



PETAWAWA ACCOMMODATION REVIEW COMMITTEE

Report to the
Renfrew County District School Board

January 2009

Pupil Accommodation Review – Background Information

The Renfrew County District School Board has identified three key outcomes that guide decision-making: excellence in teaching and learning; safe, caring and respectful learning environments; and wise use of resources. The Province of Ontario determines the financial resources available to the Board and as most grants are based upon the number of pupils, enrolment decline results in a need to reduce expenditures.

The Board reviewed enrolment and facility data for the Petawawa Family of Schools (General Lake Public School, General Panet High School, Herman Street Public School, Pinecrest Public School, and Pine View Public School) in 2003-2004 but did not proceed with an accommodation review at that time. Enrolment in the Petawawa Family of Schools has declined from 1,748 pupils in 2003 to 1,396 pupils in 2007-2008. Currently, annual operating costs are over a million dollars and projected capital costs for the next decade are in excess of 20 million dollars. The current capacity of the five schools exceeds enrolment.

In light of enrolment decline, the Board initiated a pupil accommodation review in the Petawawa Family of Schools in May 2008 to determine the feasibility of school consolidation and closure. Reviews are conducted in accordance with Board Policy 15 – Pupil Accommodation and guided by the following principles:

- that programs and services for students are preserved or enhanced;
- that schools provide a safe environment conducive to learning; and
- that resources made available for education are used to improve the quality of education for students.

Concurrent, with its decision to conduct a pupil accommodation review in Petawawa, the Board submitted a proposal to the Ministry of Education under its Prohibitive to Repair (PTR) Capital program for three schools in the Petawawa Family: Pinecrest Public School; General Lake Public School; and General Panet High School.

In August 2008, the Ministry confirmed the government's support for new school construction through the Prohibitive to Repair Capital program, providing the board initiate a Pupil Accommodation Review process within the community.

Timelines and Consultation

May 26, 2008	Board embarks on a pupil accommodation review in the Petawawa Family of Schools based on a staff report containing information on enrolment trends, school capacity, operating costs and facility renewal costs.
August 25, 2008	Board appoints members to the Petawawa Accommodation Review Committee.
August 29, 2008	Board receives confirmation from the Assistant Deputy Minister supporting new school construction through the Prohibitive to Repair (PTR) Capital program to address facility conditions in the following schools: Pinecrest, General Lake and General Panet.
September 15, 2008	Board holds press conference at General Panet High School to announce Ministry's funding support for new school construction through the Prohibitive to Repair (PTR) Capital program.
September 23, 2008	Petawawa Accommodation Review Committee holds working meeting at General Panet High School to discuss the review process and to customize the Board's School Valuation Framework for the Petawawa Community.
October 2, 2008	First Public Meeting at Pinecrest Public School to present information contained within the Board's Petawawa Family of Schools Pupil Accommodation Review from the May 2008 Report and to clarify the process for seeking input from the community and school groups on the School Valuation Framework is held.
November 13, 2008	Second Public Meeting at Herman Street Public School to seek input from the Pinecrest and Herman Street Public School communities on the School Valuation Framework is held.
November 20, 2008	Third Public Meeting at General Lake Public School to seek input from the General Lake and Pine View Public School communities on the School Valuation Framework is held.
November 27, 2008	Fourth Public Meeting at General Panet High School to seek input from the General Panet School community and from other interested community groups on the School Valuation Framework is held.
December 11, 2008	Petawawa Accommodation Review Committee holds working meeting at Pine View Public School to consolidate information provided at the five public meetings and to develop a final report for presentation to the public and the Renfrew County District School Board for January 2009.
January 8, 2009	Petawawa Accommodation Review Committee holds working meeting at the Petawawa Town Hall to review the draft final report and prepare presentation to the public.
January 15, 2009	Final Public Meeting at General Panet High School to present the findings of the Petawawa Accommodation Review Committee is held.
January 26, 2009	Renfrew County District School Board receives the Final Report from the Petawawa Accommodation Review Committee.

Summary of School and Community Input

SCHOOL VALUATION SUMMARY - GENERAL LAKE P.S.

