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## Staff Input regarding the Colborne Holmesville Accommodation Review As of November 3, 2011

### Colborne Central Public School – November 1, 2011

Nine staff were in attendance

- 1) Superintendent Ash reviewed the accommodation review process and the staff option presented at the first ARC meeting.
- 2) What will be the implementation timeline if the decision is to close Colborne?
  - a. That decision will be made by the trustees with input from the ARC and staff. Historically we have allowed for a one year transition after a decision has been made and if that pattern is followed we would move students and staff for September 2013. It would be a challenge to organize the schools for September 2012 given the decision will not be made until June 2012.
- 3) What will the staff process be if schools close?
  - a. The board and ETFO will draft an agreement as we have done for other schools undergoing a transition. Staff will get the opportunity to indicate their preferred schools within the area under review and their preferred grade assignments. The seniority lists of closing and receiving schools will be combined. Staff involved in the transition get a second opportunity to request a transfer near the end of March after they have seen their tentative assignment (before March Break).
- 4) Some people live close to the Hullett or Clinton boundary – would we consider sending students there?
  - a. Hullett will be receiving a large number of students from Blyth when it closes in June of this school year. That influx of students will fill the school. The Holmesville students going to Clinton will have a similar effect at that school. The Ministry of Education will want us to use the existing capacity in Goderich and Brookside before they will fund additions at Hullett or Clinton. Adjusting the boundaries from what was proposed in the staff option will also add to the transportation costs because we will not be able to consolidate routes with the secondary school in Goderich or the Catholic school board. Parents can choose to request to border cross in those schools but it cannot result in additional staffing and their children will have to meet an existing bus stop for the receiving school.
- 5) There was a review of the projected number of classes in each of the schools covered by the staff option.
- 6) There will need to be very efficient use of the existing gym space to accommodate the influx of students at Goderich and Goderich DCI – Elementary. Physical Education schedules should include two classes in the gym at the same time and planning for outdoor activities as much as possible.
- 7) Staff were informed that they can add further comments by sending them to Superintendent Ash or to their ETFO representative.

## Holmesville Public School – November 2, 2011

Eleven staff were in attendance.

- 1) Superintendent Ash reviewed the accommodation review process and the staff option presented at the first ARC meeting.
- 2) There was a question about whether or not Holmesville needed more space to accommodate students from Colborne.
  - a. Central office staff are going through the analysis right now. Our sense at this time is that Holmesville would not have sufficient space to accommodate all of Colborne.
- 3) If the students north of Blyth Rd were sent to Brookside would there be enough space?
  - a. That is something that we would have to determine through our analysis.
- 4) There was a discussion regarding the Ministry figures used to determine class loading and school capacity. Those have changed since the time that Holmesville had close to 300 students. Primary class size caps and reducing the Junior/Intermediate class size average has required more rooms than was previously required.
- 5) There was a question regarding whether the capital money for Full Day Kindergarten that staff had cited in their option could be applied to Holmesville renovations rather than Goderich renovations.
  - a. We have not confirmed whether or not we can apply the potential capital from Colborne to Goderich or whether or not we will get the capital at all. We will have to ask if it can be applied at Holmesville.
- 6) Comment that specialized teachers (French, music) are able to better deliver their program when there is a designated room for the teacher and the program.
  - a. The board does not get funding to maintain designated classrooms for French or music.
- 7) Suggestion to keep Holmesville open and adjust the boundaries to avoid the necessity of building at all.
- 8) A discussion regarding the merits and challenges of desktop computer labs versus mobile computer technology. Some concerns that the mobile technology is not as robust as the desktop technology and therefore cannot handle some of the programs currently used by teachers and students.
  - a. The board does not get funded to maintain rooms for computer labs.
- 9) Comment regarding the strength of the program at Holmesville and that discussion of possible closure should take that into consideration.
- 10) Question about the benefits to students when they will potentially have larger classes and less access to resources like technology and gym space when they are combined with another school population.
  - a. While there may be some smaller classes at Holmesville, classes at all of the schools must remain within the caps designated by the collective agreement and the Ministry regulations. Those caps won't be exceeded in a larger school. The smaller class sizes at Holmesville are achieved at a cost of larger class sizes in other schools across the district. This situation results in an inequitable distribution of the board's resources to provide education to each of its students.

- 11) Question about whether the ARC actually has an impact on the final decision.
  - a. In the Usborne ARC of 2008/2009, the Trustees took the ARC recommendation to defer a decision regarding Usborne until such time that a review was done including all schools in the area. In the Central East North Huron ARC of 2008/2009, the Trustees took the ARC idea of building a new school and combined it with the staff recommendation to place Grade 7 and 8 students at FEMSS. In the Huron East North Perth ARC of 2009/2010, the Trustees took the North Perth suggestion to look at a possible solution involving the schools in the Listowel area and applied for funding to make the case for this possibility. The public input has always had an impact on the Trustee deliberations even if the Trustees did not accept all of the ARC suggestions.
- 12) What is the staffing process?
  - a. ETFO and the board will draft an agreed upon staffing process as we have in other areas that have undergone a review. In general, staff will be asked for their preferences in terms of school and assignment and then in early March they will receive a tentative assignment. The staff in this type of situation get a “second chance” to apply for a transfer immediately after March Break.
- 13) Will the Grade 7 and 8 students from this area be moved into Central Huron SS?
  - a. We have no plans at this time to move the Grade 7 and 8 students into CHSS. Those discussions may occur at some point in the future but we do not anticipate that to be the case at this time.
- 14) Comment that the Holmesville staff would like to see the school remain open.
- 15) Comment that the Holmesville staff want the parents to know that they are following the procedures established for staff input during an ARC. Their attendance at public meetings, or not, is a reflection of those procedures and not a comment one way or another on their beliefs related to possible outcomes of the process. They are not comfortable engaging in conversations with the community regarding this topic as those conversations put them in a very awkward position with their employer.
- 16) Staff were informed that they can add further comments by sending them to Superintendent Ash or to their ETFO representative.