

THURSDAY, AUGUST 30, 2007

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**BOARD APPROVES ACCOMMODATION REVIEW FOR NEWTONVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOL,
BROAD ORGANIZATION DIRECTIONS FOR 2007-2011**

At tonight's meeting of the Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board, Trustees approved the establishment of a joint Board/community accommodation review committee to consider the future of Newtonville PS. and a new goals framework for the next four years.

School Accommodation Review

In March 2007 the Board reviewed and revised its pupil accommodation policy to reflect new provincial directives regarding school reviews, specifically concerning school valuations. KPR schools may be considered for review on the basis of a number of key criteria, including: Underutilization, Overcrowding, Program Viability, Physical Condition, Operating/Maintenance Costs, Individual or Group Accommodation Plan, or exceptional circumstances like fire, environmental or health hazards.

The committee established this evening will hold a number of public meetings to examine the student accommodation needs at Newtonville PS. At the end of that study administration will prepare a report, with input from the committees, that will include recommendations on the future of the schools, including possible closure.

"Administration has a responsibility to bring to the Board schools that, for a number of reasons, have specific accommodation challenges. Together with members of the community, we will now take some time to discuss these local challenges before deciding on a course of action for the future," says Angela Lloyd, Board Chairperson.

In Spring 2007 administration discussed the continued status of multi-grade, combined classes with the parent community of Newtonville. At that time it was indicated that triple grades were planned to continue for the 2007-08 school year, and that parents would be allowed to send their children to Orono PS or Newcastle PS as an alternative. More than 50% of parents have accepted this offer which has resulted in the Newtonville PS site being made inactive for the current school year.

Strategic Direction Setting 2007-2011

With the Board's current strategic direction setting process, 2004-2007 concluding with a final report this evening, Trustees tonight approved broader organizational directives for the next four years. After a joint community/parent/school council and employee consultation exercise throughout the 2006-2007 school year, the Board endorsed three new central goals.

Framed within the context of "**Success for All Students**", the three broad directives are: Improved Student Achievement and Personal Development supported by Quality and Accountability.

"We believe it is vital that, every four years, we take time to ask ourselves, students, parents and the public that we serve, what are the areas that we should be working on. We asked all of our partners in education to help us

understand what they feel we are doing well, and where we need to improve,” says Angela Lloyd, Board Chairperson. “These new goals are the result of this input and we are excited about the path they will pave for our future.”

“Our consultation process was extensive and affirmed a number of things we held to be true. Namely, that we have been preparing our students well in a number of areas: as citizens and contributors to society, for academic success, in developing interpersonal skills and developing life skills,” says Sylvia Terpstra, Director of Education. “We believe the new four-year framework, “**Success for All Students**” adopted this evening will usher in a new period of innovative growth and success for our students and our Board.”

Areas of Emphasis 2004-2007

Also this evening, Director of Education Terpstra presented to the Board a final report concluding the Board’s efforts over the last three years in support of the 2004-2007 Areas of Emphasis: Student Achievement, Community Outreach and Engagement, Quality and Accountability and Organizational Effectiveness.

“We have made great progress in reaching our goals in each of these areas, and in particular have made concerted efforts to broaden our community partnerships in support of students,” says Terpstra.

Highlights of the Board’s work over the last three years noted by Director Terpstra include:

- developing Instructional Standards across the grades with an emphasis on kindergarten and primary programs
- a focus on special education training, qualifications and programs
- raising the percentage of students reading at Level 4 at the end of Grade 1 from 21% to 56%
- increasing the retention rates of secondary students to 95.5%
- decreasing the early-leaver rate of secondary students from 10% to 4.5%
- increasing the student graduation rate by 10%
- fostering a viable and growing adult education program through the Board’s Centres for Individual Studies.

Other business

Tonight Trustees also:

- received a final report regarding the conclusion of its approved the establishment of the Ladies Auxiliary, Legion Branch 178 Award, to be presented annually to a graduating student of Clarington Central Secondary School;
- received a number of Committee reports for information.

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