



**Thornhill Elementary Schools
Accommodation Review Committee**

School Valuation Report

Report To: Director of Education
York Catholic District School Board

Report From: Thornhill Elementary Schools Accommodation
Review Committee

Submitted On: June 19, 2009

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1.0 Executive Summary

At the October 7, 2008 Board meeting, Trustees approved a recommendation to initiate an Accommodation Review process for the Thornhill (Markham) community of schools which included St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School, St. Michael Catholic Academy and St. René Goupil-St. Luke Catholic Elementary School. An Accommodation Review Committee (ARC), which included parents, principals, teachers, non-teaching staff and parish representatives from all three schools, was fully constituted on December 11, 2008. The mandate of the ARC was to review the current situation in Thornhill (which included declining enrolment and two prohibitive to repair facilities) and develop an accommodation option which would ensure suitable and equitable learning environments for all students, while consistently being aware of best education practices.

This report outlines the recommendation of the Thornhill Accommodation Review Committee and details the work completed by the ARC throughout the entire process.

2.0 Accommodation Review Process

In October 2006, the Ministry of Education issued the “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 (see Appendix-1A, Appendix-1B and Appendix-2), which were approved on June 17, 2008.

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 York Catholic District School Board’s Long-Term Accommodation Plan 2007-2016 (LTAP) indentified the opportunity to study the area in southwest Markham, referred to in the LTAP as the Thornhill Markham community. There are currently three Catholic elementary schools located in the review area including; St. Anthony, St. Michael Catholic Academy and St. René Goupil-St. Luke. On April 9,

2008 the Board received a letter from the Ministry of Education (see Appendix-6) confirming the planning approval of Prohibitive to Repair (PTR) funding for this review area in the amount of \$9,179,522 to address the facility conditions for students attending St. Anthony CES and St. Michael Catholic Academy. On December 4, 2008, the Ministry of Education announced top-up funding for the Board to accommodate the future implementation of Full Day Learning for Four- and Five-year olds (FD45), and a capital funding benchmark increase of 7 per cent to reflect higher construction costs including the implementation of green standards. This top-up resulted in a total project budget of \$10,855,994 (see Appendix-7). This funding is still subject to Ministry of Education final approval. This provided the Board with an opportunity to enhance the student learning environment by considering options that may include program changes, boundary changes and/ or consolidation.

2.1 Purpose of the Accommodation Review

The York Catholic District School Board recognizes its responsibility to provide effective and appropriate accommodation for the pupils of the Board. In keeping with this obligation, the Board, staff and members of our Catholic Learning Community must consistently be aware of best education practices, assess the effectiveness of current situations, and make appropriate decisions to ensure suitable and equitable learning environments for all students. There may be times when it is appropriate to consider consolidation of schools or programs, closure of a school(s) or relocation of a major program in order to provide an optimum learning opportunity and/or environment.

2.2 Establishing an Accommodation Review

At the Regular Board Meeting of Tuesday, October 7, 2008 the Board of Trustees for the York Catholic District School Board approved a recommendation to initiate an Accommodation Review process for the Thornhill (Markham) area, involving the following elementary schools: St. Anthony, St. René Goupil-St Luke and St. Michael Catholic Academy. The Board motion goes on to state the following:

“The identification of a Review Area does not imply that schools are necessarily being considered for closure or consolidation. Various options will be considered in order to ensure the ongoing suitable and equitable range of learning opportunities students in the Review Area. The process will invite public participation and take at least one year

to complete, in accordance with Ministry guidelines and Board policy. It is anticipated that any accommodation changes resulting from the Accommodation Review would begin to be implemented in the 2010-11 school year to allow adequate time to complete the process, including extensive consultation and any transition planning that may be required.”

2.3 Composition of the Accommodation Review Committee (ARC)

The Board’s policy identifies that the ARC will consist of the following persons:

- Appropriate Superintendent of Education;
- From each affected school:
 - the school principal or designate
 - one teacher
 - one non-teaching staff member
 - three parents – one of whom will be the school council chair or designate;

The ARC will also invite the following to join the ARC:

- a parish representative,
- municipal councilor or designate and
- a member of the business community

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

In accordance with the above composition guidelines the following table includes the Thornhill Elementary Schools Accommodation Review Committee membership list:

Name	Affiliation	Representing
Patricia Preston, ARC Chair, Associate Director, YCDSB		
Andy Di Sebastiano, ARC Secretary, Superintendent of Education: School Leadership, YCDSB		
Norbert Koehl	CSC Chair	St. Anthony CES
Sam Cuda	Parent	St. Anthony CES

