending \$2 million to build an addition to St. Frances Cabrini School. He questioned the logic of spending to build a new addition versus spending to keep an older school open. He also noted that a Toronto school board, sold a seven-acre property for \$121 million and the Ministry of Education then gave the school board an additional \$20 million to build a new school on the very same property.
- He asked trustees to wait to make their decision, and get it right this time, by reconsidering the use of long-range planning numbers and by considering the use of census numbers, which will show growth in Norfolk County. He asked trustees for a moratorium regarding the closing of Our Lady of La Salette School.
- Across the province, many parents, communities, municipalities and MPPs have urged the Minister of Education to implement a moratorium on school closures and to change the accommodation review process and the funding model.
- Many community members have spent countless hours conducting research, have had many sleepless nights and have put much effort into their presentations. He urged trustees not to write-off community members as country bumpkins. They are willing to help.
- He noted that community members understood the difficult position of the trustees. They are charged with the task of ensuring that the community has a direct way to express their views regarding education decisions and that they play an indispensable role in preserving the community's democratic heritage.
- He asked trustees to consider a moratorium until school boards receive definitive answers regarding possible changes to accommodation review processes for rural schools and the funding formula. He commented that the community would be ready to assist the Board when these possible changes occur.



2.4 **Bobbi Ann Brady**

Bobby Ann Brady is a mother of a child who attends Our Lady of La Salette School as well as a child who has graduated from Our Lady of La Salette School, who expressed her views regarding the accommodation process:

- Ms. Brady thanked ARC Committee members for their time and involvement in the school community and she asked trustees to implement a moratorium.
- She noted that the school community was given only a few months to save the School, and with Christmas in the middle of the process, the time has roughly worked-out to approximately two months.
- Many questions have been raised and many ideas have been expressed by the community, which have not been satisfactorily addressed or they have been dismissed. What the community expected was to be treated fairly.
- Several years ago, many parents and community members heard the rumours about the School closing, but because there was no word from the Board, they believed them to be only rumours. In hindsight, it is hard to believe that that the rumours weren't a *means to an end* as what family would register their child(ren) at a school that is rumoured to be closing?
- The community has recently been made aware that a meeting was held for potential community partners. If the community had known about this mystery meeting, they could have encouraged partners to attend the meeting and perhaps contributed to the meeting. She questioned why Our Lady of La Salette School was the only school listed for potential partnerships?
- Many questions have been raised regarding why the School has a full-time principal instead of a part-time principal? Several years ago, Our Lady of La Salette School shared a principal with St. Frances Cabrini School. Today, when enrollment is at an all-time low, it has a full-time principal. The quality of the School principal has never been an issue.
- The community felt that triple grades have not helped in attracting new families to the School. From a business sense, would it not have been more advantages to add another teacher to the school to prevent triple grades than to have a full-time principal? Triple grades have put a great strain on the teachers of Our Lady of La Salette School and they have done a fantastic job.
- The Our Lady of La Salette community are not simple people. Families have done a significant amount of work and they have inundated Board staff with some of the toughest questions yet. If the School is given a moratorium, community members will develop a plan to save the School and the community. The will and the knowledge is here.
- Consultations regarding rural schools have taken place. School boards have been asked to seek out other more fruitful alternatives, which do not disrupt the lives of rural families. Shared facilities agreements and ways to find cost efficiencies within school systems have been proposed. The government has not recognized the need for rural schools.
- The Ontario Federation of Agriculture believes that the school accommodation review process is flawed and closing rural schools impacts children and families and communities.
- Our Lady of La Salette School is in good shape. An addition to St. Frances Cabrini School will cost approximately \$1.2 million, which will likely climb to \$1.5 million, which is more than ten-years' operating costs at Our Lady of La Salette School. The community is not against the Board making changes to St. Frances Cabrini School, but they ask that the Board not make these changes on the backs of Our Lady of La Salette School. Perhaps the Board's special education staff could set-up offices using the excess space in Our Lady of La Salette School?



- She advised the trustees that the Our Lady of La Salette School community will shop around for schools and their tax dollars may not have to stay with the Board. She reminded them that a provincial election will be held in 2018 and the community will not forget who was helpful and who was not.
- She questioned why trustees would rush this process when the funding formula is flawed?
- The Minister of Education has commented that school boards are provided enough funding to keep rural schools open and school boards have commented that this is not true. Who is telling the truth?
- At the First Public Meeting, Ms. Brady asked if the Board would write a letter to the Minister of Education to ask for more funding and the answer was *no*. She commented that all the community wanted was for the Board to work with them. Was the closure of the School a foregone conclusion?
- She noted that trustees may want to take a look at the recent accommodation review at the Bluewater Board, whereby an independent review of their Watson Report uncovered poor findings and made some schools in their Board look worse on paper than they really were.
- She commented that if trustees wanted to keep taxes in the Board, the community is asking them to stop stacking the odds against them and find a way to make Our Lady of La Salette School viable. She commented that the Board's slogan is *Excellence in Learning, Living in Christ*. She questioned whether the accommodation review process has been a fair process and if the Board has been telling the truth?
- She asked trustees to support a moratorium and return Our Lady of La Salette School to the vibrant school it once was.

Question: Trustee Casey asked what was the suggested length of the moratorium?
 Answer: The presenter responded that a two-year moratorium was suggested.

