

## Thornhill Elementary Schools - Accommodation Review Committee

### Minutes of ARC Public Meeting #4 held May 28, 2009, 7:00 p.m. at St. Michael Catholic Academy 41 Simonston Boulevard, Thornhill

#### In attendance:

**ARC Chair:** Patricia Preston, Assistant Director  
**ARC Secretary:** Andy Di Sebastiano, Superintendent of Education: School Leadership

#### Members:

Norbert Koehl	CSC Chair	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
Maureen Hurley	Parent	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
Amanda Butters	Teacher	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
Tony Patriarca	Non-Teaching	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
June Buick	Principal	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
Joe Wigglesworth	CSC Chair	St. Michael Catholic Academy
Louie Gavros	Parent	St. Michael Catholic Academy
Trixie Santiago-Sorrell	Parent	St. Michael Catholic Academy
Dayna Fitzpatrick	Teaching	St. Michael Catholic Academy
Melodie Curran	Non-Teaching	St. Michael Catholic Academy
Luisa Busato	Principal	St. Michael Catholic Academy
Tracey O'Connor-Lauzon	CSC Chair	St. René Goupil-St. Luke Catholic Elementary School
Diane Scaini	Parent	St. René Goupil-St. Luke Catholic Elementary School
Gord Lovgren	Principal	St. René Goupil-St. Luke Catholic Elementary School
Father William Burns	Parish	St. Luke Parish, Thornhill
Lisa Thalassinios	Parish	Good Shepherd Parish, Thornhill
Carol Cotton	School Trustee	Markham, Area 1, Wards 1,2,3,6

**ARC Facilitator:** Dan Del Bianco, Watson & Associates

#### ARC Resource Staff:

Bryce Eldridge	York Catholic - Superintendent of Plant
Dan McCowell	York Catholic – Senior Manager, Administrative Services
Tom Pechkovsky	York Catholic – Manager of Planning Services
Christine Hyde	York Catholic – Planner
Joe McLoughlin	York Catholic – Manager of Maintenance Services
Chris Cable	York Catholic Communications Manager

**Recording Secretary:**  
Silvana Greco  
Wendy Cosentino

**Public Observers Signed In:**  
There were 124 participants signed in. Refer to Appendix A attached.

#### Absent with Reason:

Sam Cuda	Parent, St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
Lisa Falconi	Teaching, St. René Goupil-St. Luke Catholic Elementary School
Paul Wilkie	Parent, St. René Goupil-St. Luke Catholic Elementary School

1. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

The meeting was held in the St. Michael Catholic Academy Gymnasium and was called to order by the ARC Chair at 7:00 p.m.

2. PRAYER

The ARC Representative for the Good Shepherd Parish, Thornhill, led the community in a prayer before the meeting.

3. WELCOME

The ARC Chair welcomed the community to the fourth Public Meeting of the Thornhill Accommodation Review Committee (ARC). Members of the community were reminded to sign-in and note school affiliation. Minutes of Public Meeting #4 will be posted to the ARC website at [www.ycdsb.ca](http://www.ycdsb.ca).

An information package was distributed to the community containing the Thornhill Elementary Schools Accommodation Review Committee Draft School Valuation Report and Public Meeting #4 Feedback Sheet.

4. INTRODUCTIONS

At this point in time, the ARC Secretary and Superintendent of Education – School Leadership, Andy Di Sebastiano, was introduced along with the 21 voting members of the ARC as mandated under Board Policy 713. The ARC voting members represent Catholic School Councils Chairs, parents, teaching and non-teaching staff from each of the 3 schools under review, along with, representation from the 2 community parishes – St. Luke and Good Shepherd, and, school trustee for Markham, Area 1, Wards 1,2,3,6. Members of the ARC Resource Team were also introduced as well as the ARC facilitator to the Board in attendance from Watson & Associates.

The ARC Chair reviewed the accommodation process as set forth by the Ministry of Education and indicated that it is expected to take at least one year to complete. It is anticipated that any accommodation changes would begin to be implemented in the 2010-2011 school year to allow time to complete the process, including extensive consultation and any transitional planning that may be required. The goal of the review is to arrive at recommendations that will make the best use of facilities and resources, while maintaining and enhancing the quality of learning environment and superior programming for students.

The purpose of Public Meeting #4, as required under *Board Policy 713, Section 2.4, Meetings of the ARC*, provided an opportunity for the ARC to receive community feedback on the ARC proposed accommodation option and Draft School Valuation Report. Those in attendance were encouraged to give their input by using the Public Meeting #4 Feedback Sheet. All submissions must be submitted to the ARC no later than Monday, June 1, 2009, 4:00 p.m.

6. PRESENTATION – THORNHILL ACCOMMODATION REVIEW

The ARC Chair welcomed 3 Committee members to present on the work of the ARC to date.

Thornhill Accommodation Process:

A representative of the ARC reviewed the process, including work completed by the ARC to date.