Maureen Hurley	Parent	St. Anthony CES
Amanda Butters	Teacher	St. Anthony CES
Tony Patriarca	Non-Teaching	St. Anthony CES
June Buick	Principal	St. Anthony CES
Joe Wigglesworth	CSC Chair	St. Michael Catholic Academy
Louie Gavros	Parent	St. Michael Catholic Academy
Patricia Santiago-Sorrell	Parent	St. Michael Catholic Academy
Dayna Fitzpatrick	Teacher	St. Michael Catholic Academy
Melodie Curran	Non-Teaching	St. Michael Catholic Academy
Luisa Busato	Principal	St. Michael Catholic Academy
Tracy O'Connor-Lauzon	CSC Chair	St. René Goupil-St. Luke CES
Diane Scaini	Parent	St. René Goupil-St. Luke CES
Paul Wilkie	Parent	St. René Goupil-St. Luke CES
Lisa Falconi	Teacher	St. René Goupil-St. Luke CES
Angie Della-Rovere	Non-Teaching	St. René Goupil-St. Luke CES
Gordon Lovgren	Principal	St. René Goupil-St. Luke CES
Father William Burns	Parish	St. Luke Parish, Thornhill
Lisa Thalassinos	Parish	Good Shepherd Parish, Thornhill
Carol Cotton	School Trustee	Markham, Area 1, Wards 1,2,3,6

At the November 20, 2008 Working Group Meeting (#1) the ARC voted in favour of co-opting the area Trustee, Carol Cotton as an additional member.

Letters of invitation were also sent on behalf of the ARC to the Town of Markham Councillor for Ward 1 and the President and CEO of the Markham Board of Trade (see Appendix-14). Unfortunately due to the time commitment involved in the process both parties sent regrets and were unable to accept the invitation or name a designate. The ARC was fully constituted on December 11, 2008.

2.4 Meetings of the Accommodation Review Committee

As outlined in the Board Policy, the ARC held four public meetings in order to receive input from the community on the following issues:

- a) **Public Meeting #1:** At the first public meeting, the ARC described its mandate, outlined its study process, and gave the public a briefing on the data and issues to be addressed. The ARC also described how the School Valuation Framework and the school specific Valuation Factors have been customized. After the presentation and brief question/ answer period the ARC encouraged the community to engage ARC members and resource staff located at four information kiosks set up throughout the gymnasium.
- b) **Public Meeting #2:** At the second public meeting, the ARC presented its draft school-specific valuation reports, applying the school valuation factors to the schools under consideration, to the public for input. After the presentation and question/ answer period the ARC encouraged the community to engage ARC members and resource staff located at four information kiosks set up throughout the gymnasium. Three of the kiosks were dedicated to the school-specific valuation reports/ school valuation factors while one kiosk was dedicated to the ARC process and contained information from Public Meeting #1.
- c) **Public Meeting #3:** At the third public meeting, the ARC received community input on the six accommodation options to be considered. After the presentation and question/ answer period the ARC encouraged the community to engage ARC members and resource staff located at four information kiosks set up throughout the gymnasium. Three of the kiosks were dedicated to the six accommodation options while one kiosk was dedicated to the ARC process and contained information from Public Meeting #1 and Public Meeting #2.
- d) **Public Meeting #4:** At the fourth public meeting, the ARC presented its draft School Valuation Report and recommendation to the public and received community input. After the presentation and question/ answer period the ARC encouraged the community to engage ARC members and

resource staff located at three information kiosks set up throughout the gymnasium. Two of the kiosks were dedicated to the recommended accommodation option while one kiosk was dedicated to the ARC process and contained information from Public Meeting #1, Public Meeting #2 and Public Meeting #3.

In preparation for the four public meetings, the ARC was also involved in (14) working group meetings. These working group meetings were designed to facilitate the exchange of ideas, comments and/or concerns between ARC members on the topic which were to be presented at the public meetings. Although working group meetings were catered around ARC members, the public was invited to attend, as observers. The number of observers which attended the working group meetings steadily increased throughout the entire accommodation review process.

Detailed minutes of all of the public meetings and working group meetings (see Appendix-128 to Appendix-170) were kept and made available to the public via the Board's website. In addition, any questions or comments received as a result of these meetings were processed through the ARC and posted on the Board's website.