Value to Students

- Quality of the learning environment – with a highly transitory school population, identifying and planning for students is critical; teachers are adept at assessing needs of individual students and helping them adapt; bilingual administrator; and enthusiastic parent volunteers
- Student Outcomes – high expectations for students, respectful learning environment, character education
- Range of program offerings – Early French Immersion, Deployment Support Program, Special Education, Early Literacy Intervention
- Proximity to community facilities
- Large playground, full-size gym, sports fields, separate play area for kindergarten students
- Computer lab, bilingual library and book room

Value to School Board

- Range of program offerings including early French Immersion and Special Education
- Human Resources: dedicated parent volunteers (School Council and Parent's Association)

Value to the Community

- Involvement of community in school and school staff in community (i.e. literacy events, parental involvement in school)
- Parents value a staff and culture that appreciates and understands the military lifestyle
- Unique partnership with the military community
- Special Education students remain in their home community

Value to the Local Economy

- Availability of cooperative (co-op) education opportunities (i.e. our school provides training placements for high school, college and university students in preparation for jobs in various fields of study)
- School as local employer, including bilingual employment possibilities

SCHOOL VALUATION SUMMARY - HERMAN STREET P.S.

Value to Students

- Quality of learning environment - collaborative staff, team teaching, dedicated teachers who give time for extracurricular activities and events, welcoming atmosphere
- Student Outcomes – character development (Herman Street Hero program), social awareness projects
- Range of program offerings: rotary program for Grades 6 – 8; French as a second language (FSL)
- Adequacy of physical space – computer lab, SERT and multi-sensory rooms, comfortable and expanding library, gym
- Adequacy of school's grounds – large yard for physical activities (soccer, baseball, basketball, volleyball), treed yard with environmental focus, new play structure
- Safety of the school – well organized bus loading and departure zone, separate Kindergarten yard
- Proximity of school to students – neighbourhood school; over 60% of students walk
- Proximity to community facilities – within walking distance or a short bus ride to facilities such as the Petawawa Civic Centre, public library, and parks

Value to School Board

- Condition and location of school – new port-o-pac, new boiler system, wheel chair accessible ramps and washroom, school office adjacent to main entrance
- Human Resources – collegial staff, administration and support staff, committed parent volunteers (hot lunch program), dedicated School Council, School Support Counsellor (SSC), Deployment Support Program
- Rotary program, deployment support program, FSL

Value to the Community

- Involvement of community in school and school staff in community
- Facility for community use
- Contribution to school-wide charity fundraising efforts (i.e. Walk for the Cure, World Vision Coin Drive)

Value to the Local Economy

- Availability of cooperative education and work experience placements with General Panet High School
- Availability of teacher training placements (Faculties of Education - Nipissing U. and Ottawa U.) and possible future employment possibilities
- Availability of Early Childhood Education/Social Services Worker training placements (Algonquin College) and possible future employment possibilities
- Availability of employment possibilities for spouses of military personnel

SCHOOL VALUATION SUMMARY - PINE VIEW P.S.

Value to Students

- Quality of the learning environment – collaborative team effort toward a common vision
- Mixed Abilities Classroom (MAC), dedicated School Support Counsellor (SSC)
- Student Outcomes – named a Lighthouse School, EQAO, Parent/guardian involvement, positive character education focus
- Range of extracurricular activities- athletic, arts clubs, parent workshops, science fair
- Adequacy of physical space – treed perimeter of yard, adjacent park, paved area, large open space
- Safety of school – separate bus entrance and parent pick up/drop off area, visibility of yard supervisors, separate playground for kindergarten students
- Proximity of school to students/length of bus ride – 214 students bussed; 16 walkers; 10 students driven
- Proximity to community facilities – Petawawa Civic Centre and CFB Petawawa facilities

Value to School Board

- Student Outcomes – Consistently improved EQAO results
- Range of program or course offerings – MAC class, pilot for 6+1 Writing Traits Model
- Condition and location of school – single level construction, recent renovations
- Fiscal and operational factors – largest school zone but smallest school based on population
- Human Resources – active parent volunteers and school council

Value to the Community

- Facility for community use
- Programs serving both school and community (i.e. fall supper, book fair)
- Involvement of community in school and school staff in community
- Contribution to school-wide charity fundraising efforts

Value to the Local Economy

- School as a local employer
- Availability of cooperative education and training placements (i.e. practice teaching for Faculties of Education)
- Attracts or retains families in the community – broad spectrum of students (1/3 military) rural and local
- School supports local businesses

