NORTHWEST HURON TRANSITION MEETING
Tuesday, January 29, 2013
GPS Gymnasium and Break Out Rooms
6:30-7:30 p.m.

MINUTES

1) **Welcome and Introductions – Meet the Committees**
   Principal Van Poucke (Colborne P.S.) welcomed the group and introduced Principal Bennett from Holmesville P.S. Principal Van Poucke explained that she will circulate a sign in sheet for all committee members. All committee members' names and email addresses will be added to a Northwest Huron conference. All emails, including minutes from these meetings will come from this conference.

2) **Role of the Transition Committees**
   Principal Bennett presented the PowerPoint, which explains the process for the meetings.
   - The main goal for the Transition Committee is to create a harmonious and smooth transition for students who are coming together from two or more school communities
   - The main work will be around communicating with each other, listening to parent and student views from all school communities, and continuing to provide and build upon the nurturing, supportive, caring, and welcoming environments which already exist for our students in our buildings
   - **The Transition Committees DO**:
     - discuss events/ideas to welcome students
     - discuss concerns about student well-being and safety
     - discuss tradition/cultures from each building and share how to amalgamate and honour the traditions of the combining communities
     - discuss any items relevant to student comfort in the school building
   - **Transition Committees DO NOT:**
     - determine the distribution of assets
     - discuss budget items
     - determine staffing
   - **Format of the Committee of the Whole Session**:
     - meeting of the whole minutes will be recorded by an Admin Assistant at each meeting
     - all Transition Committees meet as a whole when there is a common topic or theme to be shared affecting all committees
     - meetings will last one hour
     - all questions/answers from previous meetings will be made available to the public on the Avon Maitland DSB website and paper copies will be made available at each meeting
     - if you have questions/concerns you would like addressed, your Transition Committee representative will convey these on your behalf
     - paper and pens are available in different locations in the gym and the Break Out room, in order for you to write down and share with your representative
   - **Format of Break Out Sessions:**
     - each Break Out session will be chaired by the receiving school's principal
     - each principal needs to select a person to take minutes
     - anyone may watch the proceedings from the gallery
     - questions/concerns from people in the gallery may be written down and share with your Transition Committee representative

- Chairs will write down questions from the Committee which requires further information or investigation. We will endeavour to provide answers as quickly as possible and will post these to the AMDSB website and provide paper copies at subsequent meetings

- **Communicating your concerns**:
  - Please know that we value all community input. In order to run meetings effectively and respect your time, we ask that everyone work within the timelines and structures outlined for the meetings.

Anyone from the audience can go and observe any of the breakout sessions. If any questions arise at the breakout sessions, they can be written on a piece of paper provided in each of the rooms. Questions/concerns will be included in the minutes of the meeting.
Principal Bennett explained how the breakout sessions will look. Principals from all schools involved will circulate to all of the breakout sessions.

3) Break Out Sessions

a) Colborne/Holmesville/GPS/GDCI Elementary
Jennifer Skelding, GDCI ES Vice Principal, welcomed the group and introductions were made around the table.
Discussion

- **Q**: How many students are expected? **A**: 150-160 students total.
- **Q**: Do the students mix with other/secondary students? **A**: The elementary students & secondary students are currently on a slightly different schedule. Their movement in the hallways typically happens when secondary students are in class. There is some time, during the lunch hour, when both secondary and elementary students share the cafeteria. During the morning, arrival at school, all students are in the hallways. The elementary students have their own area of the school where their classrooms are congregated.
- **Q**: Do E.S. student lunches overlap with secondary student lunches? **A**: A few secondary students are left in the cafeteria when elementary students arrive. Elementary students enjoy perks of being in the cafeteria.
- **Q**: Are students allowed to go to Tim's, etc., at lunch? **A:** Yes, with note from parents.
- Drop off and pick up times (GPS) Confusing drop off and pick up times.
- Have been working on having parents park on one side of the street & supervising has continued.
- **Q**: How many students will be transitioning into GPS? **A**: Trustee Sygrove noted approximately 79.
- New classrooms will be for Early Years students, plus 2 additional classrooms. Construction will begin in April.
- **Q**: Will Grades 7/8 be on buses with secondary students? **A**: Yes
- Q: How many border crossers will be allowed each year? A: Will depend on number of students in each class.
- **Q**: Gym space at GPS: will students have access to the gym? **A**: Grades 4-6 students will always have full gym periods.
- Trustee Sygrove noted they are aware of gym concerns and this has been passed on to Senior Staff.
- **Q**: Will GPS have a new name or will it be Goderich & Area Public School?
- **Q**: Will there be new sports? A: There will be more opportunities, ie: field hockey, wrestling, all regional sports, regions for competitions/tournaments have changed.
- **Q**: will students have an opportunity to compete? **A**: Some sports allow more opportunities ie: cross country.
- **Q**: How are teams compiled for Grades 7/8 students?
- **Q**: GDCI Athletics: Are students from ES allowed to use equipment in the weight room?

