



# Halton District School Board

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Report Number: 09029

Date: January 16, 2009

**INCIDENTAL INFORMATION**

TO: The Chair and Members of the  
Halton District School Board

FROM: W. Joudrie, Director of Education

RE: Response to Facilitator's Report re: Ward 3 Oakville

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Background:

The Honourable Kathleen Wynne, Minister of Education, released the report of facilitator Dave Cooke on December 5, 2008.

On December 10, 2008 the following motion was approved by the Halton District School Board:

*Be it resolved that the Halton District School Board ask the Director to bring a report to the Board in January 2009, reviewing the findings of the facilitator, giving consideration to the report's recommendations and outlining steps to develop appropriate responses.*

This report is intended to fulfill the direction and intent of the Board, as outlined in that motion.

After reviewing the findings and considering the report's recommendations, the following proposed responses are presented for the Board's consideration:

1. build a school in Clearview;
2. conduct a community consultation;
3. review and modify PARC Policy;
4. continue to act in accordance with the "Duties and Powers of a Board" as outlined in the Education Act.

Appendix 1 attached to this report provides a summary of each of the findings and recommendations as outlined in the "Observations" and "Suggestions" portions of Dave Cooke's report. The right-hand column identifies the proposed responses consistent with the findings/recommendations outlined.

Moving Forward:

As the Board moves forward in dealing with the accommodation issues in Ward 3 Oakville, one key suggestion from Dave Cooke, is for the Board to provide a clear statement of its intended outcomes. To that end, the following is suggested:

▪ **Enhanced Services:**

The Board intends to enhance the services and facilities offered to students in Ward 3 Oakville in a manner that is educationally sound and fiscally responsible.

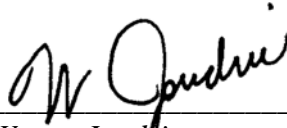
▪ **Responding to Changes in the Community**

The Ward 3 Oakville community has changed and as a result, the Board intends to align the services and facilities offered to students in Ward 3 Oakville consistent with current and projected student need.

▪ **Broad Public Input:**

The Board intends to continue to consult the community in a manner encouraging broad public input prior to making a final decision with respect to accommodations in Ward 3 Oakville, as outlined in the process detailed in Report 09028.

*Respectfully submitted,*



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Wayne Joudie  
Director of Education

<b>Observation</b>	<b>Proposed Responses</b>
<p><i>“The process used for this accommodation review had major flaws from the very beginning. The size of the PARC was unmanageable and the significant membership of school board staff was of concern to some of the parents. While I do not believe the addition of 3 members from the Clearview community was a violation of Board policy, I do believe the way it happened was unclear, and it lacked transparency. Clearview parents were already represented on the PARC from each of the schools their children attended under review.”</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>conduct a community consultation process</b></li> <li>• <b>review and modify PARC Policy</b></li> </ul>
<p><i>“Without a direction or vision from the Board the PARC had difficulty developing a plan that could unite the community and allow it to move forward. The lack of an "alternative accommodation plan" from the Board was a significant mistake and a violation of Board policy.”</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>include alternatives in community consultation process</b></li> <li>• <b>review and modify PARC Policy</b></li> </ul>
<p><i>“The role of the trustees on the PARC was confusing. On one hand there was an expectation that trustees should remain neutral, yet on the other hand their involvement was extensive. I will not detail this issue but I think it is clear the local trustee's interventions resulted in some members of the community feeling concerned.”</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>define Trustee role in community consultation process</b></li> <li>• <b>review and modify PARC Policy</b></li> </ul>
<p><i>“The change in the financial assumptions that came to light, after the PARC submitted its report, was significant. It would be difficult to believe that this new financial information did not have a very significant, if not decisive, influence on the final decision of the Board. It seemed to change everything. In addition a mistake was made in the Revised Administration Report to the Board regarding the number of students to be bussed for E.J. James Public School. The report originally stated 30 students but was corrected on July 22, 2008, to 300.”</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>include financial data in community consultation process</b></li> </ul>
<p><i>“The decision making process followed by the Board from April to July 2, 2008, was not transparent and it confused the community. I think everyone involved, the Board, Administration, and the communities would have to agree that the change from the first preferred option to the final decision was a complete surprise.”</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>continue to act in accordance with the “Duties and Powers” of a Board (Education Act)</b></li> </ul>
<p><i>“The PARC put in hours and hours at meeting after meeting and in the end their work did not seem to be valued. The Director told me that the PARC process was just one of the avenues for consultation by the Board but given the policy framework for accommodation review, it has to be seen as much more than that. The final Board meeting on July 2, 2008, did little to convince the public that the decision making process was transparent. There was little debate, and a unanimous vote, for an accommodation plan that a few weeks ago was not even on the table.”</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>review and modify PARC Policy</b></li> <li>• <b>continue to act in accordance with the “Duties and Powers” of a Board (Education Act)</b></li> </ul>

<b>Observation</b>	<b>Proposed Responses</b>
<p><i>“The Petition argues that the timelines provided for in the Board policy were violated because 60 days notice was not given after the Director released his preferred option that called for the closure of more schools. While the option released June 13, 2008 was significantly different than the earlier one and it resulted in more schools closing, I do not believe that would require the 60 day notice. The timelines set out in the Board policy are pretty clear and set out requirements for each stage of the review process.”</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>review and modify PARC Policy</b></li> </ul>
<b>Suggestions</b>	<b>Proposed Responses</b>
<p><i>“Everyone seems to understand that schools need to close and others need to be updated and renovated. The Clearview community has a school site but no school and I believe there is general agreement that this should be corrected. All parents involved would like to see as few students being bussed as possible.”</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>build a school in Clearview</b></li> <li>● <b>conduct a community consultation process</b></li> </ul>
<p><i>“How these matters are addressed can either bring communities together or divide them. The PARC process followed by the Board decision making process has resulted in division because it lacked transparency and from the outset it did not clearly state what the Board wanted to achieve. An alternative to continued division and conflict would be in the best interest of the students.”</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>conduct a community consultation process</b></li> </ul>
<p><i>“The accommodation plan needs to reduce the excess pupil places in Southeast Oakville. This means some schools need to be closed and the remaining schools renovated and modernized. Clearview students need accommodation in their own community. The plan should result in as few students being bussed as possible.”</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>build a school in Clearview</b></li> <li>● <b>conduct a community consultation process</b></li> </ul>
<p><i>“Perhaps a two month process could be set-up to explore solutions and work from the Board's goal of meeting the accommodation needs of students in both Southeast Oakville and Clearview. Another possible process would be a revised PARC, with shorter timelines and a focussed mandate. Whatever steps are taken to find common ground, everyone involved must be open-minded about possible solutions. The Board would have to understand that its existing Board approved position would likely change but the objectives would remain the same.”</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>conduct a community consultation process</b></li> </ul>
<p><i>“Continued conflict means important staff and financial resources are diverted from students. It is in the interest of the Board, the communities and most of all the students to find a solution.”</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>conduct a community consultation process</b></li> </ul>
<p><i>“In the longer term I would also suggest that the Board review its accommodation review policy. The size of the PARC needs to be examined and the role of Trustees on the PARC should be clarified.”</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>review and modify PARC Policy</b></li> </ul>