2.5 Helen Mels

Helen Mels is the mother of a child who attends Our Lady of La Salette School who shared her family's story:

- Ms. Mels' family are third-generation farmers who live in the boundary of Our Lady of La Salette School.
- They began a thinking about a school for their daughter in 2014. At that time, they lived in the St. Frances Cabrini School boundary, however, they felt that a small, rural school, a school with a French language program or a Catholic school would be best for their daughter. The French language school was a public school and it was located far away from their home, so they decided that they wanted their children to go to a Catholic school so that faith and religion were a part of their daily lives. They also decided to drive their daughter to Our Lady of La Salette School and registered her at the School in January 2015.
- After making their decision, people began voicing their concern regarding the possible closure of Our Lady of La Salette School. The next closest Catholic school to their home was St. Frances Cabrini School, however, when she talked to parents from the School, they expressed their concern regarding bullying and behavioural problems. They also commented about the high academic ratings the School achieved as well. Being a victim of bullying herself, the concerns of parents struck a chord with her.
- When she asked about Our Lady of La Salette School, many people would tell her that the School wouldn't be open for much longer, but they also made many positive comments about the School as well.



**Brant Haldimand Norfolk
Catholic District School Board**

Unofficial Minutes

Catholic Education Centre
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- She read an article, which stated that when new funding policies are implemented, the policies do not look to see the positive effects of funding, but they look to see how education dollars are being used productively.
- When they registered their daughter at Our Lady of La Salette School, they voiced their concerns regarding the school closing and were told that there was no need for concern. However, the rumours of closure were always looming in the back of her mind. She planned on joining the School Council and getting down to the business of increasing enrolment, when a health issue forced her to abandon these plans. She trusted that the Board was doing all they could and that they had the best interests of the School in mind.
- One year later, their worst fears were realized -- Our Lady of La Salette School was faced with potential closure and they began to fight for the survival of the School and the education their children deserved.
- Ms. Mels attended a Working Committee Meeting and was appalled with the information she received, so she spent many hours conducting research and talking to people in communities who were in the same situation. She quickly became aware that the closing of rural schools was a province-wide issue. She contacted her local MPP, who was aware of the issue and was in agreement that a two-year moratorium was the best solution so that the Pupil Accommodation Review Guidelines could be rewritten. She also contacted the Mayor of Norfolk County, who brought the matter to the attention of the councilors, who passed a motion for a two-year moratorium on the matter and she wrote to the Board's trustees.
- While conducting her research, Ms. Mels discovered that a new process had been developed, which fast tracked the timelines of events for the accommodation review. She felt that this new process allowed the ARC to present different accommodation options, but the parents and community are not given enough time to properly research and implement the options.
- She felt that given the opportunity for a two-year moratorium, the Our Lady of La Salette School community could become innovators and set a precedent for underutilized rural schools.
- She noted that Norfolk County is primarily composed of agricultural-zoned land and a plan should be established to deal with decreasing enrolment. She felt the Board should have used resources, like the Watson Report, to create plans for enrolment and underutilization of schools when the report was released. She felt that the Board should have asked the School Council and the community to be involved in the process. The Board should have taken a more proactive approach to the situation, rather than a reactive approach.
- Ms. Mels commented that her family, like many others at Our Lady of La Salette School, are not moving elsewhere as farming is their livelihood. She felt that by closing the School the students were being punished by having longer bus rides to the other schools.
- She asked trustees to set a precedent by giving the School a two-year moratorium so that the parents and community could properly implement a strategy to keep the School open.

Conclusion

Chair Petrella thanked presenters for their delegations and the work, which had gone into their presentations. He also thanked them for bringing a rural community perspective to the accommodation review process. He noted that it was now time for trustees to process and digest the presentations and the information submitted and make a decision on March 23, 2017.



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3. Adjournment

Moved by: Carol Luciani

Seconded by: Bonnie McKinnon

THAT the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board adjourns the Special Meeting of the Board of March 2, 2017.

Carried

Next Meeting: Tuesday, March 28, 2017, 7:00 p.m. - Boardroom

1. Introduction
2. The flawed funding and Pupil Accommodation Review (PAR) models:
 - a. Lack of consideration for non-financial factors
 - b. Timeline is essentially two months, majority of input is from school board
 - i. "We want a board accommodation review to be one where parents and communities won't have to fight to be heard, where they won't have to struggle to get the information that they need and where they won't feel that the process has been rushed," Ms. Wynne said. "We want the process to be real."¹
 - c. Auditor general said two-thirds of its capital funding should be on renewal needs and maintaining existing schools vs building schools²
 - i. Reward for closing newer buildings/ trade existing buildings for new classrooms. (Funding expansion through consolidation)
 - d. How do we fix it?
 - i. It's up to YOU!
3. Looking at the bigger picture:
 - a. Rural county=rural schools
 - b. Declining enrollment and under-utilization across Norfolk County
 - i. Excluding other schools from the solution, a narrow solution to

School Name	On-The-Ground Capacity	Year 1 2016/ 2016	Year 5 2019/ 2020	Year 10 2024/ 2026	Year 15 2029/ 2030	Difference % (+/-) 2016 - 29
Our Lady of Fatima School	141	73%	66%	62%	64%	-9%
Our Lady of LaSalette School	187	44%	33%	30%	31%	-12%
Sacred Heart School	294	70%	57%	50%	52%	-18%
St. Bernard of Clairvaux School	210	81%	77%	87%	85%	4%
St. Cecilia School	190	79%	68%	62%	67%	-12%
St. Frances Cabrini School	288	91%	95%	93%	93%	2%
St. Joseph's School	448	101%	95%	94%	98%	-6%
St. Michael's School	184	84%	55%	50%	49%	-15%
Total Elementary Enrollment	2,304	80%	73%	71%	72%	-8%

Source: Initial Staff Report

a wide problem.

