

School District No.36 (Surrey)

ANNIEDALE TRADITIONAL ELEMENTARY POSSIBLE SCHOOL CLOSURE MEETING WITH TEACHERS FEBRUARY 25, 2009

MINUTES

Introductions were made: Bob Coventry, Assistant Superintendent; Kerry Magnus, Associate Director, Business Management Services; Umur Olcay, Manager, Facilities & Demographics Planning; Ray Prosser, District Principal.

The Board passed a motion on February 12, 2009 to start the formal process involved for closing three schools. Although Surrey is a growing community, there are different situations such as enrolment shifts, enrolment decline, or traffic which have negative impacts on schools.

The Ministry of Education sets out legislation and the School Board has established a policy around possible school closures. All documents are posted on the District's website. We are also providing information through the media and newspapers. The process started with the Board motion on February 12, 2009, and continues for a minimum of 60 days to allow adequate time for consultation. An end date of December 31, 2009 has been established to avoid delaying the process, while making sure there is adequate time for feedback from the community.

The Board motion was read.

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.

Comment forms are provided to ensure the Board receives input from the community. These should be returned to the Principal to ensure they are included in the binders prepared for the Trustees. These binders will contain copies of all comments, documents, questions and answers.

The process involves consultation with school staff, the PAC, and the greater community. Legislation has changed to involve consultation with the entire community, not just the school community.

The community at large is encouraged to make submissions through the comment forms. Any questions or concerns, please share them with us or your Principal.

There are 2 other separate processes we will also touch on briefly:

- a) One process involves the disposition/disposal of the property. This is a completely separate public consultation process and will include discussion on the fate of the one room heritage school house.
- b) The second process is discussion on possible transfer of staff.

Bob Coventry - For the educational issues, there is a separate process for the reason that we cannot pre-judge what is going to happen. Once a decision is made, if it is to relocate, there are important issues you will want to know about. One of the issues is what happens to staff? If the recommendation to close Anniedale goes forward, it would involve a relocation of the school. We would move much of the same equipment, have the same Principal, same kids and probably the same staff. Our interpretation is that it is a relocation. Feedback will be required as to when it will happen. The original hope was that the McLeod Road site would be ready for September, 2010. There have been delays in the proposed schedule, so it could be sometime during that year. The Board will ultimately decide when is the best time to make the move.

Schedule: Woodward Hill is slated to be open next January, 2010. It may take up to a year for upgrades at McLeod Road. If staff and students currently at McLeod Road allow us to start early, that would enable work to finish earlier. At the worst case scenario, would Anniedale staff consider the possibility of moving into portables?

Question: Will only the current existing community move?

Answer: Initially, the move would involve only the students currently enrolled and their siblings.

Question: What would that look like, moving during the middle of the school year?

Answer: What is the priority for staff? When KB Woodward was moved over Christmas, we used District transportation services staff to move the entire school. School started at the new location the first day after Christmas. You would not be expected to give up vacation time. This is an option we request your feedback on.

Question: Am I speaking for all of us that we would want to move in Summer?

Answer: Staff may want to consider various possible moving dates and indicate their preference in priority order.

Question: It could be a Summer move in 2010 with portables or Summer move 2011, no portables. Would you consider helping us move early?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Are modular pods available?

Answer: There are no modular pods available. The modulars at Queen Elizabeth, Frank Hurt, T.E. Scott and Coyote Creek are considered by the Ministry of Education as school capacity.

Question: Are there portables on the site now?

Answer: Yes, there are currently 9 portables on site. A washroom portable can also be installed.

Question: Will there be teachers working out of portables?

Answer: There may be a possibility that teachers/students will be in portables if construction is delayed and the school agrees to move before September 2010.

If the final decision is to close Anniedale and move to McLeod Road, over time, the Traditional Program will likely flourish. Some students may go to Surrey Traditional. It is a matter of parental choice. Having the school moved to McLeod Road will likely result in growth.

Question: Is there an option to stay here until 2011?

Answer: Yes, the Board is open to all options. Ongoing road construction in the Anniedale area will negatively impact enrolment. Dodging around road construction is a problem.

Question: Is there a minimum enrolment number that will close the program?

Answer: We know that the projections are down again for next year. If the decision was made to move in the summer of 2010, it is expected that parents will start to enrol students for next year. Many of the students in Traditional programs come from the Newton area. There may even eventually be a waiting list. If there is a delay to September 2011, the enrolment may shrink a bit, but it will likely bounce back.

Question: There are four options here?

Answer: The Board has to consider all options. Don't assume that the Board has made a decision. We have to be very true to the process. In terms of long term planning and land use planning, there could eventually be 15,000 people in the Port Kells area. The housing market will be coming back in the next 3 or 4 years, and in the next 10 years, we may see population growth in the Anniedale/Port Kells area. Future growth will require planning to look at new school facilities for this area over time. We do not want to leave Anniedale Traditional in a business park.

Question: Is there a problem moving staff over?

Answer: If the decision is made to close Anniedale and move to McLeod Road, we are viewing this as an existing school which is being moved to another site. If you are on staff here, you move. If you are a term assignment teacher, you would only go for the remainder of that current year. This year there could be a possible reduction in staff. It would depend on when the move takes place and recall rights to that assignment.

Question: Next year, would there be another term employee?

Answer: All term assignments end in June, and then have to be posted for the new school year. Human Resources can provide further clarity on this issue.

The teaching staff thanked everyone for coming and sharing this information.

Comment forms were provided for distribution to staff and parents.