2.5 Resources Available to the Accommodation Review Committee

Throughout the entire process ARC members relied on a number of tools to assist them in developing and assessing potential accommodation options. These resources include the School Valuation Framework (see Appendix-102 to Appendix-106), the ARC resource binder and the knowledge of resource staff. All of the information contained within the resource binder (including the School Valuation Framework) was made available to the public via the ARC website.

2.5.1 School Valuation Framework

Prior to the commencement of the ARC, the Board in accordance with the Ministry of Education Guidelines developed and approved a Generic School Valuation Framework (GSVF). The GSVF is a "tool" available to the ARC designed to assess each of the following four considerations regarding the schools being reviewed:

- *Value to the student*
- *Value to the community*
- *Value to the school board*
- *Value to the local economy*

The GSVF forms the base and the ARC is then invited to customize the framework to address unique local factors which should be considered during the ARC process. The customization and valuation process also allows the ARC members to gain a better understanding on all of the schools involved in the process.

2.5.2 ARC Resource Binder

The resource binder provided to all ARC members included the following:

1. The Board's most recent Long Term Capital Plan to provide a context for the accommodation review;
2. Background information regarding the schools located within the area of the accommodation review including:
 - Organization and programming information for each school under study
 - Maps of area
 - Enrolment and capacity information for each school in the review area;
 - Information outlining where students attending each school in the review area reside;
 - Demographic projections concerning future enrolments at schools within the review area;
 - Information on transportation
 - Floor plans of schools under study
 - Site plans of schools under study
 - Data on portables
 - Expenditures and revenues for each school in the review area with particular emphasis on school operations (i.e. heating, lighting, cleaning, routine maintenance), school administration and staffing;

- Information regarding renewal needs of each school in the review area; and
- Information regarding the current community use of each school in the review area.
- Tenant information/agreements and other relevant information.

All information contained within the ARC binder was made available on the Board's website.

2.5 School Tour

On January 12, 2009 ARC members participated in a tour of all three schools involved in the accommodation review process. The evening included a guided tour of each facility as well as a tour of Our Lady Help of Christians (Richmond Hill) which was added to the tour to provide ARC members with a better understanding of how newer schools are designed.

2.5.4 Resource Staff

Resource staff was made available at all public and working group meetings to assist the ARC members in deciphering any information in the resource binder and to address any questions regarding Board/Ministry policies and guidelines. Resource staff was also available to respond to reasonable requests for additional information from the ARC, as directed by the chair.

2.6 Communication Strategy

Very early on in the process the ARC realized the importance of developing an effective communication strategy (see Appendix-19A) to ensure that the community was continuously informed throughout the process. Notice of the public meetings was provided through school newsletters (see Appendix-23A to Appendix-25), the Board's (ARC) website, parish bulletin and advertisements in local community newspapers (see Appendix-17 and Appendix-20 to Appendix-22). All public meeting notices included the date, time, location, purpose, contact name and number. In addition to the public meeting notices the ARC developed a communication strategy to assist the community through the entire accommodation review process. This communication strategy included the following:

- Creating an ARC dedicated webpage as part of the www.ycdsb.ca website, which included all materials available to the ARC, with information posted 48 hours in advance of every meeting where possible.
- Creating ARC bulletin boards in all schools involved in the accommodation review process. These bulletin boards contained all of the relevant ARC materials including a flowchart of the process, public meeting announcements and contact information.
- Creating an easy-to-read flow-chart of the entire accommodation review process. This poster sized flowchart was distributed to all schools and parishes involved and outlined next steps and meeting dates (including time, purpose and location) of the Thornhill Accommodation Review Process (see Appendix-171).
- Creating an ARC newsletter which was distributed to students from all three schools involved in the ARC process. The newsletter was designed to further explain the ARC process and address “frequently asked questions” (see Appendix-19B).
- Meeting with staff at all three schools to help further explain the ARC process and timelines.
- Posting meeting dates and times on the boulevard signs located in front of all three schools

2.7 Community Input

Community input was an integral part of the Accommodation Review process. Throughout the entire process the public was encouraged to share their ideas and comments through email, voicemail and “Feedback Sheets” available at all of the public meetings. All comments and questions were reviewed and responded to by the ARC and made available to the public via the ARC website.

Members of the community were also welcome to attend all working group meetings as observers of the process.

3.0 Analysis

As outlined in the Board policy, the ARC was required to consult with the public throughout the entire process. In total the ARC hosted four public meetings and (14) working group meetings. The tasks that

the ARC was required to accomplish were structured around the presentation of this work at each of the four public meetings.