- c. There will be more closures:
The Board has stated that student consolidation at other schools will solve this issue [of underutilization]." (ARC Working Meeting #4, Agenda, pg. 57).

¹ <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/ontario-lifts-school-closing-ban/article20416325/> -- Published Wednesday, Nov. 01, 2006

² "Moratorium Calls Renewed for Rural School Closures", Weekly News, Jan. 23 2017

4. Reasons for recommending closure of OLOL:
 - a. Lack of learning opportunities
 - i. No evidence provided
 - ii. More programs/ clubs available at OLOL
 - b. Improved learning opportunities and programming
 - i. What the research says about consolidation and programming
 - ii. Consolidation leads to less parental involvement
 - iii. Does a declining enrollment environment require new and creative solutions
 - iv. "Every Voice Counts" survey results: bullying, safety concerns at St. Frances and St. Bernard's
 - c. Three grades in one class
 - i. Alternate arrangement was proposed by teachers that aligned with classrooms in other Board schools
 - ii. There are other options available to address this
 - d. Small class sizes, even with combined grades
 - i. Norfolk-wide under-utilization: more school closures
 - e. 75% or less utilization
 - i. Under-capacity schools across Norfolk County
 - ii. Recommended solution doesn't address overall utilization
5. Summary/ conclusion
 - a. The PAR and funding models are very flawed.
 - b. Low enrollment at OLOL is a small part of a bigger picture of under-utilization across Norfolk County.
 - c. Reasons for recommending closure of OLOL have not been supported with evidence and parental concerns have not been addressed. Parents don't have enough information to support recommendation.
 - d. Community is asking Trustees to keep OLOL open.

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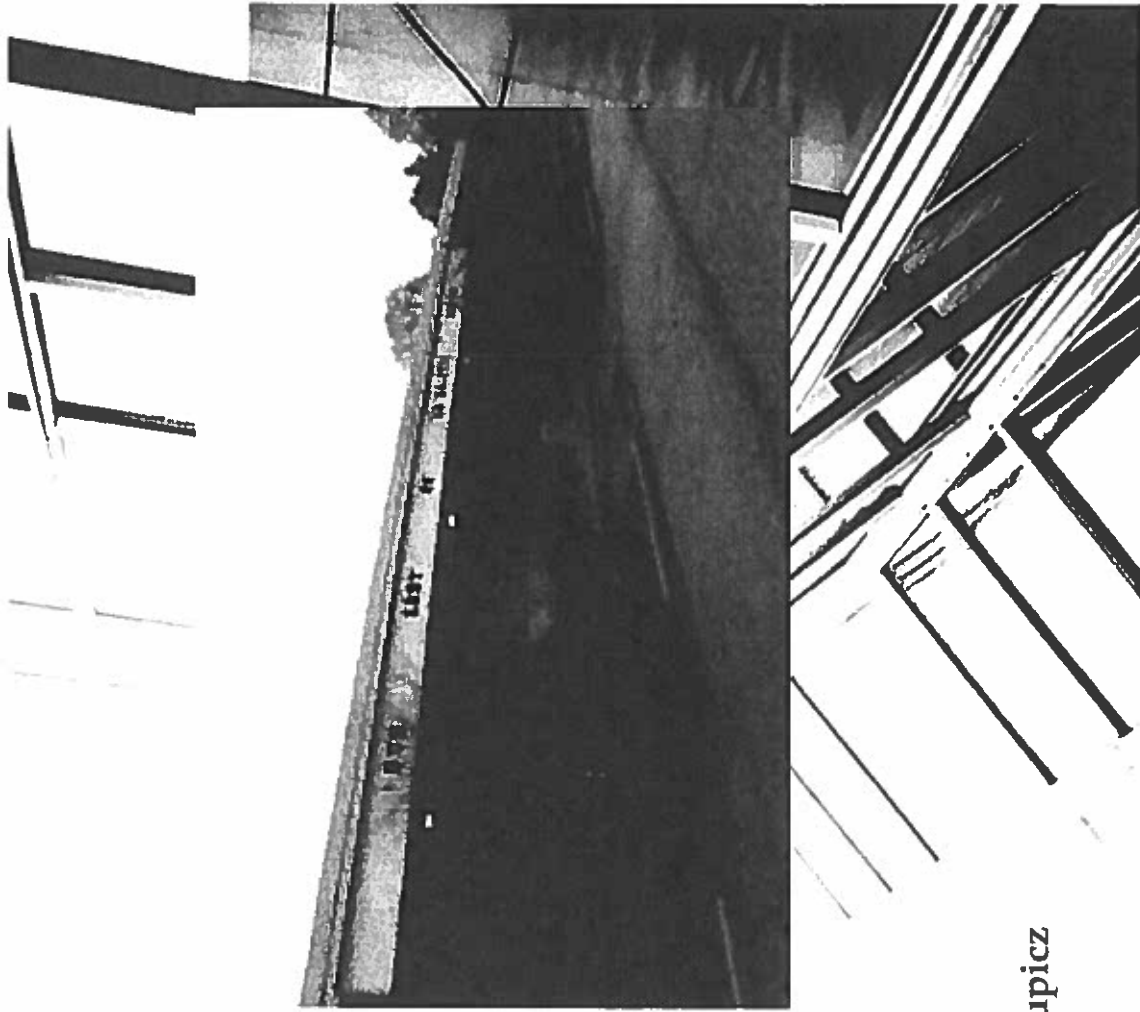
The Fate of Our Lady of La Salette School

The Unanswered Questions...

