



**SPECIAL BOARD MEETING  
Tuesday, April 15, 2014 at 6:00 p.m.  
F. J. Brennan Catholic Secondary School  
910 Raymo Rd., Windsor, ON**

**MINUTES**

**PRESENT**

**Trustees:**

F. Alexander	J. Macri
J. Courtney	B. Mastromattei
M. DiMenna, Vice-Chair	J. McMahan
F. Favot	L. Soulliere
B. Holland, Chair	

M. Ellepola, Student Trustee  
Rev. L. Brunet, Board Chaplain

**Regrets:**

Student Trustee Dellosa

**Administration:**

P. Picard (Resource)	E. Byrne
J. Bumbacco	P. King
C. Geml	P. Murray
M. Iatonna	C. Norris
	S. O'Hagan-Wong
	M. Seguin
	J. Ulicny

**Recorder:**

B. Marshall

1. Call To Order – Chair Holland called the meeting to order at 6:07 pm.
2. Opening Prayer – Fr. Brunet opened the meeting with a prayer.

Chair Holland assured members of the audience that the Board meeting was designed specifically to receive public input on Administration's Recommendations for the East Windsor - Riverside area.

Chair Holland outlined the delegation process and time limit and also mentioned trustees will remain after the meeting to speak to the members of the community.

3. Recording of Attendance – Student Trustee Dellosa sent his regrets due to illness.

4. Approval of Agenda

**Moved by Trustee DiMenna and seconded by Trustee McMahon that the April 15, 2014 Special Regular Board meeting agenda be approved as distributed. Carried**

5. Disclosure of Interest - Pursuant to the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act.:

Trustee Macri disclosed interest in relation to agenda item 6a) Director of Education's Report on the Accommodation Review Study for the Riverside Area, including F.J. Brennan High School, St. John Vianney, St. Jules, St. Maria Goretti, and St. Rose Catholic Elementary Schools due to his sons' employment and did not participate in the discussion or vote on any question raised on that item.

6. Communications:

- a. Report: Director of Education's Report on the Accommodation Review Study for the Riverside Area, including F.J. Brennan High School, St. John Vianney, St. Jules, St. Maria Goretti, and St. Rose Catholic Elementary Schools

Director Picard reviewed the data and provided insight into the analysis leading to the Riverside area recommendations.

**Addressing "On the Ground Capacity" Issues at Brennan:**

Administration is proposing the transformation of F.J. Brennan Catholic Secondary School to the Brennan Centre of Excellence and Innovation. The Centre of Excellence will be made up of two distinct schools; F.J. Brennan Catholic Secondary and Corpus Christi Middle School. The schools will be separate entities in terms of organization and administration. They will be physically divided so that there is no general interaction between students of the two schools. Start and end times will be 30 minutes apart.

**Corpus Christi Middle School**

Located at the Brennan site but separate from the secondary school, will be Corpus Christi Middle School. The grade 7 and 8 students will be housed in their own dedicated facility but will have access to all of the learning supports that only a secondary school site can offer namely, Science Labs, Dance, Dramatic Arts, Photography (Digital Arts), Visual Arts and Fitness Training.

**Specific School Concerns – St. Maria Goretti / St. Rose / St. John Vianney Catholic Elementary Schools**

The proposed closure of St. Maria Goretti suggests relocating the students to two school sites in order to maximize occupancy at both receiving schools. Subsequent to the release of the recommendation, the Director received considerable input from parents concerning the difficulty of dividing the school population. Many indicated they understand the closure but struggled with the dividing the community. As such, administration's final recommendation will include the consolidation of all St. Maria Goretti JK to 6 students at the St. Rose site. St. Rose, in this scenario, would not close in the foreseeable future.

St. John Vianney would have some excess capacity but there is the likelihood of growth in the East Riverside area and, if need be, the expansion of the school boundary into the

Tecumseh area. There is availability of some flexibility at the St. John Vianney site.

### **St. Jules**

From a facility perspective, St. Jules has long term challenges. It is above capacity, yet would require significant capital investment in order to optimize the learning environment. Even with significant investment, it would still not be accessible. The recommendation for St. Jules is twofold. First, for the 2014-2015 school year all grade 7 and 8 students will be accommodated at Corpus Christi Middle School. All grade 7 and 8 students within the school's boundary will be entitled to busing. Second, busing will also be provided to those former students of St. Alexander Catholic Elementary School.

Current students of St. Bernard / Our Lady of Lourdes who wish to attend Corpus Christi Middle School will be able to access transportation from designated pick-up spots. It will be our recommendation that all grade 7 and 8 students from St. Bernard / Our Lady of Lourdes attend Corpus Christi Middle School beginning in the 2015-2016 school year.