3.1 School Valuation Framework

Prior to the first public meeting, the ARC customized the Board's Generic School Valuation Framework. As outlined in the Accommodation Review Guidelines, the ARC was able to add additional considerations to the framework but did not remove any factors. Through the first three working group meetings (see dates below) leading up to Public Meeting #1, ARC members discussed and debated any and all additions to the Generic School Valuation Framework to capture the unique identity of each school community. Through a majority vote the ARC developed the Customized School Valuation Framework and began preparing for the first public meeting (see Appendix-103 and Appendix-104).

- **Public Meeting #1 (February 5, 2009 – St. Michael): Receive public input on the proposed Customized School Valuation Framework (39 participants signed in)**
 - Working Group Meeting – Information Session (November 20, 2008 – St. Anthony)
 - Working Group Meeting #1 (December 11, 2008 – St. Michael)
 - Working Group Meeting #2 (January 8, 2009 – St. René Goupil-St. Luke)
 - School Tour (January 12, 2009) ARC members visited all three schools as well as Our Lady Help of Christians (located in Richmond Hill)
 - Working Group Meeting #3 (January 22, 2009 – St. Anthony)

3.2 Customized School Valuation Framework (CSVF)

After first reviewing and debating the community input received from Public Meeting #1, the ARC made amendments to, and finalized the CSVF. The ARC then needed to value each of the schools using the approved framework. The exercise, which took place during Working Group meetings #4 - #6, involved each school community valuing their home schools as well as the other two schools included in the accommodation review. The ARC then completed a valuation for each school. In most cases there was consensus; however in some cases, after a discussion surrounding the interpretation of the question(s), the individual groups changed how they initially valued themselves and/or other schools

or the original value remained. Once completed (through a majority vote) the ARC began preparing for Public Meeting #2 (see Appendix-104 to Appendix-106).

- **Public Meeting #2 (March 26, 2009 – St. René Goupil-St. Luke): Receive public input on the Completed Customized School Valuations (27 participants signed in)**
 - Working Group Meeting #4 (February 19, 2009 – St. René Goupil-St. Luke)
 - Working Group Meeting #5 (March 5, 2009 – St. Anthony)
 - Working Group Meeting #6 (March 12, 2009 – St. Michael)

3.3 Proposed (ARC) Accommodation Options

After reviewing the input received from Public Meeting #2, the ARC revisited and amended some of their original values. The ARC then finalized the CSVF. With the completion of the CSVF the ARC then proceeded to “brainstorm” any and all possible accommodation options. The ARC decided that all potential accommodation options should be considered including relocated programs, boundary changes, new facilities, renovation, additions, etc. Throughout the course of the next three Working Group meetings, resource staff provided the background information for each option including enrolment projections, proposed sizes for new schools/ additions and proposed costing. The initial costing was done by an architectural firm. Resource staff addressed ARC concerns about high costs by indicating that these were high level concepts and that further refinement would be required. During the process, cost estimates were revised. In total the ARC developed 14 potential accommodation options which grew to 19 once amendments to the original options were factored in. A complete description of all proposed boundary options is available in the Appendix of this report. After further review of all of the options, and through a 2/3 vote (as outlined in the Board’s Pupil Accommodation Review Policy), the ARC decided to proceed with 6 proposed accommodation options.

- **Public Meeting #3 (April 30, 2009 – St. Anthony): Receive public input on the (6) proposed accommodation options (93 participants signed in)**
 - Working Group Meeting #7 (April 2, 2009 – St. Anthony)
 - Working Group Meeting #8 (April 16, 2009 – St. Michael)
 - Working Group Meeting #9 (April 23, 2009 – St. René Goupil-St. Luke)

3.4 Final Recommendation and Draft ARC Report

After reviewing input from Public Meeting #3, the ARC began the process of re-evaluating the remaining (6) options. Through further discussion and after reviewing public input, the ARC members voted (through a 2/3 majority) to remove four of the six options. The two options which remained included Option #4 (Revised B) and Option #7 (Revised). Minutes for Working Meeting #11 (included in the appendices of this report) detail the discussion which preceded the elimination of Options #5 (Revised), Option #10, Option #13 (Revised) and Option #14. At this point the ARC directed resource staff to develop possible boundary options for the remaining options.