SCHOOL VALUATION SUMMARY - PINECREST PUBLIC SCHOOL

Value to Student

- Quality of learning environment – smaller class size allows for instructional leadership across divisions, frequent teacher collaboration and reflection resulting from Literacy Numeracy Secretariat support, students engaged in learning
- Specialized teaching and support staff – Early Literacy Intervention Program, Special Education programs, dedicated deployment counsellor
- Physical space - school on one level, large book room, computer lab, gym, special education rooms
- Proximity of school to students – most students walk to school, sense of community, parents meet when they walk students to school
- Proximity to community resources and facilities – Dundonald Hall, Rec Plex, Silver Dart, General Panet High School, Petawawa Military Family Resource Centre (PMFRC)
- Student Outcomes – high expectations for students, character education, respectful learning environment
- Large playground for physical activity and extracurricular activities
- Safe school (from student and staff perspective)

Value to School Board

- Human resources – active parent volunteer
- Professional learning community

Value to the Community

- Parents value a staff and culture that appreciates and understands the military lifestyle
- Unique partnership with the military community
- Sense of community (parents drop off children)

Value to the Local Economy

- Availability of cooperative education and work experience placements with General Panet High School
- Availability of teacher training placements (Faculties of Education - Nipissing U. and Ottawa U.) and possible future employment possibilities
- Availability of Early Childhood Education/Social Services Worker training placements (Algonquin College) and possible future employment possibilities
- Availability of employment possibilities for spouses of military personnel

SCHOOL VALUATION SUMMARY - GENERAL PANET H.S.

Value to Student

- Quality of the learning environment –
- Student outcomes – specialist high skills majors, diverse streams of classes, leadership opportunities, student success
- Range of course offerings – French Immersion, High Performance Sports Program (HPSP), Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP)
- A strong partnership with the military exists regarding placement of co op students
- Co/extracurricular activities – leadership, sports, arts clubs
- Physical space – two gyms, library, tech wing, science labs, music room
- School safety – bus loading zone
- Proximity – reasonable bus times
- Proximity to community facilities and resources – CFB facilities, Civic Centre
Green space, public library
- Dedicated School Support Counsellors and Deployment Counsellors
- Assistance offered to new students with their transition to General Panet (Link Crew)

Value to School Board

- Student outcomes – one of 12 EQAO identified schools for literacy growth, very high graduation rate, student success program, high school transition program (Link Crew)
- Specialized teaching – communications tech, all academic pathways
- Human resources – professional learning community, partner with Town of Petawawa, strong parent council
- Focus programs such as French Immersion, HPSP and OYAP are known throughout the educational community

Value to the Community

- Facility for community use – Girl Guides, Boy Scouts, Military, OBA Basketball
- Programs offered that serve both students and community – nutrition
- Involvement of community in school and school staff in community – Relay for life, Terry Fox run, Community discussions with community recreation and AECL, Interact
- Staff run events/clubs – Band, Petawawa Ski Club, Minor hockey coaches, Coureur de Bois Running Club, OVFT Basketball,
- Host large spectator sports events – Panther Classic, Hockey Tournaments, elementary school sports events
- Grade 8 to 9 transition – Grade 8 visits, August orientation, Link Crew

Value to the Local Economy

- School as a local employer – majority of staff reside in Petawawa
- Availability of cooperative education and future employment – co op placements, an asset to AECL growth, pathway for local OYAP and skill development
- Attracts or retains families in the community – young families aid with housing boom, a benefit to CFB Petawawa and Town of Petawawa growth

- Benefits to local community – local business benefit from such events as Panther Classic, high school sports and General Panet reunion, Petawawa –officially one of top places to live in Canada

Factors for Consideration in the Accommodation of Students in the Petawawa Community

Several options for accommodating students in the Petawawa community were generated through the public consultation process including the following: Day Care – Grade 4; K – Grade 4 or 5; Grade 5 or 6 – Grade 8; Grade 9-12; and K- Grade 12.

In examining the various options and developing a recommendation for one solution, the Petawawa Accommodation Review Committee needed to consider several factors that would act as parameters in the decision-making process. These factors are described as follows:

Ministry is providing funding for 1000 students spaces:

In the Assistant Deputy Minister's letter to the RCDSB, she indicated that 525 elementary and 475 secondary pupil spaces had been approved for new school construction pending the completion of the Accommodation Review process. The Ministry's building benchmark is based on 104 square feet per elementary student and 130 square feet per secondary student. This results in 116,350 square feet of building space.