Presentation to the BHNCDSB Trustees

Thursday March 2, 2017

Presenters: Matthew Malcolm, Jeannine Krupicz



Topics for Discussion...

- Bus Rides?
- Size of School?
- Impact on the Community?
- Population Trends in Norfolk County?
- Recommendations?
- What We Do Actually Know...



Bus Rides... Questions to Ask?

- 1) What is the impact of long bus rides on children?
- 2) What is the effect of long bus rides on families?
- 3) What are the true costs of bus rides? (including the cost of child travel time)?



Research on Bus Rides?

- *It's pretty scarce... but what does it say?*
(Zars, 96,98):
 - Students participate in fewer non-essential activities
 - Lower Grades
 - Poorer levels of fitness
 - Fewer social activities
 - Poor study habits

Inclusion is not simply about physical proximity. It is about intentionally planning for the success of all students.

thinkinclusive.us

ARE THESE TIMES FAIR AND REASONABLE?

Future Ride Times (am and pm) for Our Lady of La Salette Students to
St. Frances Cabrini School

Component	0-15 Minutes	16-30 Minutes	31-45 Minutes	46-60 Minutes	61-75 Minutes	> 75 Minutes
AM	4	15	13	6	0	0
Noon	0	0	0	0	0	0
PM	4	17	13	6	0	0
Total	8	32	26	12	0	0

This option would necessitate the addition of a mini-bus to existing compliment serving
Our Lady of La Salette School students to St. Frances Cabrini School.

Future Ride Times (am and pm) for Our Lady of La Salette Students to
St. Bernard of Clairvaux School

Component	0-15 Minutes	16-30 Minutes	31-45 Minutes	46-60 Minutes	61-75 Minutes	> 75 Minutes
AM	1	16	15	6	2	0
Noon	0	0	0	0	0	0
PM	1	11	18	12	0	0
Total	2	27	33	18	2	0

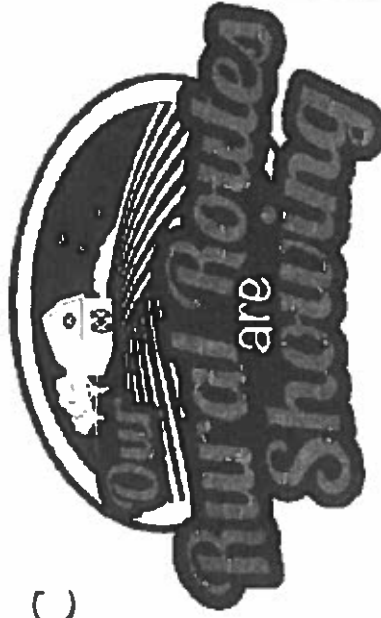
This option would necessitate the addition of a mini-bus to the existing compliment of busses
serving Our Lady of La Salette School students.

Will They STAY or Will They GO?

OLOL to St. Frances Cabrini... 6.6 km

OLOL to Teeterville Public School (PUBLIC BOARD)... 9.8 km

OLOL to St. Bernard's... 19.1 km



Are the present boundaries... Fair, Practical, Equitable?

What is the TRUE COST Impact on Kids?

- Negative impact on lifestyle (i.e. skipping breakfast)
- Parents may be more likely to keep a child who is not feeling well home, knowing that if the child becomes sicker it may be difficult to see that the child gets home.
- Sleep?
- Personal care?

“Bussing policy choices have been made and expanded without regard to the impact on the central enterprise of schools which is **STUDENT LEARNING**” (Zars, 1998:6).



School Size...Is It Important?

"Education funding reform can save small Ontario schools from closing"

Appeared in Toronto Sun, December 9, 2016

- ... "Perhaps even more disconcerting in the school closure discussion is the widespread notion that schools must be large to keep their doors open. Not true. Almost half of Ontario's independent schools (49.3 per cent) have fewer than 50 students and an additional 28.7 per cent has between 50 and 149 students."
- **If more than three of every four independent schools in Ontario can exist with fewer than 150 students, small schools must be viable. We should reject calls for shuttering small schools and shipping students out.**

Deani Van Pelt, Fraser Institute



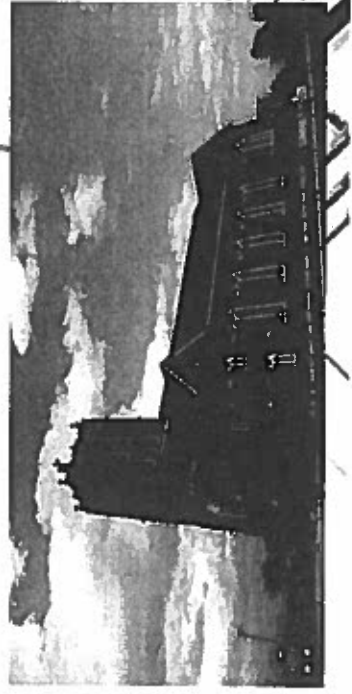
Small School Size... Let's Reinforce the Good!

