

School District No.36 (Surrey)

ANNIEDALE TRADITIONAL ELEMENTARY POSSIBLE SCHOOL CLOSURE MEETING WITH PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL MARCH 4, 2009

MINUTES

District Staff: Wayne Noye, Secretary-Treasurer; Bob Coventry, Assistant Superintendent; Kerry Magnus, Associate Director, Business Management Services; Umur Olcay, Manager, Facilities & Planning Demographics.

The Board motion of February 12, 2009, calling for public consultation on possible school closure of Anniedale Traditional is posted on the school district's website. The Principal also has a copy, as well as copies of green comment forms for feedback from staff, parents and the public.

Three options are currently being explored:

1. To leave Anniedale Traditional at the current site (status quo);
2. To move Anniedale Traditional to M.B. Sanford, Port Kells, or Latimer Road;
3. Move Anniedale Traditional to McLeod Road Elementary as soon as practical after completion of infrastructure upgrades.

Option #3 – Move Anniedale Traditional to McLeod Road Elementary as soon as practical after completion of infrastructure upgrades is the recommended action.

McLeod Road is one of the schools identified as being available for Anniedale. SD36 staff are finalizing the scope of renovations to be carried out, including upgrades to parking and drop off.

Most of the students coming to Anniedale are actually from the Serpentine Heights area. In Newton, we seem to have a group of families interested in the Traditional Program, but they don't have a school in the area. The Planning Department uses a program (GeoSchool) that identifies where students come from to the three Traditional schools.

Anniedale Traditional enrolment projection for September 2009 is 92.

McLeod Road staff are discussing moving into portables in order to facilitate an expedited move for Anniedale. SD36 Planning staff are looking at the possibility of starting repairs to the drop off and parking areas at McLeod Road this summer and commencing the rest of the renovations in the Fall.

Comment: If McLeod Road staff and students are able to allow renovations to start early, then it would be good to move from Anniedale to McLeod Road for September 2010.

There is also an option to move into portables at the McLeod Road site next Spring. Principal Petznek advised that staff are voting on when they want to do the move. They feel they may not have any students left if it is delayed another year.

SD36 Planning staff need to be cautious on the timing because it depends on contractor timing and availability. The construction industry has slowed down as far as prices go, but availability of construction workers may be an issue. We have to look at the scope of the work and contractor's abilities.

Question: Would we want to consider taking applications for bolstering the population of the school?

Answer: When a final decision is made, notification could be sent out that there will be a new Traditional school in the Newton area. When students are registering for Surrey or Cloverdale Traditional, they should be notified of the third choice.

Comment: My son is in grade 5 now, and in 2010 he will be in grade 7. I don't want to move him for 3 months.

Response: The sooner we can make a decision the better.

Question: Is it correct that the Board does not have to make a decision until December of this year?

Answer: A public consultation period must be held for a period of at least 60 days. The process commenced with the Board motion on February 12, 2009, and the final decision must be made no later than December 31, 2009. If you feel it is important that a decision be made quickly, please include this with your comments as this is something that the Board will want to hear. Please be sure to communicate your preferences on the comment/feedback forms and return them via the Principal as soon as possible. If there is another option we have not considered, please let us know. Your background and knowledge of this area is valuable and will assist the Board with their decision.

Question: What is the breaking point if the school registers less than the projected number of students? Will there be a commitment to continuing the program with 60 students?

Answer: There currently is no breakpoint. Once a decision is made to move forward, we may have more split classes depending on enrolment numbers. We can't imagine closing it down when we know it will open again soon. The Board is very committed to having choice programs in the District.

Question: Which teachers are coming with us? If enrolment does go down, will the staff disappear? The certainty of keeping our present teachers would give parents certainty.

Answer: SD36 Planning staff prepare projections and the District staffs schools accordingly. If enrolment dips and a teacher is lost; if enrolment increases again the next year - that teacher can come back to the school. The Collective Agreement guides the process and staffing is based on seniority. Unless STA advises otherwise, we believe Option # 3 is a relocation. Teachers have a right to transfer to another school, but if they stay, and the relocation happens, they will go with the school.

Question: If we did lose divisions when the school did move to a new site, would the teachers have an automatic right to come back to teach the grades that were lost?

Answer: No, they could apply as they normally would, the criteria would be to choose the most suitable candidates for those positions.

Comment: What I want for my child is the most stability. It's just not good if we don't know what's happening. It would be good to have a boost in the enrolment and have that settled before the move happens.

Response: The new location of McLeod Road is a good choice for enrolment growth. Projecting a year out, we see that enrolment will be back to capacity. Knowing the decision by June will have a huge impact. We have to run both scenarios so we have a plan B.

Question: What is the capacity of McLeod Road?

Answer: Student capacity is 40 Kindergarten, and 200 grades 1 – 7.

Question: Will the District consider 2 classes of kindergarten in order to expand the program?

Answer: There is currently no plan to expand. If another kindergarten was added, the result would be doubling of enrolment and 8 portables on site.

Question: Will the new school be open in 2010?

Answer: It is anticipated that Woodward Hill will open January 2010 or Spring Break 2010.

Question: What about a new school name?

Answer: After a final decision is made by the Board, only then would it be appropriate to start the process to rename the school. In the past, the District would request suggested names from the general public. In this particular case, the Trustees would like to hear from the school community regarding possible names for consideration.