- **Q**: Will student be on the same buses as secondary students? K-6 students whose bus will they be on, GPS or GDCI ES bus? On what bus will the new students be riding?
- **Q**: Availability of gym – can students have opportunities to have gym class outside?
- **Q**: House colours/dens – do we have them? Would we consider them?
- **Q**: What would happen to banners that the closing schools brought with them?
- **Q:** What happens to all the memorabilia, pictures, etc?
- **Q**: How will the school organization be changed by the construction of the 2 new Early Years classrooms?
- **Q**: How do you find mixing 12 year olds with 17 year olds? Supervision. Older students don't like having younger students in assemblies. Secondary students don't seem to want grades 7/8 there. **A**: Culture is changing – has been taking 4 years, moving toward one school culture. Some assemblies are separate, when age appropriate. More opportunities to participate in other clubs – OSAID, Me to We, dramas, Student Council is Grades 7-12. Gradual movement toward culture of oneness.
- GPS – Colborne has a piano teacher. Will there be an opportunity for students to take piano lessons?
- **Q**: What back up plan is there if classrooms are not completed in August?
- **Q**: What about snow days for GDCI ES? **A**: open for those who can get there safely.
- **Q**: What happens on 7/8 snow days: Don't like 'study purposes". **A**: unique opportunities
- Invitation to GPS School Council February 5.

b) Colborne/Brookside

Present: Cathy Goetz GPS, Christina Van Poucke Colborne, Michael Spetman Parent Rep Colborne, Aiden Spetman Student Rep, Colborne, Kerri Murray Parent Rep Brookside.

- Brookside Parent rep share some of the cultural and traditional items that students, staff and parents participate in:
  - Green school focus
  - Indoor recesses – group goes to the gym
  - Equipment: elephant swings, full sized basketball court, aeroglider
- How is the day set up? Same Colborne – off the buses & into classes?
- Will there be construction this summer for Full Day Learning?
- Air conditioner in the gym?
- Special Days: dances, Christmas, Halloween, Valentine's Day: same as in both schools? Split between the grades?
- Colborne has Pajama Day, Wacky Hair Day, Injury Day. Brookside has lots of these days too – they have House Competitions, so does Colborne
- Winter Olympics/Outside Play Day – both schools
- Book Club & Tutoring, Tuesday in the afternoon at Brookside
- Nobody/Somebody Dolls at Brookside
- Student View: should have a Transition Day/Field Trip. Tour day. Would like a day that is like an Open House & then a Transition Day
- Number of students going to Brookside (48?) from Colborne
- Cross-border number finalized – when will we know?
- Transition may look different if there are 40 students compared to 20
- Suggestion: if 8 students only come from Colborne, we still want Colborne culture – not just assimilation
- Some discussion around colours and school animal
- Transportation – bussing and route planning. Parent would like to know routes sooner rather than later if possible. May need to have the transportation manager come in and talk to the whole group about the process.

c) **Holmesville/Clinton**

Present - Don Rauser Clinton Principal, Jo Anne Knechtel Clinton VP, Cara Stoll Clinton Parent Council Chair, Emerson (Holmesville student), Alexis (Clinton student), Shelley Sheppard - parent from Holmesville, Gillian Bender Clinton Parent Rep, Melissa Peterson Holmesville Parent Council Co-chair, David Bennett, Holmesville Principal

Music Programs:

- Do you have a band? Instrumental music program (Currently Gr.6,7 and 8) Extracurricular Gr 7/8 Band
- How does a Holmesville music class run? Band is extracurricular, hand bell choir, bucket drumming, choir is part of class, instrumental music program (currently Gr. 5-8)
- Holmesville - Gr 4-8 one year do the concert and K-3 do the spring concert
- Christmas Concert at Clinton - generally gr K-4
- Drama Club at Clinton - spring presentation - gr 1-8
- Coffee House - choir, band, choral presentations, hand bell choir, class presentations

Planners:

- Clinton - dates for the year, different lay out for primary and Junior/Intermediate students - paid out of student funds this year, go with simple planner to keep cost down
- Holmesville - $5 per planner and rest of the amount from School Council - same layout from Adanac

School Pictures

- Adanac Photographers at both schools and at high school

Me To We Group

Clinton

- Help to make change for others, raise money for charities, We Scare Hunger, We Day, School wide Spirit Days

Holmesville

- We Scare Hunger, Raising money for wells in Africa,

Student Council

- Holmesville - parliamentary system

Recess

- Holmesville - soccer, tether ball, four square, sand area
- Clinton - play in the snow, sand pit, climbers, soccer, tarmac game
- Shade areas
- Clinton - rest/relaxation area
- FDK program in place at Clinton PS
- Clinton Community Childcare Centre is a tenant of CPS and works with the school

School Council

- try not to overdue the activities but plan good things a few times - welcome back pizza night, cake walk, book fair in September - donation for food, spaghetti supper parent night
- Barbeque - donation for welcome back, lasagne family day night
- (plan an evening for the school council members to get together as well)