A number of different boundary scenarios were developed for Option #4 (Revised B) and Option #7 (Revised). The ARC members, with the assistance of resource staff, evaluated each boundary scenario and eliminated those (through a 2/3 majority) which they determined did not meet the mandate of the ARC. After further discussion surrounding the limitations of constructing a new facility on either the St. Anthony or St. Michael sites, the ARC voted (through a 2/3 majority) to eliminate Option #4 (Revised B) and proceed to Public Meeting #4 with Option #7 (Revised) as the recommended option for the Director of Education. During Working Group Meeting #13 a member of the ARC committee stated their intention to submit a Minority Report which they intended on sharing with the rest of the ARC members at final working group meeting.

OPTION	VOTES TO REMOVE
7 Revised B	19
7 Revised C	19
4 Revised C	18
4 Revised B	14
7 Revised	4

NOTE: A total of 19 ARC members were in attendance during the voting (Excluding the ARC Chair and Secretary)

- **Public Meeting #4 (May 28, 2009 – St. Michael): Receive public input on final recommendation and DRAFT ARC Report (124 participants signed in)**

- Working Group Meeting #10 (May 7, 2009 – St. Michael) – *Meeting Cancelled and rescheduled for May 25, 2009*
- Working Group Meeting #11 (May 14, 2009 – St. René Goupil-St. Luke)
- Working Group Meeting #12 (May 21, 2009 – St. Anthony)
- Working Group Meeting #13 (May 25, 2009 – St. Michael)

Input from Public Meeting #4 was reviewed by the ARC at their final Working Group meeting (#14) held on June 4, 2009 at St. René Goupil-St. Luke. During this final working group meeting, the ARC took into consideration all input received from the community (including a review of the Minority Report), reviewed the revised costing estimates for all of the options and finalized their report to the Director of Education.

4.0 Recommendation

In accordance with Board Policy #713 the Thornhill Elementary School Accommodation Review Committee is recommending Option #7 (Revised) to the Director of Education for the York Catholic District School Board (Refer to table in section 3.4).

Proposed Option #7 (Revised)

- St. Michael Catholic Academy – New 443 pupil place school, Arts Program Only
- St. René Goupil-St. Luke CES – (8) additional classroom spaces required, Regular Track Only
- St. Anthony CES – Close
- Relocate PACE Program from the Thornhill Community
- Under this scenario the boundaries for St. Michael Catholic Academy would remain intact. The boundary for St. René Goupil-St. Luke CES would expand to include the entire geography of the existing St. Anthony CES boundary (see Appendix-115)
- As outlined in the Board policy, an Integration Committee consisting of school council chairs (for each of the three schools), school principals, the local Trustee and area Superintendent will plan for and implement the positive integration of students and staff affected by this accommodation option.

In developing the final recommendation to the Director of Education the ARC took into consideration a number of different factors which they shared with the community at Public Meeting #4 (see Appendix-170). These additional factors included:

School Size

The size of the new St. Michael facility and addition at St. René Goupil-St. Luke are designed to accommodate the long-term needs of the community. For example, the ARC explored alternative options which called for the construction of a larger facility (834 pupil place) but through further discussion and community input, it was determined that this was not a viable option.

School Site

The size (4.68 acres) and configuration of the St. Michael site will provide the Board with the most flexibility when designing a new school facility. In addition, the larger frontage of the St. Michael site will allow for the creation separate bussing and parent drop off areas.

The St. Michael site is part of a larger campus which includes Good Shepherd Parish, German Mills Public School and a municipal park. The site is situated in close proximity to major transit corridors and is easily accessible by public transit.

Disruption to Students

Under this option, the boundary for St. Michael Catholic Academy would remain intact while the St. René Goupil-St. Luke boundary would expand to include the entire St. Anthony community. This option will create two viable Thornhill schools without the need to amend boundaries and/or split existing school communities.

School Organization

The existing enrolment at both St. René Goupil-St. Luke and St. Anthony has been declining over the past several years as the communities immediately surrounding the schools continue

to mature. This ongoing decline in enrolment has made it increasingly challenging for either school to offer a “straight grade” structure. The larger student population, as a result of amalgamating the St. René Goupil-St. Luke and St. Anthony school populations may minimize the need for combined grades.

The ARC determined early on in the process the “dual track” schools (i.e. offering regular track programs and arts programs in the same facility) were not a preferred option. The ARC drew on the experience of teachers and staff that had previously been involved with dual track schools prior to proceeding with accommodation options with only included single track schools.