The ARC members have met since November 2008 consisting of 13 Working Group meetings to date. A guided school tour of all three schools was held including the tour of a recently constructed

facility, Our Lady Help of Christians. A total of 4 Public Meetings have been held with the completion of the evening meeting.

The ARC has:

- reviewed and customized the School Valuation Framework to reflect the uniqueness of the Thornhill community
- valued each school
- developed and evaluated possible accommodation options
- created a (draft) School Valuation Report which contains the ARC's recommended option

### Contents of the Draft School Valuation Report

A second representative of the ARC reviewed the contents of the Draft School Valuation Report.

The final School Valuation Report will be submitted to the Director of Education for York Catholic District School Board on June 19, 2009. The report documents all of the work completed by the ARC throughout the process. It will also include the ARC's recommended accommodation option.

The ARC is looking for input from the community on the recommended option but also on the contents of the draft school valuation Report.

Sections of the report still need to be completed but are dependant on the outcome of Public Meeting #4, feedback received this evening and Working Group Meeting scheduled for June 4, 2009.

The Report consists of 7 sections including:

- The Executive Summary
- The Accommodation Review Process
- The Analysis
- Recommendation
- Additional Consideration
- The Summary
- Appendices

The focus of Public Meeting #4 was a review of Sections 2 to 5 of the report:

Section 2 outlined all of the elements which make up the Accommodation Review:

- Purpose of the Accommodation Review
- Establishing an Accommodation Review
- Composition of the Accommodation Review Committee
- Meetings of the Accommodation Review Committee
- Resources Available to the Accommodation Review Committee
  - School Valuation Framework
  - ARC Resource binder
  - School Tour
  - Board Resource Staff
- Communication Strategy
  - ARC Website
  - Newsletters
  - ARC Bulletin Boards in each of the 3 schools
  - Advertising in local papers, Parish Bulletins, School Boulevard Signs
- Community Input
  - Community input has been welcomed and a valuable asset throughout the process
  - The ARC reviewed all of the information sent in by phone, fax or email

Section 3 outlines:

- Generic and Customized School Valuation Framework
  - This tool is designed to assist ARC members in becoming familiar with each school community
  - This section describes the process the ARC undertook to develop the Customized School Valuation Framework and how the individual schools were valued
  - The values were divided into four categories including Value to the Student, Value to the Board, Value to the Community, Value to the Local Economy
- Proposed ARC Accommodation Options
  - This section explains the process the ARC went through to develop preliminary accommodation options and how the six were decided upon for presentation at Public Meeting #3
- Draft ARC Report and Recommended Option
  - This section describes how the ARC decided on the recommended option to bring forth to this Public Meeting #4.
  - Additional work is still required on this section. To be added is this evening's input and results of the Working Group Meeting of June 4<sup>th</sup>.

Section 4 includes a description of the ARC's recommended Option (Option 7 Revised). It also addresses a number of questions the ARC must consider in their recommendation and how the recommendation will potentially impact the York Catholic District School Board.

Section 6 includes additional elements or a "wish list" for the Board to consider:

- Program Enhancements
- Design Elements
- Disposition of Assets
- Suggestions Around the Usage of the Surplus Facilities.

## 5. RECOMMENDED OPTION & NEXT STEPS

A third representative of the ARC described in detail the recommended Option #7 Revised and the next steps in the process.

### Option 7 Revised:

- St. Michael Catholic Academy
  - New 443 pupil place school, Arts Program Only
  - Boundary for St. Michael would not change
- St. Rene Goupil – St. Luke
  - 8 additional classroom spaces required, Regular Track Only
  - Boundary for St. Rene Goupil-St. Luke would expand to include the entire geography of the existing St. Anthony boundary
- St. Anthony
  - Close
  - Relocate PACE Program out of the Thornhill Community

The proposed boundary alignment and projected enrolment map were also reviewed.

The Next Steps will involve:

- The ARC to review input from Public Meeting #4 at their next Working Group Meeting on June 4<sup>th</sup>
- Finalize School Valuation Report and present to the Director of Education for the York Catholic District School Board on June 19, 2009
- No decision will be made until Fall 2009 – date to be determined

The Director of Education will establish this committee immediately following the final decision to close a school.

Members will include:

- School Council Chairs, School Principals, Local Trustee, Area Superintendent, Resource Personnel that may assist committee

Purpose:

- To plan and implement the positive transition of students and staff affected by the approved accommodation option.

## 7. COMMUNITY QUESTION & ANSWER PERIOD

A question and answer period followed, moderated by the ARC Chair. Community members were invited to ask questions in the open mike session. The community was notified that all questions and answers would be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. Those questions that may require additional research would be responded to at a later date.