Prohibitive To Repair (PTR) solution criteria:

In the Assistant Deputy Minister's memorandum to school business officials, she identified four criteria developed by the ministry to help school boards identify projects for prohibitive to repair funding. They are:

1. The solution must address at least one PTR facility.
2. The solution should reflect current construction benchmarks.
3. The solution must address current and projected enrolment.
4. The solution should consider other funding sources where applicable.

Accommodating students in other Petawawa schools:

In reviewing the accommodation of students in the Petawawa Family of Schools, the Petawawa Accommodation Review Committee analyzed the impact of accommodating students from Pinecrest and General Lake Public schools into Pine View and Herman Street Public Schools. The enrolments from the current year as of October 31, 2008 were used in this analysis. The enrolments used are listed below:

General Lake Public School	301.5
Herman Street Public School	264.5
Pinecrest Public School	199.5
Pine View Public School	215
General Panet High School	414.25
Total	1,394.75
2008 Projection	1,347
Difference	47.75

Location:

The Ministry of Education's guidelines on Pupil Accommodation requires school boards to focus on a group of schools within a board's planning area rather than on a single school. The unique aspect of our situation is that all three prohibitive to repair schools are located on DND property at CFB Petawawa. This land is not owned by the RCDSB.

Board's Three Key Outcomes and Guiding Principles:

The RCDSB has identified three key outcomes that guide decision-making; excellence in teaching and learning; safe, caring and respectful learning environments; and wise use of resources. In addition, in the Board's own Policy on Pupil Accommodation states that the process is to be guided by the following three principles:

- that programs and services for students are preserved or enhanced;
- that schools provide a safe environment conducive to learning; and
- that resources made available for education are used to improve the quality of education for students.

Recommended Option for Petawawa School Community

In applying the above factors to the recommended solutions from the consultation process, the optimal solution for the accommodation of students in the Petawawa School community is a combined elementary and secondary school with grades kindergarten to twelve. The rationale for this decision is as follows:

- The funding provided for the construction of spaces for 1000 students would only support the construction of one new school with the amenities being recommended by the community. Constructing two facilities on two separate parcels of property would result in a duplication of services and restrict the board in being able to enhance programs or the facility.
- When various scenarios were considered to place students from Pinecrest and General Lake schools into either Herman Street or Pine View schools, the rated school capacity of the latter schools could not accommodate a logical integration of students without making extensive modifications to each building. There was very little flexibility in the PTR funding to allow for capital expenditures at these sites. The recommended solution provides for all students attending the three designated PTR schools to be accommodated within this new facility. This addresses all of the aspects of the PTR solution criteria.
- K-12 school of 1,000 pupil spaces would allow for the potential growth in the area resulting from the expansion of personnel and their families at Atomic Energy of Canada in Chalk River and CFB Petawawa.

- There is no existing site on DND owned land that could accommodate a combined elementary and secondary school with the required physical space of the facility (116,000 square feet of space) and the required parking, playground, sports fields for such a facility. In addition, Ministry officials indicated that construction on leased land would require a ‘risk management plan’ and a strong business case for construction. This process was viewed as being extremely time-consuming, complicated due to the numerous approvals required from multiple levels of government, and risky in terms of not being able to start construction of a new facility within the approved Ministry time frame.
- The construction of one K-12 facility meets the Board’s three key outcomes by maintaining and enhancing program delivery by mitigating the operating costs associated within ‘old and tired’ buildings. In addition, any savings generated from not having to support long-term facility renewal costs in the three PTR schools could be redirected to support programming (excellence in teaching and learning). In addition, new school construction can incorporate aspects of safe, caring and respectful learning environments, and 1000 student spaces in one facility would be a more efficient use of specialized learning and physical spaces such as: classrooms, administration area, library, cafeteria and gymnasiums.

Enhancements for New Petawawa School

The details of this section of the report represent a compilation of all the suggestions made by the various school communities during the presentations at the public meetings before the Petawawa Accommodation Review Committee.