- Enhancement of personal and academic self concepts of students
- Greater sense of belonging and less feelings of alienation
- More positive attitudes of teachers and administrators
- Significantly higher participation rates in extracurricular activities
- Higher attendance rates
- Less Behaviour problems
- Values, values, values!



What Impact Does This Have on the La Salette Community?

- What happens to this rural community when consolidation results in the closing of the only local school?
- Will this community lose its economic vitality?
- Will the community become less cohesive?
- This school is fundamental in promoting social distinction and community identity.
- This school is the source of a significant number of community events.
- The school UNITES this community of La Salette.



Population Trends in Norfolk County...

A. THE POPULATION OF NORFOLK COUNTY IS FORECAST TO GROW TO NEARLY 70,000 IN 2031

Norfolk County's population is forecast to grow from nearly 65,000 in 2011 to just over 70,000 in 2031, adding approximately 5,000 residents over the 2011 to 2031 period, representing population growth of 8% over the 20 year horizon.

- The results of the population forecast are shown in Table 11 below.

Table 11
Historical and Forecast Population
Norfolk County, 2001 to 2041

Year	Census Population	Net Change	Growth Rate	Total Population*	Net Change	Growth Rate
2001	60,850	-	-	63,670	-	-
2006	62,580	1,730	2.8%	64,600	930	1.5%
2011	63,170	590	0.9%	64,720	120	0.2%
2016	63,670	500	0.8%	65,240	520	0.8%
2021	64,840	1,170	1.8%	66,440	1,200	1.8%
2026	66,580	1,740	2.7%	68,230	1,790	2.7%
2031	68,340	1,760	2.6%	70,030	1,800	2.6%
2036	69,220	880	1.3%	70,930	900	1.3%
2041	69,580	360	0.5%	71,300	370	0.5%
2011-2041		6,410	10.1%		6,580	10.2%

* Includes Census Net Undercoverage of 2.41%.

Source: Henson Consulting Ltd. based on Statistics Canada Census, National Household Survey and Annual Demographic Statistics.

Population Trends in Norfolk County...

Norfolk County Forecast Comparison		Table 12
Forecast Source	Norfolk 2026 Forecast Population	
Norfolk County Official Plan Hemson DC Background Study Current Hemson Forecast Ministry of Finance (est. from Haldimand-Norfolk)	74,300 66,500 68,300 61,900	

Table 16 Historical and Forecast Housing Units by Type Norfolk County, 2001 to 2041					
Year	Singles	Semis	Rows	Apartments	Total
2001	19,310	570	460	2,580	22,930
2006	20,250	620	540	2,840	24,240
2011	21,040	530	720	2,770	25,060
2016	21,640	540	760	2,870	25,820
2021	22,380	560	810	2,950	26,690
2026	23,150	590	860	3,010	27,620
2031	23,900	610	890	3,120	28,520
2036	24,600	640	920	3,240	29,390
2041	25,420	670	940	3,430	30,470
Growth 2011-2031	2,860	80	170	350	3,460
Growth 2011-2041	4,380	140	240	660	5,410

Source: Hemson Consulting Ltd. based on Statistics Canada Census, National Household Survey and Annual Demographic Statistics

Table 14 Historical and Forecast Total Housing Units Norfolk County, 2001 to 2041			
Year	Units	Growth	Growth Rate
2001	22,930		
2006	24,240	1,310	5.7%
2011	25,060	820	3.4%
2016	25,820	760	3.0%
2021	26,690	870	3.4%
2026	27,620	930	3.5%
2031	28,520	900	3.3%
2036	29,390	870	3.1%
2041	30,470	1,080	3.7%
2011-2031		3,460	13.8%
2011-2041		5,410	21.6%

Population Trends in Norfolk County...

Table 19
Historical and Forecast Share of Housing Growth by Urban Area
Norfolk County, 2006 to 2041

Urban Area	2006-11	2011-16	2016-41
Simcoe	31.6%	32.0%	32.0%
Port Dover	29.4%	32.0%	32.0%
Delhi	9.0%	6.0%	6.0%
Waterford	8.8%	13.0%	14.0%
Port Rowan	12.2%	8.0%	8.0%
Countdown	0.5%	1.0%	1.0%
Rural	8.4%	8.0%	7.0%
Norfolk	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

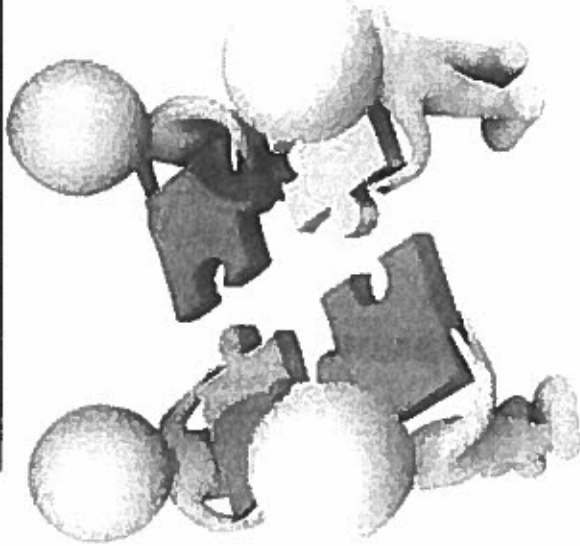
Table 20
Historical and Forecast Households by Urban Area
Norfolk County, 2006 to 2041