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|----|-------------------------|-----------|---|
| 1. | Parent<br>SML Community | Question: | “Why are we presenting to the trustees so late? Can it be done before the end of June?”   |
|    |                         | Response: | <b>There are certain time requirements in place in terms of the timing for presentation of the Draft School Valuation Report to trustees. Timelines are in place to provide the ARC with ample opportunity to make decisions, develop questions and responses, and receive community response. It also provides the opportunity for staff to prepare the ARC report. The Staff report back to the Board of Trustees is another opportunity for discussion. The process being followed is in accordance with the Board policy.</b> |
| 2. | Parent<br>SML Community | Question: | “Next steps – after presentation to trustees, should it not say “move to get approval from Ministry of Education”? From time Board of Trustees approves report, how long is it before it goes to the Ministry of Education?”  |
|    |                         | Response: | <b>The process for approval of a capital project is outside the scope of the ARC. Following approval by Trustees, the Board will approach the Ministry of Education for approval.</b>   |
| 3. | Parent<br>SML Community | Question: | How long does the Ministry of Education take for approval?  |
|    |                         | Response: | <b>We do not have that information.</b>   |

4. Parent  
 SAY Community

Question:

“Please explain – was it down to Option 4 and 7; and, what makes Option 7 more superior? Why was Option 4 thrown out?”

Response:

**All options were put forward and reviewed. A 2/3 majority vote was needed to keep/remove option from consideration. There was a great deal of agreement on many of the options. The ARC reached agreement early on, on some things, i.e. no dual track school, move PACE. In the end, the options remaining were considered based on the site itself.**

**On final vote, Option 7 was not removed. Knowing the community did not want one super school resulted in a 2 school solution. It was agreed that St. Rene Goupil/St. Luke, as the newest school in ARC mandate, have an addition (additional classroom space). A new school would be better whether on site SML or SAY. The SML site was eventually chosen as it is the larger of the 2 sites with a proportionate frontage for pick-up and drop-off; it is adjacent to a large park; it is accessible to highways and transit; and it is located adjacent to the church (Good Shepherd parish). Option 7 would keep 1 viable school in each parish. Essentially, these were advantages of the site chosen.**

5. Parent  
 SAY Community

Question:

Speaking as parents, there will be no Catholic school in the area where we live. I understand building next to parish; but don't understand why we in Ward 1 don't end up with a Catholic School.

Response:

**There is a parish where you live. The committee made the decision to keep 1 viable school in each parish.**

6. Parent  
 SML Community

Comments:

A couple of points would like to make:

- Closing Catholic schools jeopardizes Catholic education in the province and threatens the future of funding for Catholic Education.
- Re lack of enrolment – there are so many portables here (SML) – why can't we move some of those kids from portables to St. Anthony?
- It would be a huge error to move the PACE program from Thornhill; this is an opportunity for kids in this area to strive for excellence.
- It should be an option to redistribute programs or add Arts program to St. Anthony whatever keeps St. Anthony school alive.

Response:

**There are 75 students in the PACE program and 4 come from the Thornhill area. The policy of the Board is that PACE should be located as centrally as possible so that it minimizes the bus ride for students. There is pressure to move the PACE program because of 1.5 hour bus rides – this reality has been addressed.**

7. Parent  
 SAY Community

Question:

"I have 1 daughter who is 2 years old, not quite ready for school yet. Would hope she would be at St. Anthony. I have a concern with the ARC process and composition of the committee. One of the members on the ARC is a trustee. When the report goes to Trustees it will be difficult to keep neutral because a trustee is on the committee. How can that be fair? Don't have fault – trustee accepted the invitation. Why did the Board not raise a red flag?

Legal opinion that the Dufferin Peel Board of Education obtained indicated that the presence of a trustee would change things - would colour the ARC process. Open letter from counsel says that trustees will refrain from attending and giving opinion before community. The Ministry of Education is concerned that this be a public and independent process.

Shared legal opinion – Dufferin Peel received opinion from legal counsel – presence of trustees would change dynamics of meetings, trustees could have biased decisions. How could this be ignored? Why wasn't there someone from the Ministry or board staff who should have come forward?

Response:

**We received a lot of direction from the Ministry of Education as to who should be on the ARC – parents, teaching, non-teaching, etc. The ARC can make recommendations to co-opt others – to have the opportunity to have recommendations to contribute to the committee. The Trustee is fair-minded to all schools. At the end of the review process, the Board will be looking at the policy and procedures and making recommendations.**

8. Parent  
 SAY Community

Question:

"When my family moved here 6 years ago, St. Anthony and its location was one of the primary considerations – Catholic school within walking distance. Removing the Catholic presence means no Catholic facilities. It is very unlikely I will put my kids on a bus. I understand the need for accommodation – very confused that it is told to us that the purpose of the committee was to make a decision to support the Thornhill community. Art school built larger - wish them well, there is a need for this kind of thing. Children at St. Anthony are doing well; the school is winning awards; it is a place we can walk safely to. It is the focus of the community so it is disturbing that this type of recommendation is coming out. If they take my school away, it will be part of removing Catholic education in our province. People at the board are thinking of locating their facilities on the edge of boundaries – what is the impact on the over all bussing times for children, impact on the cost of bussing, impact on the environment. For PACE program, locating facilities according to where students live put on new districts not central which will impact bussing. Cost of bussing, environment should be same analysis. It is a bureaucratic thing – revisit this process and recommendations. Will run into opposition – reconsider timelines.

