

YORK CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Report To: Board of Trustees
Report From: Director of Education
Date: October 1, 2008
Re: **Director's Report:**
Thornhill Markham - Accommodation Review Committee

Executive Summary

As part of the development of the Board's Long Term Plan (LTP), an accommodation review for Thornhill (Markham) was identified. The purpose of this report is to recommend that the accommodation review process be initiated for the Thornhill Markham area and to seek approval for the scope and timeframe of the accommodation review.

Background

In October 2006, the Ministry of Education issued "Pupil Accommodation Review Guidelines" which outline the necessary steps to follow when school closures are being considered. In accordance with the new guidelines, the York Catholic District School Board established a Pupil Accommodation Review Policy, Guidelines and a Generic School Valuation Framework, which were approved on June 17, 2008 and are available on the Board's website.

Planning Analysis

The Pupil Accommodation Review Guidelines state that a group of schools facing challenges in providing a suitable and equitable range of learning opportunities for students may be considered for an Accommodation Review.

The LTP identifies an opportunity to study the area in southwest Markham known as Thornhill Markham. There are currently three Catholic elementary schools located in the review area including St. Anthony, St. Rene Goupil-St. Luke and St. Michael Catholic Academy. The Ministry of Education has approved PTR funding for this review area to the amount of \$9,179,522 million. These funds provide an opportunity to enhance the student learning environment by considering options that may include program changes, boundary changes and/or consolidation.

In accordance with the Pupil Accommodation Review Guidelines, the Accommodation Review Committee (ARC) will complete the School Valuation Framework for each of the schools identified in the review area. The identification of a school in an Review Area does not imply that the school is necessarily being considered for consolidation. The ARC will be considering data and developing options for the Review Area related to a wide range of possibilities focuses on improving student learning opportunities. The ARC after considering all available data and alternatives will make recommendations to the Board regarding these matters. Subsequently, the

Board will also consider staff recommendations on these matters and the Board of Trustees will make the final decision. This process will take at least one year to complete in accordance to ministry guidelines and board policy.

The Board's Pupil Accommodation Policy states that after reviewing the *Director's Report*, the Board may direct the formation of an ARC for the selected Review Area. Appendix "T" identifies the participants that will be appointed to form the ARC.

In accordance with the Pupil Accommodation Review Guidelines, it is the responsibility of the ARC to undertake the following steps related to the review process for each area:

- Customize the Generic School Valuation Framework
- Compile the data outlined in the School Valuation Framework for each school identified in the Review Area
- Notify the community that the Pupil Accommodation Review process is underway
- Convene the required public meetings (minimum 4)
- Compile a School Valuation Report with recommendations regarding school accommodation and school consolidations in the Review Area.

Once the ARC has completed their process and made recommendations, Administration will also have an opportunity to submit a report, with recommendations to the Board. The Board of Trustees will also consider public input before making their final decision regarding accommodation in the Review Area.

It is anticipated that any accommodation changes resulting from the ARC would begin to be implemented in the 2010-11 school year to allow adequate time to complete the process including consultation and any transitional planning that may be required.

Summary

Conducting an Accommodation Review in Thornhill Markham will allow the board and the community to explore alternatives to enhancing the long term learning environment for students in the area. The following recommendations are laid out in accordance with the board's Accommodation Review Policy.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That the initiation of an Accommodation Review Study for the Thornhill Markham area be approved in accordance with the York Catholic District School Board's Pupil Accommodation Review Policy and Guidelines;
2. That the Associate Director of Learning Services be identified as Chair of the Accommodation Review Committee (ARC);
3. That invitations to the ARC be sent immediately;

LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

D) Accommodation Review Committee Membership

Prepared by: Christine Hyde, Planner and Tom Pechkovsky, Manager of Planning Services
Submitted by: Dan McCowell, Senior Manager of Administrative Services
Endorsed by: Susan LaRosa, Director of Education and Secretary of the Board

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The Pupil Accommodation Review Policy 713 identifies the membership of the ARC as:

Composition of the ARC:

From each affected school:

- *School Principal or Designate*
- *One Teacher*
- *One non-teaching staff member*
- *Three parents – one of whom will be the school council chair*

Also invited:

- *A parish representative*
- *Municipal councilor or designate*
- *Member of the business community*

The ARC also has the authority to co-opt additional members

The ARC will also have access to various resources within the board such as:

- Superintendent of Schools
- Planning Services
- Communications
- Plant
- Transportation
- Finance
- And others as required