**Moved by Trustee Mastromattei and seconded by Trustee Favot that the Board receive as information the Director's Report on the accommodation review study for the Riverside Area, including F.J. Brennan High School, St. John Vianney, St. Jules, St. Maria Goretti, and St. Rose Catholic Elementary Schools; and**

**That the Board receive public input concerning the Director's Report, and the matters that are addressed in it and in the Accommodation Review Committee's (ARC's) Report. Carried**

### 7. Delegations:

Delegations Regarding Accommodation Review Committee's and Director of Education's Report on the Accommodation Review Study for the Riverside Area, including F.J. Brennan High School, St. John Vianney, St. Jules, St. Maria Goretti, and St. Rose Catholic Elementary Schools

- i) Parent, Julie Treloar from St. Rose to speak on student concerns regarding the Director of Education's Report on the Accommodation Review Study for the Riverside Area.

Ms. Treloar would like the Board to address F.J. Brennan's under capacity issue through programming and not involve the neighbouring elementary Catholic schools.

- ii) Parent, Cindy Nantais from St. Rose to address concerns regarding the grade 7 to 12 model.

Ms. Nantais does not support the Grade 7 to 12 model but if the model is approved, suggested administration implement a two-year delay to allow all stakeholders (students, parents, teachers, schools, board and community) to prepare.

- iii) Parent, Steven Moro from St. Maria Goretti to comment on the recommendation to close St. Maria Goretti and move grade 7 and 8 students to F.J. Brennan Catholic

High School.

Mr. Moro discussed the Accommodation Review Committee process, compared the 2008 to the 2013 Watson Report, commented on the Ministry of Education's 2014-15 School Board Funding Report and stressed community voices need to be heard.

- iv) Representatives of the St. John Vianney school community, Jason and Jennifer Marchi and Lisa and Richard Javonoski to provide additional recommendations for the Board to consider.

A group of St. John Vianney parents, represented by Mr. & Mrs. Marchi and Mr. & Mrs. Javonoski submit the following revised recommendation for the Board's consideration:

1. Effective September 2014 St. Maria Goretti close. Currently students who reside east of Lauzon Road consolidate at St. John Vianney JK to 8 school, students west of Lauzon Road consolidate to the St. Rose JK to 6 school;
2. Grade 7 and 8 students from St. John Vianney be given the option to attend Middle school located at the Brennan site, with Board transportation provided in accordance with policy; and
3. The Board promote the Middle School concept at the Brennan site not only to Brennan's feeder schools but open the boundaries city wide.

- v) Parent, Kelly Vandenberghe from St. Jules Catholic Elementary school to address concerns and ask questions on the future impact of the Director's report.

Ms. Vandenberghe commented on future concerns from the recommendation and suggested the new elementary school slated to replace St. Bernard be built on the St. Jules site; if St. Maria Goretti and St. Rose close, new families will attend the neighbouring public board school; St. John Vianney grade 7 and 8 siblings who currently attend St. Joseph High School likely also attend St. Joseph creating a second transition from the proposed Middle school; and commented on potential future Accommodation Review Committees.

- vi) Parent, Marc Williams from St. Jules school to comment on the Director's recommendation.

Mr. Williams reminded trustees of their responsibilities according to the Education Act.

Chair Holland mentioned comments and/or concerns to trustees or administration are welcomed. Chair Holland invited trustees to remain after the meeting to speak with members of the audience.

8. Closing Prayer – Fr. Brunet closed the meeting with a prayer.
9. Adjournment - There being no further business, the Regular Board meeting of April 15, 2014 adjourned at 7:21 p.m.

*Approved*

***Barbara Holland***  
*Board Chairperson*

***Paul A. Picard***  
*Director of Education*

**Presenters' Notes**  
**from the Special Board Meeting**  
**on April 15, 2014**  
**located at**  
**F.J. Brennan High School**

Hello, my name is Julie Treloar and I have a son in JK at St. Rose, with two more coming up behind him.

The bottom line is that Brennan is severely under capacity, but there is a need to keep it in Riverside. The Director's report fixes that with elementary students; this is the wrong way to go. There HAS to be a way to fix this problem with HIGH SCHOOL students.