Response:

**Ward 1 and Ward 2 are political boundaries; the ARC took into consideration Catholic parish boundaries.**

**Transportation costs are estimates. In terms of transportation students at St. Anthony will be considered in the recommendation. Ride time on initial review will be roughly 20-25 minutes, with 3 busses servicing the area. We will do more work to give information needed.**

9. Parent  
 SAY Community

Question: "One of objects in the Board reports in 2007, was to minimize bussing. Losing a viable community school and putting students on busses is not a solution.

Recurrent theme from Public Meeting #3 and this meeting #4 was that public input is very important. Voicing opinions on the objectives from Public Meeting #3. None of the recommendations brought forward at Public Meeting #3 - to assess, review, revisit options, remove options – none of them were considered except for the mega school. Not once did any one of the recommendations come up for review – this is a flawed process. Were any of the options revisited? Did not bring up as ARC – did not bring up as it was not in ARC minutes. This was brought to Ms. Preston's attention. Why did the discussion with the chair not show up in the minutes. The whole ARC process is window dressing. None of the information was talked about. Introductions or options were not shown in minutes. More responsibility of chair to have public input considered. Right decision to maintain community school."

Response: **They may not have been recorded in the minutes but in dialogue of the meeting. When input is received from the public, there are 2 assistants to record and organize it in advance and distribute to all ARC members to prepare for meetings. All feedback/input is presented to ARC members for consideration. It is the responsibility of the ARC to review and their decision whether to raise for discussion.**

10. Parent  
 SAY

Question: Was the feedback/input from public meetings looked at?

Response: **Yes. It was discussed at the meeting. The fact that the ARC chair addressed the ARC Committee did not show up in the minutes does not mean it was not reviewed. ARC members are asked to consider public input when looking at options. Community feedback/input is also posted to the ARC website.**

11. Parent  
 SAY

Question: "My son goes to St. Anthony. Six months ago I was approached by an elderly neighbour. Talked of proposed subway coming up– 2 stops close to Kirk, etc., and proposed residential development coming. Area was going to explode. But – now will not have school to go to. Did you consider criteria when you went through proposal?

Response: **In the enrolment projections that factor into these options - currently and on the way - we are aware of subways and new building. High density does not usually result in large number of students but all assumptions are built in. We have looked at other jurisdictions that are much denser. We have done a lot of demographic work. We do not go into the process to close school.**

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| 12. Parent<br>SAY Community              | Question: | “How many students of YCDSB will be lost with the closing of a school. 2 schools within 30 second walk from St. Anthony. Kids will go to Public and French Immersion – the other schools has the Arts.”   |
|  | Response: | <b>This is a debate that happens in every community – there may be a loss and that is unfortunate, but certainly would hope not. It is the hope that the community will see the value of Catholic education.</b>  |
| 13. Parent<br>SAY Community              | Comment:  | “It takes a village .... I chose to send my son to St. Anthony because of its stellar reputation. There is no bullying at St. Anthony. Everyone knows each other. Principal says hello to my son every morning. I don't think he will be eligible for bussing under proposed option. Right now it is a wonderful walk to St. Anthony. When he is older will he be able to take his bike? If we go to St. Rene Goupil-St. Luke we will have to cross a busy street, go by commercial area and mall. Will have to cross train tracks. Asking us to increase carbon foot print – take away community. Spend for gas – spending free time – which is taking away from my children.” |
| 14. Parent<br>SML Community              | Comment:  | “When I first heard about the ARC, decided was a conspiracy - thought SML would close. Was ready to go to Ministry to complain. But we have gone through the whole process. Went to first public meeting and then started going to working meetings. The ARC members have gone through a lot of work. The Board resource were there to guide. The ARC Secretary kept referring back to the Ministry guidelines to ensure they were doing the right things. I am impressed with the ARC members. Looking at logistics of property at school on TCH 19 – I do bring my daughter to school from out of area – and as a result support the Thornhill community in many ways.”       |
| 15. Parent<br>Richmond Hill<br>Community | Question: | “With regards to PACE program, do you know where it will move to? And when? Is there public input on this?”   |
|  | Response: | <b>Our Board has asked the Special Education Department to review all the PACE centres. Some Centres were established 15 years ago. At that time students were coming from those areas. We are finding now in some of our schools we have few students. We need to find out where students are coming from, what is a reasonable location, where do we have room to house the program. These conversations will go on through the next year. There will no changes for next year. Yes, there is a consultation with parents as part of the review.</b>  |