Urban Area	Total Households					Growth		
	2006	2011	2021	2031	2041	2006-2011	2011-2031	2031-2041
Simcoe	5,960	6,220	6,740	7,330	7,950	260	1,110	620
Port Dover	2,700	2,930	3,460	4,040	4,670	230	1,110	630
Delhi	1,960	2,030	2,130	2,240	2,350	70	210	110
Waterford	1,320	1,400	1,620	1,870	2,150	80	470	280
Port Rowan	450	550	680	830	990	100	280	160
Countdown	380	380	400	420	440	20	40	20
Rural	11,470	11,540	11,660	11,790	11,920	70	250	130
Norfolk County	24,240	25,050	26,690	28,520	30,470	810	3,470	1,950

Source: Hemsan Consulting Ltd. based on Statistics Canada Census, National Household Survey and Annual Demographic Statistics.

Recommendations...

- Take a step back...a pause for reflection... *is this really where we need to be?*
- *Is the "Technical Solution" (Recommending for Closure) the answer?*
- *Remove the LABEL!*
- *Let's Work Together... What can WE do to support this school.... Those discussions should be the STARTING POINT. Is everyone in this room comfortable with saying those were given considerable time, process and effort?*



WHAT WE DO ACTUALLY KNOW...

- We need to challenge the very assumptions upon which public education has been built and the relationship of school to community. If rural communities are to not only survive, but thrive, then educational solutions must acknowledge and account for the necessary relationship between rural communities and their schools. **Technical solutions are not enough.** As Fanning (1995: 4) writes "The sound development of children is closely linked to the well-being of communities. Consolidating often destroy these links." If we wish to "produce" more than technocrats to work in the global economy, but whole humans interested in community life and engaged in responsible citizenship, then we need to forge linkages between students and communities, between students and place."

~ Dr. Allan C Lauzon & Ms. Danielle Leahy

University of Guelph

WHAT WE DO ACTUALLY KNOW...

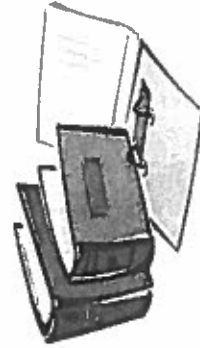
- If one thing is clear from the research, going through the ARC process together and being here today... it's that small schools ARE worth saving and worth the cost.

Please, WE are counting on your support to agree.

Please, support a moratorium on closing OLOL.

References

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My name is Bernie Byer and I am a business owner in La Salette.

As a business owner, I am very concerned about the reckless spending by the Ministry of Education and the unchallenged willingness of the School Board staff to help them do it!

- When businesses experience slowdowns they cut back expenses and search out new opportunities to grow that location. Constant promotion is needed to increase traffic.
- The pervasive negative atmosphere hanging over the fate of OLOL for the last few years certainly contributed to a decline in enrollment. Nothing appears to have been done by Board staff to indicate there was any hope for the future of this school. In fact, as you will hear from the others the parents and community were never told of this process until several months later. (Sept 2016)

FUNDING FORMULA FLAWED

My concern is the unnecessary spending of our TAX dollars just because the grants are available.

- Changes to the GSN was a strategy called School Board Efficiencies and Modernization that was “to provide incentives and supports for boards to make more efficient use of school space”.
- Erroneously resulted in many small rural schools being subjected to review because they are small.
- Erroneously closing them and consolidating the students with another school(s) results in mistaken believe by education administrators it will be a larger, “more efficient” school.
- At the public meeting, it was noted that operational funding will be short \$110,000 per annum. Yet you are willing to spend up to \$2 million on an extension to St Francis.
- How many years will it take to use up \$2 million TAX Payers dollars by keeping OLOL open instead of building new?
- I know it is operational versus capital funds, but closing OLOL is writing off \$5 million in capital.
- There must be some area in the budget to save \$100,000 per annum.
- Is there an APP on your phone that tells you that spending \$2million instead of \$100grand is a savings? Or that it leads to a better education?

Another example of the flawed funding formula:

- The Toronto school board sold a 7acre property in November 2016 for \$121 MILLION.
- The Ministry is giving the Board an additional \$20 MILLION of Taxpayers money to build a new school on that site. A site they don't own.
- What did the Board do with the \$121 Million?
- And why did the Ministry give another the Board another \$20 million? Because that is what the Funding Formula allows!

Please consider the following in the total costs of these changes:

- Additional bussing including additional mini bus which you won't supply now
- Setting up portables until construction complete
- Reams of paper / salaries wasted at these meetings
- Writing off of \$5 million in capital at La Salette property

LONG RANGE PLANNING

The board employees were just doing their job when they filled in the blanks in the Board report and I accept the fact that these are the numbers to be considered.

