



SPECIAL BOARD MEETING
Tuesday, February 3, 2009 at 6:00 p.m.
Windsor Essex Catholic Education Centre
John Paul II Boardroom

MINUTES

PRESENT

Trustees:

F. Alexander, Chair	P. Keane
M. DiMenna, Vice-Chair	J. Macri
B. Holland (<i>participated electronically</i>)	S. Porcellini
C. Janisse	L. Soulliere
C. Resendes, Student Trustee	
N. Lau, Student Trustee	
Rev. L. Brunet, Board Chaplain	

Regrets:

J. Courtney, Trustee
J. Berthiaume, Director of Education

Administration:

M. Iatonna (Resource)	J. Bumbacco
C. Geml	E. Byrne
P. Picard	P. Littlejohns
L. Staudt	P. Murray
Thérèse Barichello	S. O'Hagan-Wong

Recorder:

D. Steffens

1. Call To Order - Chair Alexander called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.
2. Opening Prayer - Fr. Brunet opened the meeting with a prayer.
3. Recording of Attendance - Trustee Courtney sent regrets due to illness. Trustee Holland participated electronically. Director Berthiaume sent regrets due to his vacation schedule. Superintendent Iatonna provided administrative resource.
4. Approval of Agenda

Amendments:

- Addition: 7a (i) Delegation - St. Mary Catholic School Advisory Council (Shawn Fuerth and Roger Bastien) regarding agenda item 8a Ad Hoc Elementary French Immersion Study Committee Recommendations

- Addition: 7a (ii) Delegation - Vittoria Conciatori-Fortier, Parent St. Mary Catholic Elementary School regarding agenda item 8a Ad Hoc Elementary French Immersion Study Committee Recommendations
- Addition: 7a (iii) Delegation - Rene Deschamps, Vice Chair of the Holy Name Catholic School Advisory Committee regarding agenda item 8a Ad Hoc Elementary French Immersion Study Committee Recommendations

Moved by Trustee DiMenna and seconded by Trustee Soulliere that the February 3, 2009 Special Board meeting agenda be approved as amended. Carried.

5. Questions Pertaining to Agenda - None.

6. Disclosure of Interest - Pursuant to the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act. - None.

7. Delegations:

a. Delegations Regarding Items On the Agenda

- i. St. Mary Catholic School Advisory Council (Shawn Fuerth and Roger Bastien) regarding agenda item 8a Ad Hoc Elementary French Immersion Study Committee Recommendations

Members of the delegation thanked the Board for deferring their decision last meeting and thereby allowing the school community time to gain a better understanding of the issues surrounding the recommendations. The delegation confirmed the majority of parents are now accepting the prospect of a French Immersion program located at St. Mary with renewed hope for the future vitality of the Maidstone school community. The delegation brought forward several factors raised by members of the school community over the course of the past week for the Board's consideration should the recommendation be approved.

- ii. Vittoria Conciatori-Fortier, Parent St. Mary Catholic Elementary School regarding agenda item 8a Ad Hoc Elementary French Immersion Study Committee Recommendations

As parents of children attending St. Mary's elementary school, Mr. and Mrs. Fortier thanked trustees for amending the original committee recommendations to address some of the concerns raised by the affected school communities. The delegation indicated their support of the proposed single-track French immersion program as recommended, and encouraged trustees to vote in favour.

- iii. Rene Deschamps, Vice Chair of the Holy Name Catholic School Advisory Committee regarding agenda item 8a Ad Hoc Elementary French Immersion Study Committee Recommendations

Mr. Deschamps, as Vice Chair of the Holy Name Catholic School Advisory Council and as a parent of children attending Holy Name school questioned the rationale to initially locate the French Immersion program at Holy Name despite the accommodation pressure that was apparent at that time, and commented on the subsequent impact of moving the program on both school communities. The delegation petitioned trustees to monitor the enrolment at Holy Name Catholic Elementary School and to move quickly to address its accommodation needs.

8. Item:

- a. Deferred Report (*as revised*) from the January 27, 2009 Regular Board Meeting:
Ad Hoc Elementary French Immersion Study Committee - Final Report

Trustees considered the final report from the Ad Hoc Elementary French Immersion Study Committee that was deferred from the January 27, 2009 Regular Board Meeting in order to follow-up on concerns raised by both school communities affected, to receive additional data from administration and to study the revised proposal.

Administration provided an overview of the stakeholder meetings that have been held over the last week, provided information on a single- versus dual-track French Immersion program and provided additional rationale for selecting St. Mary Elementary School as the permanent site.