1. If the Board is planning on revving up programs at Brennan anyway, they should do that FIRST before shoving Grade 7's and 8's in there, and revamping it afterward. Put the money into it, offer attractive programs (such as auto shop, culinary area, better sports and arts facilities, etc.), THEN see how the enrollment increases. The Director's suggestion puts the cart before the horse. If you make Brennan a school people want to go to, they will come, as opposed to avoiding it. IF, several years down the road, there is no improvement, then consider other alternatives at that point, but based on the general population's opinion, if Brennan was a school worth going to, they wouldn't feel the need to send their children elsewhere and kids would actually WANT to go there.
2. Catholic Central is slated to close and move locations. Assumption is under capacity. There must be something that can be done between the three schools to keep them as high schools. For example, closing Catholic Central and dividing those students between Brennan and Assumption is something to be looked at. If they are moving anyway, they might as well move and fix a problem at the same time. The money to build a new Catholic Central (which has yet to even be approved) could be used to build a new Catholic Central and Brennan together at a location between the two schools, or used to bring Brennan up to par and accommodate the Catholic Central students there. \*
3. Regarding St. Rose, St. Maria Goretti, and St. John Vianney, no one understands why any of these schools need to be affected by Brennan's problem. You WILL lose students by closing them, creating a vicious cycle. These are the children that will go to Brennan. People are fed up, especially after the St. Thomas, St. Wilfred, St. Alexander's, Our Lady of Lourdes and now St. Jules closures. Is it the goal of the Catholic board to force everyone to go with the public system? You are limiting our options and creating an uncertain future. You will have no small community school left in Riverside - all the way to Tecumseh. And no K-8. You're leaving us with a huge K-6 school at St. John Vianney, then Brennan, which currently has nothing to offer. That's it. And that sucks!
4. The threat to close St. Rose any given year is a self-fulfilling prophecy: people aren't going to send their children to a school that could close at any point. It's an unstable environment, so they won't send their children there. The numbers go down. Well, lo and behold! Now it's way below capacity and has to close. Who could have seen that coming??? St. Rose is at 90% capacity and is the top-rated school in Riverside and top 5 in Windsor, and just had an increase in JK registration in February. Why would you even consider closing it? Granted, the building is older, but instead of closing everything, make it better and more attractive! Look what they did in the public system, especially David Suzuki - they made schools parents WANT their children to go to, and where the children themselves want to go. The problem with David Suzuki is that it is TOO big - because of the mass migration to the area so parents could get their kids in there.

\* As per the meeting at Catholic Central last night, I understand Mr. Picard does NOT expect ~~what~~ those students ~~to come~~ to Brennan as they will have to pass 3 public schools to get here. Well what about the same for the elementary schools?

Keep the smaller schools, but update them. You will require a lot more money to make Brennan a PROPER 7-12 school than to fix up an elementary school or two.

5. St. Maria Goretti is at capacity. If St. Maria Goretti HAS to close (for reasons yet to be understood), combine them completely with St. Rose. That way, St. Rose won't be in a constant threat of closure, the St. Maria Goretti students won't be divided, and St. John Vianney won't be too big, as is the concern of many parents/ Leave them as K-8.
6. There is huge development in the Riverside area around St. Rose that is slated for the building of homes. Also, many Riverside residents are aging and the homes they have had for 40+ years are going up for sale and are being scooped up by people trying to get in the area. Where are these children going to go to school? David Suzuki or St. John Vianney? People will be far more likely to have their children walk to school than drive or bus them to a school that's just as big, and that is only K-6. Keep the smaller schools in Riverside!!! And keep them as K-8!!!
7. St. Rose already turns down multiple out-of-boundary requests every year. Allowing these requests would certainly boost numbers, especially after word gets around that this is possible.

In closing, Barb Holland said: "We should not be limiting our children in ANY setting" in the Faith in Our Future video on the Board's website. Putting grade-school children in an ill-equipped high school does just that. It limits their potential to grow and become leaders in a smaller community school. It makes them become just a number to fill a failing school; lost in the crowd. Do NOT do this to our children.

Bottom line: Keep Brennan separate from the grade schools. You will only make enrollment matters worse by going forward with the Director's plan. You talk about faith, but we have no faith in you. Give us something to believe in. People need their faith in the Catholic school board restored. Stop and take a deep breath. Think this through. There IS a better way. What's your motto? Learning together in faith and service? Let's see it.

Thank you. - And Happy Election Year



My name is Cindy Nantais and I have 3 boys at St. Rose in grades 1, 3 and 6.

I do not support the 7-12 model, not only because of concerns for the social aspects of a middle school, but also the negative academic effects. According to American and Canadian academic research, which I shared in a letter during the ARC process, children in middle schools "lose ground" in reading and math compared to their K-8 peers and those losses are not regained in high school. The studies support that a structural break in grades 7 and 8 is problematic. We should not underestimate the value of being in a supportive elementary school environment and how that contributes to success. Remember that grades 7 and 8 are important times for growth and maturation, for developing leadership skills and for being somewhat fragile as children learn to navigate early adolescence – it is a time when children need stability and security. Boards in the US and Canada (including Toronto) are actually moving away from this configuration, back toward k-8.