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| 16. Parent<br>Richmond Hill<br>Community | Comment: | "I do appreciate the difficult job the ARC members have difficult decision. My first time here, somewhat of a perception problem – perception of taking the Arts program as a special project over community input."  |
| 17. Parent                               | Comment: | "Don't feel you should close school because this would be loss of Catholic Education. Difficult situation. Perception – trying to articulate how to defend how factors weighted. Arts project over community input."  |
| 18. Parent<br>SAY Community              | Comment: | "Revisit qualifications of the PACE program to include more community children."  |
| 19. Parent<br>SML Community              | Comment: | <p>"The ARC process is very open and scientific – all these community volunteer members tried to do their best for all the students in this area – we're just trying to improve our facility – we're not trying to move more students. The ARC tried to do something better for the community, better use of the resources, land. When we studied profiles and enrolment for all 3 schools - St. Rene Goupil-St. Luke &amp; St. Anthony have dropped. St. Michael has maintained a steady enrolment. I chose St. Michael for daughter as a better place to study, park nearby, better frontage.</p> <p><b>Response given by St. Anthony CSC Chair Member of the ARC: I had frustration with the data. Re: Option 7, in mid April it would cost 14 million, by end of May it would cost 10 million. 14.8 suddenly became 10 million. Certain options were weeded out because of the money. Decision on the option is not unanimous. Under Board policy, a group of individuals can submit a minority report. I am preparing it and will present to the Board. No one does not want St. Michael to have a new school – the Arts is a good program. Feeling is why does St. Anthony has to be sacrificed for the Arts. Keep St. Anthony and St. Michael.</b></p> |
| 20. Parent                               | Comment: | "Have heard a lot about bussing. Kids cannot walk to school. Something that we need to balance. School not within walking distance – giving up time with daughter. See other parents giving up time coming to pick-up children. Parents trying to pick-up/drop-off – precious time but feel important to have daughter in program."   |
| 21. Parent<br>SAY Community              | Comment: | "My son wants a normal school in his community, he doesn't want the Arts."  |
| 22. Parent<br>SAY Community              | Comment: | "Talking about long term viability - why is St. Michael taking so many students from out of area? Thornhill students should be considered for Thornhill first."   |

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| 23. | Parent<br>SAY Community            | Comment:  | “I have heard Carol Cotton say PACE should be moved to central location. If a lot of kids using the Arts at St. Michael, move them to where they are and use money for Thornhill students.”  |
| 24. | Parent<br>SAY Community            | Comment:  | “PACE is a very vibrant part of the school. I have heard many times, there are only 4 Thornhill students there. Revise qualifications of the program to include more local school students and maintain integrity of the program.”   |
| 25. | Parent                             | Question: | Page 16 of the DRAFT report – states traffic patterns would remain unchanged at St. Rene Goupil-St. Luke.  |
|     |                                    | Response: | <b>It would remain unchanged based on 3 busses. The assumption is made that all students would be bussed.</b>  |
|     |                                    | Question: | “Parents will drive to school – many cars will show up before and after school. Misleading to St. Anthony – should not be in draft.”   |
|     |                                    | Response: | <b>Part of receiving input is that we can amend the report.</b>  |
| 26. | Parent<br>St. Anthony<br>Community | Question: | “Look at numbers. The whole thing started because of 2 schools being PTR. Why don’t we back up and forget these options? What if we split it in half? Suddenly 1 school is not replaced, the other school gets all the money. 200 students from Thornhill. Do without these options. Give St. Anthony \$5,000,000. Let St. Anthony decide what kind of programs we want. With \$5 million, we can put Arts program or Science, or any program we want.”  |
|     |                                    | Response: | <b>All St. Anthony comments have been articulated by your chair and you should be proud of that. We have all been voted into our roles by our school so that we can all have a voice. Discussions at the ARC are open and consensus driven. Everything is a written process/policy driven so difficult not to follow process. With respect to St. Michael, the school does have a lot of students from outside the area. We are part of the YCDSB, part of York Region. Students coming from other areas in York Region. From stats for students locally, there were more walking to St. Michael. With regard to costs and \$10 million, we did discuss the idea of splitting the funding between the 3 schools. We tried to use the money as best as possible and find a viable option between schools. It did not support cost for renovation or growth. St. Michael has been chosen as an Arts school as per data. There was discussion at the beginning of the process that the Arts program is valued by the community. Value to student to see them be able to appreciate the program. As mentioned, taxes are not part of the ARC’s mandate. It is the decision of parents to give Catholic education for their children.</b> |

27. Parent (and Graduate)  
 St. Anthony

Question:

"I recently moved back into community. I am raising my own children now and wanted to move back to the community where I grew up. I was shocked to learn that St. Anthony is closing. Baythorn Public may be my school – it's a decision that I'm struggling with. I want you to take that into consideration."

28. Parent & Teacher  
 OLHC  
 Community

Comments:

- 90% of students at OLHC are bussed and the principal is struggling with congestion, driveway blocking. There should be consideration about bussing – and parent drop off/pick up. You go there at the end/start of the day and everyone including the parking enforcer is having a field day.
- Re: PACE – no one asked us where we want our kids to go. Bureaucracy exists, but they can make exceptions. When parents of PACE students found out it's at St. Anthony, they were glad their children wouldn't feel overwhelmed; if moving PACE, talk to parents first before making a decision
- I tried for 4 years to get my kids into St. Michael; I could not get them in because I could not drive them to school. Parents are driving their kids from other areas to St. Michael because they love the curriculum. If the goal is what best serves all, why are we putting the program in a school on the border of Metro Separate - why did they put an Arts school at the edge of Steeles. Why not move the Arts program to more central location like Pope John Paul?
- If the parish proximity is so important, it's slated to be demolished – what's wrong with bussing the kids for 5 min to go to church

29. Parent  
 SAY Community

Question:

"Proximity to church should not be a deciding factor. Closing SAY – you're taking a school out of a community – you have not given consideration to the value that catholic school gives. Planners and architects are great at putting figures on paper but not the final decision. In today's economy these renovations can be tendered – there is a way to keep all 3 schools open."