- Even though they have been shown to be flawed.
- Please treat them as guesses and not the absolute truth.
- Long-range projections are more worrisome because of the rapid pace of changes in today's society.
- Many recent graduates will be doing jobs that didn't exist when they started their schooling. Who knows where these will be located.
- This makes it very difficult to have much faith in those projections.
- The recent Census population numbers for Norfolk are out but the age numbers, not yet released, will show the growth has been fuelled by recent retirees.
- The generation with good retirement benefits is coming to an end. In 10 years, as that demographic fades out, the turnover will increase and switch to younger home owners.
- The rapid rise of housing prices in the GTA will force many to leave the city and commute to work.

I did an informal census of just the village of La Salette to prove this:

Of a total of 60 homes - 27 homes due to change in the near future or have recently changed:

9 homes widows/widowers aged of 70- 90: 8 homes couples over 70+:

2 Empty homes: 8 new young couples/families in last 2 years

The Provincial election in 2018 will see the Education system come under massive scrutiny.

The huge spike in support province wide for going to one public system with the abolition of subsidies for religion based boards

Wait until this is sorted out. Let's get it right this time!

Why be in such a rush to spend that money!

STOP THE reckless spending by the Ministry of Education

MORATORIUM - We request your support for this option.

- Students, parents, school councils, municipalities, citizen groups and MPP's have urged the Minister of Education and the Premier to implement a moratorium on school closures until an education funding formula that recognize the needs of rural Ontario are in place.
- One group- OAASC, has 885,000 supporter signees as of January 2017.
- The total number of such schools is often reported to be over 600
- Another organization, the Community School Alliance, hasn't been able to identify the number that are rural, they know that many are in single-school communities
- The Community School Alliance (CSA) has made presentations to the Premier, Minister of Education and have the backing of most rural MPPs & municipalities in Ontario
- CSA has commissioned a study
- Norfolk County Council has adopted a Motion requesting a Moratorium
- Our MPP also calls for a Moratorium

All of us in attendance tonight understand the difficult position you are in.

We want to help you make the best decision possible.

Please hold off on the spending of \$2 Million taxpayer dollars until there is a definitive answer!

Please have an alternative plan ready for when the funding formula gets changed!

It is the local trustee who makes sure that the community has a direct way to express its views on vital education decisions that affect our day-to-day lives.

School trustees play an indispensable role in preserving our democratic heritage.

Please help us restore democracy in the education system.

Anyone can steer the ship, but it takes a leader to chart the course.

Good evening my name is Bobbi Ann and I am the mom of Carter, a Grade six student here at OLOL, as well as Addison who is in grade 10 and a graduate of the school.

- School community has been given just a few months to propose options that would see the doors to this building remain open.
- There are still many questions that have not been satisfied and won't be...but what is truly troubling is that any suggestion or idea that has come out of our school community has been dismissed almost immediately.
- Our community expects is to be treated fairly.
- Rumours of closure with regard to OLOL started several years ago.
- Were those rumours a means to an end?
- Why do we still have a full-time principal?
- Triple grades have not helped us attract families/students.
- Been a great strain on the teachers at OLOL.
- Families in our community have done a significant amount of work to date in the very limited time they've had. Imagine what we would be capable of if given more time.
- Addition at St. Frances.
- Provincial election in 2018.
- Tax dollars don't have to stay with the BHNCD SB.
- What is the hurry?
- Why does Minister of Education say she gives enough money to keep small/rural schools open and yet the Board says that's not true?
- Is this all a foregone conclusion?
- School Board slogan – Excellence in Learning, Living in Christ
- We need more time, we need to be treated fairly.

My Story

Good Evening board members, trustees and fellow delegates. My name is Helen Mels and this is my family. My husband Brent, our two daughters Alexa and Shaelyn and our son Tyler. We are third generation farmers who currently reside at a rural address located within the boundaries of Our Lady of La Salette School (OLOL). Choosing a school for our children is very important. A school is one of many life experiences that will shape who they become.

We began thinking about schools for Alexa in 2014. At the time we lived on a farm just outside of Delhi. We lived within the boundaries for St. Francis or Delhi Public schools. These schools did not have the right fit for us. We wanted a small rural school with either a French immersion program or a Catholic school within a decent distance. The closest French immersion program was in Walsh which was a twenty-five minute drive straight there, so we assumed the bus ride would be even longer. This French Immersion program is public, and I did not like that it was located so far away. We then decided that we wanted our children to go to a Catholic school to be sure faith and religion was kept in their daily lives. The next option was OLOL. At the time of deciding, I would have had to drive Alexa to OLOL school or look into the bussing situation, and it did not bother me if I had to drive her, it was a five minute drive down the road. Our decision had been made we would register Alexa in OLOL in January of 2015. Not long after our decision was made we told people of our decision. It was then that people around us started voicing their concern of closure of OLOL.

I started thinking about the next closest option for a catholic school which was St. Francis. I spoke to many parents of children who attended St. Francis who voiced their concern of bullying and other behavioural problems they also would comment about how highly academically rated the school was. However, being a victim of bullying myself I wanted to protect my children and give them the best chance, the concerns from parents stuck with me. After asking around about OLOL the worst any one

could say was "there is no way they are going to keep that school open much longer". Other comments included "we are like a family", and "the blended grades helps the students learn to help each other, they all look out for one another". For us it was common sense we were going to choose a school where no one had raised concerns for bullying, a smaller school means smaller class sizes for more one on one time and teacher control. According to many journal articles I have read but specifically one published in early 2011 by Grover J. Whitehurst and Matthew M. Chingos state at the time there were many studies and research done regarding smaller class sizes but only a few were actually creditable.