Tour for Holmesville parents:

- just call the office for a day or after school tour
- will plan a formal visit but informal/individual tours are always welcome
- **Holmesville parents are welcome to come early (6 pm) before the next transition meeting that will be held at CPS**

School Trips:

- What school trips are planned - Celtic, Camp Sylvan (Holmesville currently plans) - traditionally Gr 8 teacher at Clinton PS has taken students to Jump at Wilfrid Laurier University

******expressed an interest to have kids visit the school and do some activities together this school year*******

Questions from the Committee that require further information or investigation

- no current questions on record

d) Holmesville/Huron Centennial

Present: Secretary/Recorder: Tom Bishop

Present: Carol Rauser Principal HCPS, Brian Barnim Central Huron Councilor, Randy Wagler Trustee, Tom Trick HPS parent, Spencer Barnim HPS student rep, Hailey Reid HCS Parent Council rep, Brenda Chuter HCS Parent Council Chair, Ruth Buffinga HPS staff rep.

- Members indicated there had been some initial concerns around a rural option being available to students transitioning to a new school – boundary adjustments were made to accommodate this concern, with thanks. Approx. 25 students will come from the Holmesville area to HCS.
- A question was posed in regards to whether there were any dates being considered for students from Holmesville Public School students to visit? Principal Rauser indicated that there has been some discussion around a day that might work best for students to come. Various special activity days are being considered as they would represent a nice informal way for students to come and meet teachers and students. Huron Centennial is eager to show around parents who may drop by as well – given the number of families making the transition to HCS, it was thought that this may be done incidentally as parents can arrange.
- A question arose about possible spring events that might be shared with the Holmesville community? Brenda Chuter reported that a mental health and wellness night was coming, a spaghetti dinner, and a play day. These might be possible venues to which Holmesville parents and students could be invited. The suggestion was made that perhaps parents and their children could be invited early to one of these events to meet teachers, have a tour of the school and then be invited as an option, to remain for the event as they wished…
- **Q**: Grade 8 trip: "Celtic" has been an important part of the grade 8 year at Holmesville for some years…will this be something possible at Huron Centennial PS? **A**: Principal Rauser indicated that this is currently the grade 8 trip at HCS as well.
- Other trips: In the past (for gr. 7) Camp Sylvan/Rock Glen – Holmesville parents see value in these destinations as well, and that was expressed to the committee.
- A member indicated that there had been an idea discussed at their School Council about bringing all grade 8's back to the local community centre for a grade 8 graduation ceremony for those who attended Holmesville PS, and would have graduated from there? A parent group from Holmesville may seek to organize such.
- Positive things are being reported in the community about HCS which is viewed to be a plus for students/families making this transition.
- A question was asked about the current enrollment at HCS. Principal Rauser confirmed approx. 360. There are 13 classrooms. HCS goes to full day Kindergarten next year. There are no concerns about physical space to accommodate the transitioning students.
- Sports teams and band/choir – will the changing numbers affect who makes teams etc.? Some concerns around how opportunities for students in these areas might be affected by the growing numbers at HCS.
- A parent indicated they heard bus sharing for students from the transitioning schools may be a reality (i.e. elementary/high school).

- Christmas/spring concert arrangements…what does HCS currently do to accommodate/ensure that all students have opportunity? Principal Rauser discussed current arrangements – primary Christmas concert, Jr./Int. have a Museum exhibit of student work to which other classes and parent community are invited.
- Extra-curricular and clubs? We typically have representation at a variety of the district sports meets in a normal year. Clubs around waste-free lunches, choir, skipping, character counts/Me-to-We groups, student council, and school garden also exist to offer the students a diverse choice.
- There were questions posed around grades and split classes. Principal Rauser indicated that structuring has not occurred yet for the coming year but some splits may occur.
- Instrumental Band? This is viewed as very important to the Holmesville PS community. Principal Rauser described the program currently in place for students at Huron Centennial including instrumental learning made available through the classroom music program. Also a piano/keyboarding lab is active as part of our music offering to students.
- Playground – are there designated areas? Principal Rauser confirmed the current playground arrangement consisting of a Jr/Int yard for students in grades 6-8, a junior yard for gr. 4-5, and a primary area for JK to 3. The playground equipment available at this time and slated for installation was also described. An outdoor classroom/pavilion provides a sheltered study space for students on the intermediate yard as well.
- Questions around the use of technology in the school – is it a distraction? The emphasis at HCS is on using it for planned, programmed use guided by the classroom teacher, to ensure that it is effectively used. Some aspects of technology can actually assist focusing attention of students. Uses of personal devices are guided by the board policy and individual teachers' insistence on appropriate use.

This committee adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

4) Meeting Adjournment @ 7:30 p.m.

5) Next Meeting: Tuesday, February 19, 2013
Clinton P.S. (Gymnasium)
6:30 pm – 7:30 pm