30. Parent  
 SML Community

Question:

"I understand (CSC Rep) is a member of the ARC. I saw the vote for Option 7. I understand from Ministry of Education guidelines you had to have 2/3 of school behind him. How can an ARC member who was voted in by the school council be objective and not put in his own emotions? How could he guide his own member from the community?"

Response:

**The group as a whole will be submitting a majority report. It requires a 2/3 vote (66%) to pass or remove an option. The majority report will reflect that. Any committee member according to the Board policy can create a Minority report. The CSC Rep from St. Anthony is well within his rights.**

31. Parent  
 SAY Community

Question:

“Question with Recommendation on Pg 18 – if we end up closing St. Anthony and consolidate, we need more details on what enhanced means? What are our children getting in return?”

Response:

**The ARC had a discussion on this that falls within the mandate. The ARC does have an opportunity to recommend new programs. We can make recommendations in the ARC report to enhance the new school. Some examples that have been discussed are to keep the daycare, update the gym and library. Please send an email with your suggestions/ideas so that the ARC can consider. You heard earlier about the Integration Committee – a mandate of that committee is to make recommendations, i.e. science focus, computer technology focus.**

32. Parent  
 SAY Community

Question:

“Demographics – real estate with high density. Really did not change school area because young adults were moving in. In Thornhill, all our young families have chance to move in area for lower costs. Demographics should be looked at again. Baythorn was suggested. PTR. How did St. Anthony get that designation and when was it implemented? How about St. Michael? Concerned – invited to meeting at St. Rene Goupil-St. Luke with 3 principals, Trustee, and 3 school council chairs. At that time, St. Michael made a presentation to renovate school to accommodate Arts program and wanted the Board to fund it. We have new designation – money coming from the Ministry of Education. Timing dead on for Board to say lets tear one down. Who initiated this?”

Response:

**There was a study headed up Dr. Rozanski in 2001-2002. The Ministry of Education became aware of maintenance upkeep on schools – it is a huge investment in the educational infrastructure. Some boards have been presenting to the Ministry on the condition of their schools. In 2003, we had a consultant come through all our schools. The consultant was a Ministry person (not Board). Upon reviewing, they created a document (Recapp Report) that we and the Ministry have. The study looked at life expectancy, what would it take to improve components, and at what point in time would it be improved? We were advised 65% for 2 of our schools – one being St. Michael. Within the first 5 years, we were to exceed 65% of the cost to rebuild the school – it was deemed PTR. A second review of schools was done in 2006 and this included St. Anthony. At that time, St. Anthony met the PTR threshold. The Recapp Report indicated that the Ministry had identified \$9,000,000 for St. Anthony over a 30 year period to meet improvements that would be needed to components in the school.**

33. Parent  
 SAY Community

Question:

“I have attended a lot of the ARC meetings. The cost of all options has been very confusing. \$14,000,000 to \$10,000,000 million. Did you revisit the costs of the options once new estimates were received? What was the percentage of the costs that changed? Renovations to St. Anthony was too high. What is the accuracy of the costs of all options and is it available for all to see?”

Response: **We did go back and review options on final round. When we started the whole process, we were dealing with concepts, based on rough estimation. Costs were considered and weighted; initially, round off of estimations available. Within the last 2 weeks, we received tenders on new schools that were a lot lower than previously received – we used those figures for the last 2 options. On renovations, we will stand by the same numbers. We have not gone back to look at renovations at all 3 schools. If you address all of the issues at once, going to be scope of cost. Components of building decide on code impact. If they were refined they would probably still exceed funding available. We are recording your comments – if that is your request, we will work on having this information posted to the ARC website. They will still be working figures - estimates - as we continue to work with architects to get final numbers.**

34. Parent  
 SML Community

Question: “It’s not about St. Anthony vs St. Michael – I commend you for being here tonight – if you wanted to know more, you should have come out to the public meetings. ARC did a lot of work – we at St. Michael have nothing against St. Anthony. I was there when the decision was made – it wasn’t easy.”

Response: **It is an emotional issue, people have to express what they feel.**

35. Parent  
 SAY Community

Question: “What weight was given to proximity to the parish when making the decision?”

Response: **It certainly is one of the factors. The School Valuation Framework comes from the Ministry. One of the values we added was proximity to the parish.**

36. Parent

Comment: “Four years ago I presented a Music proposal to help St. Anthony because enrolment was down. If we had some support at that time to keep our enrolment up, we would have children to sustain it – sorry you couldn’t help then, maybe you can help now.”