Long-Term Viability

Along with addressing the PTR needs at St. Anthony and St. Michael, the ARC members created an option which is intended to ensure the long-term viability of the Thornhill (Markham) community. The total proposed capacity of the remaining schools will meet the needs of the existing communities and any additional growth experienced as a result of new development.

Proximity to Parish

Under this option there will remain one viable school community within the Good Shepherd and St. Luke parish boundaries (see Appendix-47).

Due to the location next to the Good Shepherd Parish, many opportunities exist. The opportunity to attend daily mass on occasion and during the holiday seasons of Lent and Advent enable students to get closer to their God which is the whole reason for Catholic schools to exist. The opportunity for alter servers to serve at daily mass. There is also the children’s choir which sings every Sunday. Of course the parish’s proximity always allows students to drop-in whenever they wish.

Ministry of Education Considerations

The recommended option satisfies the mandate of the Thornhill Elementary Schools Accommodation Review Committee while at the same time meeting the intent of the proposed funding allocation as outlined by the Ministry of Education.

As outlined in the Board policy, the final recommendation must consider the following questions:

- a. Does the school or group of schools currently provide the range of mandatory programs required to meet the Ministry of Education policies and ensure program quality for all the students of the District School Board who reside in the catchment area?
 - *Yes, all schools currently provide all mandatory programs required to meet Ministry of Education policies for students who reside in the catchment area.*

- b. Does the school or group of schools currently provide the range of optional programs required to ensure an appropriate education and program quality for all the students? What optional programs cannot be offered currently that are available in other District School Board schools?
 - *Yes, all schools currently have access to a range of optional programs.*

- c. Is the operation of the schools or size of schools supported by the funding guidelines of the Student-Focused Funding Model or are there other sustainable sources of revenue to support the operation?
 - *No, beginning in 2009 two of the schools (St. Anthony and St. René Goupil-St. Luke) will be operating at 74% and 80% utilization respectively and therefore require top up funding for operating costs. Two of the three schools have been deemed PTR and therefore have higher than average maintenance costs which are not supported by provincial funding. There are no other sources of revenue to support the operation of these schools.*

- d. Do enrolment projections and development plans indicate that the enrolments will be high enough for the next five years to keep the current organization educationally and financially viable?

- *No, enrolment (existing and new development) only supports the need for two schools within the Thornhill community.*
- e. Is there a proposed organization of all or some of the existing schools that could result in each remaining school being able to provide the range of mandatory programs required to meet the Ministry of Education policies and ensure program quality for the Board's students who reside in the existing or proposed catchment area, and that could result in each remaining school being able to provide the range of optional programs required to ensure an appropriate education and equity for all the students? What optional programs could be offered in the proposed organization that are available in other District School Board schools?
- *Yes, the proposed organization could provide the range of both mandatory and optional programs required to meet Ministry of Education policies. Other optional programs available in other District School Board schools could include: Intensive Support and Assessment Centre, Language Centre, Autism Spectrum Disorder Centre, Hearing Centre, Program for Academic and Creative Extension, Reading Recovery Program, etc.*
- f. Can the proposed school organization result in an equivalent or improved environment for the students from a health and safety perspective?
- *Yes, the recommended option considers the demolition of the existing St. Michael facility and rebuilding a larger school on the existing site as well as an addition to St René Goupil-St Luke. The outcome of the construction of a new school to replace an existing school will result in an improved physical learning environment for the students. The school site and floor designs will address pedestrian and vehicular traffic issues; lines of sight which are fundamental to the enhancement of better supervision and therefore safer learning environment; and, life safety and property protection systems (e.g. fire alarm and suppression systems). From a health and safety perspective, the environment will be improved. The increased size of the new St. Michael facility will also eliminate the need for the portables which are currently located on site and being used to accommodate students.*

- *The school organization option requires eight additional classrooms at St René Goupil – St Luke Catholic Elementary School. The Library is appropriately sized to accommodate the increase in student population. The addition would not require extensive upgrades to the existing facility. An addition maintains the lines of sight which are good. The life safety and property protection systems will be extended. An addition to the school will result in an equivalent health and safety environment from a student perspective.*
- g. What bussing would be required under the proposed organization? If there are increased bussing costs, can these be offset by reduced operating and administrative resource costs?
- *Bussing will increase due to the elimination of a neighbourhood school. These costs can be off set by some of the operation savings of closing a school, however routing efficiencies may also be gained by serving larger populated schools.*
- h. What are the financial benefits of the proposed school organization that would enable the Board to maintain or improve the student learning environment? Would the operation of the proposed school organization be supported by the funding guidelines of the Student-Focused Funding Model or are there other sustainable sources of revenue to support the operation of this organization?
- *The proposed school organization would reduce current operating and administrative costs.*
 - *The overall capital budget available for this program is \$10,855,994.*