Trustees entered into a period of discussion and debate, seeking clarification from administration on the cost effectiveness and program viability of “grandfathering” existing students enrolled in French Immersion at Holy Name Elementary School, transportation costs and student pick up locations, the potential for future accommodation pressures / expansion opportunities at St. Mary, the need to address the student capacity issue at Holy Name, the possibility of opening the St. Mary catchment area to include interested Catholic ratepayers in South Windsor as an option in alleviating accommodation pressures at St. Anne French Immersion, and the on-going role of the principal assigned to lead the implementation process. Administration confirmed that existing French Immersion students at Holy Name whose parents elect to stay at Holy Name to receive instruction in the English language will receive additional Learning Support Services, if needed, to assist in their transition.

Moved by Trustee Janisse and seconded by Trustee Porcellini that the Board approve the following Ad Hoc Elementary French Immersion Committee recommendations:

The designation of St. Mary Elementary School as the permanent site for a single track French Immersion school with full-time JK/SK to commence in September 2009 (including Implementation Recommendations);

***and*, that the Board approve the dissolution of the Ad Hoc Elementary French Immersion Committee in accordance with Board By-Law 4:03;**

***and*, that the Board approve the establishment of a system-wide standing French Immersion Committee which will develop Terms of Reference to be approved by the Board. Included in the Terms of Reference will be provisions for the Holy Name and St. Mary School Communities to advise the committee of ongoing issues and concerns with respect to the transition issues related to single/dual track French Immersion at the St. Mary Catholic school site. Carried unanimously.**

Upon request, a recorded vote was taken. In favour: Trustees Janisse, Soulliere, Keane, DiMenna, Porcellini, Macri and Holland. Student Trustee Lau requested that his support of the recommendation be noted.

Implementation recommendations, noted in the above approval, include:

1. The immediate commencement of planning for the transition of the St. Mary School site to a single track French Immersion school.
2. Full day French Immersion Junior and Senior Kindergarten at St. Mary Elementary School to begin in September 2009, with on-site before and after school child-care.
3. The approval of an open boundary for French Immersion at St. Mary Elementary School for all County schools effective the start of the 2009-2010 school year.
4. A dual track French Immersion/English Language Instruction program will be provided at St. Mary Elementary from Grades 1 – 8 effective September, 2009. In each succeeding year, one English Language grade will be eliminated. (i.e. 2010-11 – grade 1, 2011-12 – grade 2, etc.)
5. Effective for the 2009-2010 school year, the Holy Name School site Junior Kindergarten to Grade 8 will be English language.
6. The transfer of existing French Immersion students in Grades 1 to 3 from Holy Name School (Essex) to St. Mary School (in Grades 2 to 4 in 2009-2010).
7. A parent of any French immersion student transferring from Holy Name to St. Mary who has an older child in an English language grade at Holy Name may elect to transfer that student to the St. Mary English track. Transportation will be provided by the Board.
8. Transportation for French Immersion students will be provided from centralized locations outside the Holy Name and St. Mary boundaries pending enrolment numbers.
9. Principal Barichello will submit regular status reports to administration and the Board on the planning and implementation of the St. Mary French Immersion School site.

9. Remarks/Questions by Trustees

- Chair Alexander conveyed his appreciation to the Ad Hoc Committee members, administration, the delegations and school communities for their work and input into this initiative.
- Trustee Janisse inquired into the process for providing a response to the St. Mary school community regarding the points raised by the delegation. Chair Alexander indicated the concerns and suggestions will be referred to the new French Immersion Committee for their advisement to the Board.
- Trustee Soulliere asked if an administrative report could be provided regarding the accommodation issues that remain at Holy Name Catholic Elementary School, to include the viability of providing some leniency in providing approval for out-of-boundary requests from parents in the Holy Name catchment area who wish to enrol their children at St. John Evangelist Elementary School.
- Trustee Keane congratulated St. Mary and Holy Name of Jesus parents on their active parish involvement.

- Trustee DiMenna indicated that she would like to see the new French Immersion Committee struck as soon as possible with representation from both Holy Name and St. Mary parents.
 - Trustee Porcellini thanked parents and delegations for attending tonight's meeting, thanked the Chair for his visit to St. Anne French Immersion Elementary School, and extended an invitation to everyone to attend a fundraising dinner for a St. Anne French Immersion family whose parent is facing a serious illness.
 - Trustee Macri congratulated and extended his best wishes to the parents and families of St. Mary and Holy Name school communities.
 - Trustee Holland asked that the Board consider East Windsor schools when exploring options to alleviate accommodation pressures at St. Anne French Immersion.
10. Closing Prayer - Fr. Brunet closed the meeting with a prayer.
11. Adjournment - There being no further business, the Special Board meeting of February 3, 2009 adjourned at 7:37 p.m.

Approved.

Fred Alexander
Board Chairperson

Mario Iatonna
Superintendent of Business & Administrative Resource

Joseph Berthiaume
Director of Education & Secretary-Treasurer