37. Parent  
 SAY Community

Question: “For consideration – have been speaking to parents who have children who have graduated from St. Anthony. When told St. Anthony was closing they said they would switch their taxes to public. Why support a catholic school if not in area.”

38. Students from  
 SAY

Comment: “Ever since 1966 St. Anthony has been a great school. When we found out St. Anthony was going to close we made a petition for every student to sign and they did. We have our petition here. Every single student from St. Anthony has signed to not have their school closed down.”

Response: **The ARC Chair thanked the students of St. Anthony and accepted the petition on behalf of the ARC.**

39. Parent

Question: “What kind of additional funding is available for a program like St.

SML Community

Response:

Michael that would be over and above what has been earmarked for PTR. Is there a possibility to obtain additional funding not only to keep St. Michael with arts program, but also keep St. Anthony with the PACE program?”

**The Ministry has a number of capital initiatives – in previous years we actually had some level of control over funding for new schools – because of a change in demographics in region, we no longer qualify and have to apply for any capital funding. It is a 2 step funding process. One is growth related and PTR is a separate funding. The funding we have received is tentative planning approval and subject to the ARC process. It is earmarked to service the needs of the community. There will likely not be additional funding for this area.**

40. Parent  
 SML Community

Question:

“What increased enrolment will there eventually be in St. Anthony area within the next 5 years? Can we sustain both schools for that timeframe – is there a way to push the process so that it can be explored further? There has to be additional funding the Ministry is able to provide for both schools.

Response:

**The Board does not have the funding – we rely on the Province on giving us capital funds. This exercise is happening across the province. The province is trying to do the best they can – we are lucky we have funds that create an opportunity.**

41. Parent

Question:

“I acknowledge the hard work of the ARC committee – they are working very hard. I do think that his process has gone on in such a way that the recommendations are not satisfactory. \$10,000,000 meets needs of the Arts School and hope that St. Michael is maintained. But there must be a way to maintain a school in our neighbourhood - keep the life of St. Anthony. We watch demographics of the area. What it means to me – Thornhill area vs region. I ask the ARC to approach the Board to push back the date, to approach the Ministry and continue working on the problem. Which needs are being met should be in the Report.”

42.

Question:

“Thank you to the ARC Committee – not an easy process. Suggest pushing back timelines – it hasn’t been a community process – PACE program is community based. Revisiting the cost to repair the school after the estimate went down – it does make sense to review again. Is there any discussion/funding perspective – opportunity that the board can go and get a loan with low interest rates? Studies and consultants have not indicated what percentage may leave the system based on this decision. Send out a survey – it might be worthwhile to get an idea what the impact might be.”

43. Parent

Question:

"If SAY needs to be closed, what are the required repairs? How much would it cost? I would like to request to review all 3 schools, look at the money, and make it feasible for all 3 schools."

Response:

**Although St. Anthony has been designated PTR, in terms of the site being considered for an alternate purpose, the building is still a safe environment.**

The question and answer period concluded at approximately 10:10 p.m. The ARC Chair indicated that all questions and comments will be reviewed for Working Meeting #14 on June 4, 2009, when the Committee meets to continue its work. Community members were encouraged to complete the Feedback Sheets available in the Community information package distributed at the meeting and submit to any of the ARC Committee or Resource staff present or drop off at their local school by June 1, 2009, 4:30 p.m. Additional forms were also made available at the Feedback Station located in the St. Michael gymnasium.

A reminder was made that general comments and/or questions can be sent to the ARC at any time during the review process through e-mail at [arcthornhill@ycdsb.ca](mailto:arcthornhill@ycdsb.ca) or voice-mail at 416-221-5051, 905-713-1211, Ext. 7567. The Public Meeting #4 Information Package, minutes of meeting, and community feedback received on the ARC Draft School Valuation Report and/or input on the ARC process will be posted to the ARC website.

8. KIOSKS

Kiosks on the Proposed Accommodation Option #7 and ARC review process were open for review. Resource staff and ARC members were available to discuss and respond to inquiries.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Preston, Chair of the ARC Committee, thanked everyone for attending Public Meeting #4. The meeting adjourned at 10:30 p.m.

APPENDIX A

Thornhill Elementary Schools – Accommodation Review Committee  
 Public Meeting #4 – May 28, 2009  
 St. Michael Catholic Academy