Facility	School	Cost Estimate
<i>New School</i>	<i>St. Michael</i>	<i>\$7,500,000</i>
<i>Addition</i>	<i>St. René Goupil-St. Luke</i>	<i>\$1,500,000 - \$1,750,000</i>
<i>Fees</i>	<i>Both</i>	<i>\$1,000,000</i>
Total		<i>\$10,000,000 - \$10,250,000</i>

- i. What are the capital requirements of the proposed school organization be in terms of renewal, additions, new schools or program enhancements? Would they be supported by the funding

guidelines of the Student-Focused Funding Model or are there other sustainable sources of revenue to support the capital requirements, such as the shared use of a building or site?

- *Capital requirements are the construction of a new school at St. Michael and an addition at St. René Goupil-St. Luke. Yes, these costs will be supported by the funding guidelines of the Student-Focused Funding Model as per the Ministry's Planning Allocation.*

j. Do alternative organizations of all or some of the schools offer better long term opportunities to provide quality educational services and accommodation for students within current fiscal realities?

- *Yes, larger enrolment for St. René Goupil-St. Luke with the addition of the St. Anthony population minimizes the number of combined grades required. By combining the two schools in one, the option takes advantage of surplus capacity within St. René Goupil-St. Luke, therefore maximizing current fiscal realities. The development of an Arts specific school will assist the Board in providing quality educational services and accommodation for those students within the program. It is anticipated that the construction of spaces complimentary to the Arts Program will be financially feasible within the Ministry benchmark available.*

k. What effects would the proposed organization have on community activities of social, educational, cultural or recreational nature?

- *The proposed school organization would enhance the learning (educational) environment of all three school communities while at the same time sustaining the long-term viability of social, cultural and recreational activities in the community.*
- *The proximity to the Parishes of both St. Michael and St. René Goupil-St. Luke enhances the faith life of the students and strengthens the partnership between Church, home and school.*

l. What are the possible alternative uses for any building recommended for consolidation or closure?

- *Encourage the Board to continue to use the facility for learning opportunities*
- *French Immersion*
- *Office Space*
- *Adult Learning Centre*

The following summary Outlines how Option #7 (Revised) will potentially impact the York Catholic District School Board:

- m) The implications for the program for students both in the school under consideration for consolidation, closure or program relocation and in the school(s) where programs may be affected.
- *All programs including the Arts program at St. Michael will not be affected by the building of a new school at the St. Michael site.*
 - *All “regular” programs may be enhanced by the consolidation of St. René Goupil-St. Luke and St. Anthony through school trips and other activities not easily done with a few students or in combined grades.*
 - *The Grade 5-8 PACE program currently at St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School will be relocated but the substance and quality, and teachers delivering the program will not be affected.*
- n) The effects of consolidation, closure or program relocation on the following:
- i. The attendance area defined for the schools
 - *The St. Michael attendance area will remain the same as it is currently, but the attendance areas of St. Anthony and St. René Goupil-St. Luke will be combined.*
 - ii. Attendance at other schools
 - *Under this option there is no impact on surrounding schools attendance areas except for the introduction of PACE to a school outside of Thornhill (yet to be determined).*
 - iii. The need and extent of bussing
 - *Based on the existing enrolment at St. Anthony (excluding PACE) an additional 3 to 4 busses would be required.*
- o) The financial effects of consolidating or not consolidating the school, including any capital implications
- *There are a number of financial implications on the consolidation of these schools.*
 - *Capital – There will savings with the elimination of two PTR facilities.*