This article referred to a study that was published in the late 1980's where they decreased a class by 32%. The class went from 22 students to 15 students. It was concluded that students achievement was increased by about three additional months of schooling. Oddly enough relating to our current situation the article states that when new funding policies are implemented they are not looking to see the positive effects but how education dollars are being used productively.

While registering Alexa at OLOL we voiced our concern about school closure and the principal reassured us that there was no need for concern that the board must go through a strict process and we would have plenty of knowledge and time for this and at the time there was no sign of this.

Before school began that year we moved to a new farm which was within the boundaries for OLOL – talk about meant to be! Mind you these horrible rumours of school closure were in the back of my mind. With a back ground in marketing I started brainstorming ways of increasing enrollment. I also thought why had no one else been doing this? I had plans of joining parent council and getting down to business. I was then struck with a health issue I was forced to deal with and would be unable to join parent council. I had in the back of my mind I am sure the school board is doing what they can and they have our best interests in mind, I trust them because after all it was just rumours.

One year later OLOL school and community were faced with what everyone had warned us about, the potential for closure. At first I didn't know how to process the information, I did not know what to do, how or if I was able to be involved....I had just given birth to my third child, but again I felt safe and I thought the board and our community had our best interests in mind. I started asking other parents what was going on and the information I got back was that the board wanted to close us. It was harvest time, I had a five year old and two children under two years old and I was being forced to fight for the survival of our school, fighting for my children to get the proper education they have a right to. What I was about to embark was like learning a new language. I knew nothing about this process or what was involved during what was probably the most intense point of my life.

I attended the working meeting which was held after the first public meeting (newborn baby in hand) and I was appalled with the information that was given. I am not sure if the numbers were meant to convince us of closure or make us look stupid and believe these numbers were accurate. I am referring to the quotes given by auditors for repairs. If you tell me you are okay with these exaggerated numbers then I know you do not have the best interests of my children in mind.

I began to spend many hours doing research, reading articles and talking to other communities in the same situation. I quickly became aware that the closing of rural schools is a province wide issue. Immediately I called and emailed our local MPP, who also was aware of the issue and stands for a two year moratorium until the Pupil Accommodation Review Guidelines (PARG) gets rewritten. I also spoke to our Mayor who brought it to the attention of the councillors and voted a two year moratorium be put on schools until the PARG gets re-written. I emailed and spoke to the trustees as well.

Continuing my research I also found how this is a new process that the timeline of events has been fast tracked. This allows the committee to come up with different options, but are not allowed enough time to properly research and implement the options. This gives the board an advantage for the

option they present. I know given a two year moratorium that the OLOL community will become an innovator and set a precedent for under utilized rural schools – which according to the numbers in the report is a problem within Norfolk County.

Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School board is partly made up of Norfolk County which is a county primarily made up of agricultural zoned areas. There should be a plan put in place to deal with the decreasing enrollment. The board has been given resources like the Watson Report which suggests there is a steady decline in enrollment and population. The Watson Report is not new, the board should have been creating a plan when these predictions were published. An idea would have been to get parent council and the community involved. Now they decide to do something about it and that is to close an under-utilized school – well there are four other schools in Norfolk County which are under utilized how will they deal with those? There should be a more pro active approach to this instead of a re active. Also note that the results from the 2016 census will be published this year, allowing real time data. Although this still doesn't paint a clear picture for birth rates in Norfolk County since the information is gathered from hospitals. I gave birth to three children at Brantford General Hospital in the last 6 years – giving Brantford my birth rate numbers.

As a family who farms and many other families like us attending OLOL, we are not moving anywhere – it's our lively hood and we will always live in a rural area, why punish the children? Giving them longer bus rides, making their new proposed school twenty five minutes direct travel time from our home. Let us set a precedent for the rest of the province, give us a two year moratorium to properly implement a strategy to keep this school open and pray that the province sees this issue and the PARG is re wrote to accommodate the changing population within rural areas.

REFERENCES

Online Journals

Whitehurst, Grover and Chingos, Matthew M. "Class size: what Research Says and What It Means for State Policy." Brookings. Wednesday February 28, 2017. <https://www.brookings.edu/research/class-size-what-research-says-and-what-it-means-for-state-policy/>

Norfolk ARC Meetings

1. **Working Committee Meeting #2:** Wednesday, November 23, 2016 - Holy Trinity Catholic High School (128 Evergreen Hill Road, Simcoe) - Room 157 - 5:30 p.m.
2. **Working Committee Meeting #3:** Monday, December 12, 2016 - Our Lady of La Salette School (71 La Salette Road, La Salette) - Gymnasium - 6:00 p.m.
3. **Public Meeting #2:** Wednesday, January 18, 2017 - Our Lady of La Salette School (71 La Salette Road, La Salette) - Gymnasium- 7:00 p.m.

Other

Ontario Human Rights Commission – "Elementary and Secondary Education"

Norfolk County planning committee and website

Rural Schools Matter

Ontario Ministry of Education

Ontario Alliance Against School Closures