Community Sign-In

	Name	Affiliation (Area School)
1.	H. Jibry	St. Rene Goupil/St. Luke Catholic Elementary School
2.	R. Cecco	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
3.	D. Chateau	St. Michael Catholic Academy
4.	N. Ng	Peter Sherman, MPP, Thornhill
5.	Taxpayer	
6.	J. Huang	St. Michael Catholic Academy
7.	L. Mendonca	St. Michael Catholic Academy
8.	L. Tim	St. Michael Catholic Academy
9.	L. Chang	St. Michael Catholic Academy
10.	C. Pissaris	St. Michael Catholic Academy
11.	M. De Gasperis	St. Michael Catholic Academy
12.	R. Levins	St. Michael Catholic Academy
13.	T. Mohan	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
14.	D. Mohan	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
15.	C. Hamam	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
16.	Alex Vasil	St. Michael Catholic Academy
17.	Beth Dermody	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
18.	C. McCue	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
19.	C. Mandarino	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
20.	E. Sirianni	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
21.	G. Sirianni	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
22.	C. Fernandes	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
23.	E. Fusciardi	St. Michael Catholic Academy
24.	R. Orban	St. Michael Catholic Academy
25.	J. Mackenzie	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
26.	D. Moser	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
27.	S. Chan	St. Michael Catholic Academy
28.	E.P.(Unknown)	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
29.	V.C. (Unknown)	St. Michael Academy
30.	L. Restue	St. Michael Catholic Academy
31.	S. Koth	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
32.	L. Jennings	
33.	K. Middleton	St. Michael Catholic Academy
34.	A . Pickering	St. Michael Catholic Academy
35.	H. Ngo	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
36.	A . Wong	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
37.	R. Fitzpatrick	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
38.	W. Morrison	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
39.	J. Morrison	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
40.	A . Fitzpatrick	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
41.	N. Choi	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
42.	N. Axford	St. Michael Catholic Academy
43.	J. Axford	St. Michael Catholic Academy
44.	F. Vdichoie	St. Michael Catholic Academy

45.	W. Hopkins	St. Michael Catholic Academy
46.	K. Kim	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
47.	F. Ley	St. Michael Catholic Academy
48.	L. Wong	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
49.	C. Stanuyde	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
50.	L. Zammit	St. Michael Catholic Academy
51.	F. Khail	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
52.	C. Mason	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
53.	L. :Ping Ny	St. Michael Catholic Academy
54.	F. Costa	St. Anne, Richmond Hill
55.	H. McCue	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
56.	T. Dermody	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
57.	B. Vottero	St. Michael Catholic Academy
58.	A . Lee	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
59.	M. Bunch	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
60.	M. Kaszbzarif	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
61.	P. Noronha	St. Michael Catholic Academy
62.	C. So	
63.	A . Iacobellis	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
64.	C. Von Zueben	St. Michael Catholic Academy
65.	M. Vigliotta	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
66.	M. Chisholm	St. Michael Catholic Academy
67.	K. Zarzour	The Liberal
68.	L. Murray	St. Michael Catholic Academy
69.	L. Naccarato	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
70.	H. Kim	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
71.	J. Pare	St. Michael Catholic Academy
72.	G. Koehl	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
73.	L. Appleton	St. Michael Catholic Academy
74.	A . Stobie	St. Michael Catholic Academy
75.	T. Di Giovine	St. Michael Catholic Academy
76.	S. Koth	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
77.	R. Dimizo	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
78.	M. DiMambro	St. Michael Catholic Academy
79.	R. Pileci	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
80.	N. Pileci	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
81.	H.Gy	St. Michael Catholic Academy
82.	J. De Oliveira	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
83.	R. Tapley	St. Michael Catholic Academy
84.	B. MacKinnon	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
85.	S. Paparosis	St. Margeurite D'Youville Catholic Elementary School
86..	J. Dc	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
87.	L. Mahony	St. Michael Catholic Academy
88.	J. Simile	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
89.	M. Hanley	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
90.	E. Chang	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
91.	A . Marzo	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
92.	V. Pataka	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
93.	L. deHaas	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
94.	C. Stem	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
95.	A . Vyn	St. Michael Catholic Academy
96.	R. Charlesworth	St. Rene Goupil/St. Luke Catholic Elementary School
97.	G. Murray	St. Michael Catholic Academy
98.	V. Van Katz	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School

99.	r	R. Slat	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
100.		K. Dimmi	St. Michael Catholic Elementary School
101.		K. Natale	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
102.		C. Banwell	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
103.		P. Vettese	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
104.		B. Bernard	St. Michael Catholic Elementary School
105.		V. Ng	St. Michael Catholic Elementary School
106.		J. Bolzon	St. Rene Goupil/St. Luke Catholic Elementary School
107.		M. Camacho	St. Michael Catholic Elementary School
108.		L. Rotundo	St. Michael Catholic Elementary School
109.		C. Reynolds	St. Michael Catholic Elementary School
110.		V. Burke	Councillor, Ward 1
111.		C. Tudor	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
112.		D. Burke	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
113.		K. Trlahall	St. Michael Catholic Elementary School
114.		H. Durham	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
115.		J. Abbass	St. Michael Catholic Academy
116.		R. Piques	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
117.		M. :Pires	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
118.		A . Bozue	St. Michael Catholic Academy
119.		L. Lamette	St. Michael Catholic Academy
120.		D. Mauro	St. Michael Catholic Academy
121.		G. laboni	St. Rene Goupil/St. Luke Catholic Elementary School
122.		S. MacDonald	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School
123.		T. Geraci	St. Michael Catholic Elementary School
124.		M. Lam	St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School