- *Operational - There will be maintenance and administrative savings.*
- p) Revenue implications as a result of the consolidation, closure or program relocation
- *There are no revenue implications.*
- q) Savings expected to be achieved as a result of the consolidation, closure or program relocation
- i. School operations (heating, lighting, cleaning, routine maintenance)
 - *Under the school organization that is being proposed, St. Anthony Catholic School would close. The custodial complement in this school is 2.5 FTE custodians. Cost avoidance of utilities, maintenance, custodial and other expenditures is estimated to be \$200,000 annually.*
 - ii. Expenditures to address school renewal issues which will no longer be required
 - *Over the next ten year period, the cost of facility renewal needs at St. Anthony and St. Michael is estimated to be in the order of \$1,500,000 and \$2,000,000 respectively for high/urgent needs only, and not including standard repair items.*
- r) Additional expenditures, if any, at schools which will accommodate students displaced as a result of a consolidation, closure or program relocation decision taken by the board
- i. School operations (heating, lighting, cleaning, routine maintenance)
 - *The addition to St. René Goupil-St Luke Catholic School will generate between 5,500 to 7,200 square feet and will result in an annual estimated cost of \$30,000 to \$36,000. Increasing the size of St. Michael Catholic Academy from 36,555 square feet to 46,500 square feet will result in annual estimated increased operating cost of \$40,000.*
 - ii. School administration
 - *There will be no additional expenditures for school administration.*
 - *There will be a cost saving of one school administration salary due to the consolidation of St. Anthony and St. René Goupil-St. Luke Catholic Elementary Schools.*
 - iii. School renewal

- *Increases in school renewal are expected to be minimal. For a new St Michael Catholic Academy and a new addition to St. René Goupil-St Luke the increased cost may be in the order of \$100,000 over the next ten years for high/urgent needs only, and not including standard repair items.*
- iv. Transportation
 - *Please refer to section 4.0 b) and c)*
- s) Net savings/costs associated with:
 - i. Teaching staff
 - *There will be no net savings or additional costs associated with teaching staff as they are generated using Ministry and Board staffing formulas.*
 - ii. Paraprofessionals
 - *There will be no net saving or additional costs associated with paraprofessionals. These are assigned based on student needs and are allocated using Ministry profiles and Board formulas.*
 - iii. Student transportation
 - *Although there will be an increase in bussing for St. Anthony students there are potential savings with the relocation of the PACE program to off set some of the increase.*
- t) The possible alternative use or disposition of an empty building
 - *Sell property*

5.0 Additional Considerations

St. René Goupil-St. Luke Catholic Elementary School

- It is a priority of the ARC that childcare continue to operate on site, and that the Board works with the childcare provider to ensure the long-term viability of the program at St. René Goupil-St. Luke CES
- Enhance the library and other non-classrooms space at St. René Goupil-St. Luke CES

- Provide a double gymnasium
- Provide a computer lab
- Program enhancements that will consider all aspects, including possible French and Science enrichment, to increase the viability of St. René Goupil-St. Luke CES.
- Provide support for professional learning development
- Provide opportunities for students to feel truly integrated
- Provide for separate student drop-off area

St. Michael Catholic Academy

- New facility to have purpose built space designed to support the Arts Program, including a substantial stage, music room, visual arts studio and dramatic arts centre, as well as storage for the dramatic arts.
- Provide a double gymnasium
- Provide a computer lab
- Provide for separate parent and bus loops
- Maximize play space through positioning of new facility

Both Facilities

- New facilities to be constructed to a LEED standard equivalent
- Playground enhancements
- Budget for resource to enhance existing fixed assets and learning resources
- Thornhill Markham community event for integration
- Move PACE program as a whole
- Peace Garden/Reflection Area
- Green/Vegetable Garden

6.0 Summary

In October 2008 Trustees of the York Catholic District School Board initiated an Accommodation Review process for the Thornhill (Markham) community of schools. The area, which is bounded by Highway 7 (north), Yonge Street (east), Steeles Avenue (south) and Highway 404 (west), contains three

Catholic elementary schools including St. Anthony CES, St. Michael Catholic Academy and St. René Goupil-St. Luke CES. The Accommodation Review was initiated by Trustees to address the long-term viability of the Thornhill (Markham) school community. In recent years enrolment in the area has steadily declined as the surrounding community continues to mature and two of the three schools (St. Anthony CES and St. Michael Catholic Academy) have been deemed Prohibitive to Repair (PTR) by the Ministry of Education.

An Accommodation Review Committee (ARC), consisting of parents, principals, teachers, non-teaching staff and parish representatives, was constituted in December 2008 to develop an accommodation option for the Thornhill (Markham) community. Over the course of 14 Working Group Meetings, 4 Public Meetings, 1 school tour, significant community input through email, voicemail and public meetings, as well as countless hours spent reviewing background information the ARC developed a total of 22 possible accommodation options. Through further consultation and feedback from the community the ARC choose to recommend Option #7 (Revised) – as described above – to the Director of Education for the York Catholic District School Board.

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