Facility Considerations:

Elementary Learning Area

Academic Needs:

- Science laboratory
- Storage and book rooms for literacy materials and math manipulatives
- Life skills room with a kitchen for Special Needs Students
- State of the art computer equipment (e.g. Smart Boards, wireless capability, computers in each classroom, computer lab)
- Library staffed with qualified teacher-librarian
- Auditorium for the Performing Arts (Dance, Music, Drama)
- Large classrooms with white boards
- Enough classrooms to handle dual tracked school (English and French Immersion program)

Social, Emotional and Health Needs:

- Cafeteria
- Lockers
- Day care facilities
- Meeting rooms for military, community support personnel, public health officials
- Rooms for School Support and Deployment Counsellors to meet with students individually and in large groups
- Facilities for breakfast and nutrition program
- Staff room

Physical Environment Needs:

- Large double gym with male and female change rooms with showers and privacy lockers
- Large reception area at main office (capable of handling waiting parents and parents registering children for school)
- Large hallways to accommodate Daily Physical Activity program during inclement weather days

Secondary Learning Area

Academic Needs:

- Permanent seat auditorium
- Wireless facility with state-of-the-art computer technology
- Large library
- Subject specific areas of the school that support programs such as High Performance Sports, French Immersion and Special Education
- Co-op education classroom
- Photography and video production facilities
- Science classrooms need to be full service laboratories with storage/preparation areas for chemicals
- Greenhouse
- Spacious art and music rooms with storage capability
- Food preparation area with working kitchens
- Transportation/manufacturing/construction facilities with separate classroom as quiet teaching area and large garage doors for accommodating big equipment

Social, Emotional and Health Needs:

- Large, full-service cafeteria
- Staff room
- Large multi purpose health and training room
- Teacher preparation and conference areas

Physical Environment Needs:

- Full-size double gymnasium
- Large foyer
- Spacious main office area with appropriate defined spaces for individual offices
- Large properly equipped fitness room
- Climate controlled facility (proper ventilation and air quality)
- Adequate storage space within classrooms, hallways (for custodians) and gymnasium

Playground Considerations:

Elementary:

- Age-segregated areas including fenced area for day care and kindergarten students
- Outdoor skating rink
- Pool
- More outdoor play equipment
- Sports fields

Secondary:

- Soccer and baseball fields

- All weather track
- Pool

Site Considerations:

- Proximity to residential areas
- Proximity to recreational facilities
- Proximity to before and after school child care programs and facilities
- Adequate parking for staff, secondary students, parents, and members of public attending concerts or special performances in auditorium
- Separate bus loading and unloading zone
- Drop-off area for students away from bus loading zone

Points to Consider For Planning/Transition Process

- Continuation of the Board-sponsored Deployment Support program (Additional School Support Counsellor staffing to address the needs of students whose families are affected by the deployment of Petawawa Forces overseas)
- Transient nature of the school population places additional demands on school staff:
 1. High turnover of students can result in the admission and departure of up to 30% of a school's population in a given year.
 2. The crossing of provincial boundaries of these students often results in lags associated with delays in receiving accurate school records and variations in curriculum standards may require additional on site support for these students.
- Community interest in green school options for any new building construction.
- Impact analysis on bussing and traffic flow in and around any future building site.
- Petawawa Family of Schools is the only family able to support and maintain an immersion programme from K-12.
- Process for applying for cross boundary transfers be maintained.
- Herman Street and Pine View school zones be maintained.
- Transition team will consult with school community stakeholders to ensure a smooth transition and to contribute to a sense of community in the new school.
- Base Commander maintains military's ongoing support to the programs offered through PMFRC and Family Support Services to the new Petawawa School regardless of location. In addition, students and staff of the new school will continue to have access to base recreational facilities and the military's cooperative education placements.
- Parents who are unable to drive are concerned about being able to be involved in their child's education if the school is located off the military base. Transportation networks or options to facilitate the access of parents to the new school would be appreciated.
- It is important for military families to have a school that recognizes the culture of the military and identifies with the challenges of military life.

Accommodation Review Committee Members

RCDSB

Roger Clarke, Superintendent (Chair)
Roy Reiche, Trustee
Theresa Hein, Trustee
Bryan Baird, Principal

PARENT REPRESENTATIVES

Sonya McLaren, General Panet HS
Anna Montgomery, General Lake PS
Don Stewart, Herman Street PS
Jennifer Neville, Pine View PS
Lynn Deschambault, Pinecrest PS

CFB PETAWAWA

Lt. Col. Bill Moore, Base Commander

TOWN OF PETAWAWA

Bob Sweet, Mayor