For a number of reasons, I hope St. Rose stays the successful K-8 school that it is now – including my view that the K-8 model better supports inclusion of children with special needs, something important to me as a parent of child with Down Syndrome.

I want you to agree with me and preserve our Riverside grade schools. I want to spend my whole 5 minutes trying to convince you – but because a 7-12 school may be coming, I have to address implementation.

The Director asks for a 7-12 model starting in Sept 2014, relying on one of the ARC Committee recommendations (the other was status quo). But that committee recommended, after extensive community consultation, was that the 7-12 be subject to a TWO-YEAR IMPLEMENTATION DELAY to give all stakeholders (students, parents, teachers, schools, board, community) time to prepare. I doubt a 7-12 model would have been recommended without the delayed implementation.

While I may come to understand that finances and demographics necessitate the new model, I cannot support or understand immediate implementation as it is contrary to the needs of students.

This is not just about the building, school structure and curriculum being ready. That is part of it - I think many of us doubt how everything that needs to be decided, adapted and reconfigured for so many students, from a number of school communities can possibly be accomplished properly in such a short time. But even if everything could be ready by the first day of school, it is about so much more than that.

Kids who *know* they are going to middle school and are prepared for it throughout grade school – they are the ones in the studies who have the social and academic issues when they go to middle school. Here, those problems and issues will only be magnified because our students will have virtually no preparation or time to adapt. The final decision will not be made until the end of May. Kids would then have about 4 school weeks to adjust to the end of grade school and the fact that they are moving to “high school”. There will be uncertainty and anxiety, without enough time to make them feel comfortable or adjusted. They will be thrown into a new model without the tools they need to succeed (emotionally, socially or academically). While some kids may be ok, many will not. Kids need time to adjust to big changes and make no mistake – this is a big change.

I hear from many parents that could accept the 7-12, but not if it starts in September 2014. It's too soon. It's too rushed, especially for kids with exceptionalities.

The problem I think is that over the past few years our trust in you has been eroded, and this process has done nothing to repair that. Ignoring the delayed implementation piece of the ARC recommendation and rushing this transition only makes us trust you even less. **SHOW US** that you are willing to work with us to make this a positive experience, to create more value to student, to do it right. Rushing implementation makes us feel that our kids are not being put first, that a sound elementary experience is being sacrificed to save an under-populated high school without regard for their needs.

2 – year delayed implementation has tremendous value to student, school and the community, while still ultimately accomplishing consolidation. Kids in grades 6 and 7 will finish under the existing model. Younger students will have time to be as ready for the transition as possible. And the delay will facilitate

more thoughtful and meaningful implementation of special needs transitions and programming.

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A 2-year delay may also minimize loss to the Public Board. <sup>The</sup> ~~the~~ ~~board's~~ view that people generally don't leave the board because of changes and closures, should not be taken as a license to keep pushing until the breaking point is found. Students entering grades 7 and 8 would have to move in September anyway - many parents may instead choose one of the 3 viable k-8 public schools in Riverside and then public high school. You need to give parents a reason to stay and a thoughtful, meaningful transition may do that.

There may be some financial reasons for starting right away - but certainly the fact that you have 3 well-attended K-8 grade schools in Riverside makes delayed implementation feasible. It is not unreasonable to ask that there be convergence between financial demands and student interests before the change is implemented. It will give time for everyone, but especially kids, to prepare for the transition.

<sup>30 sec -</sup> Ideally, I would ask you to abandon the 7-12 model altogether or at least allow the changes in programming at Brennan to take effect and the fate of Catholic Central to be known - then reconsider this plan in the future if it's necessary. Failing that, I am asking that if you implement a 7-12 model, that you at least respect the ARC process and recommendation, and delay its implementation for 2 years. Please Do it right.

Thank you

██████████  
Windsor, ON  
██████████  
██████████

Cynthia Nantais

February 17, 2014

Attention : Riverside ARC Committee and WECDSB

Re: February 19, 2014 ARC meeting

I am the parent of three boys attending St. Rose School. They are in grades 1, 3 and 6. My youngest son, Myles, has down syndrome. My other boys are typical. I am writing to reiterate my support for the retention of St. Rose as a K-8 school, as well as to express my deep concern about the proposed recommendation for a 7-12 school for students generally but St. Rose students in particular.

While I appreciate that demographic and budgetary issues will like involve change for all or some of the schools within this ARC process, I respectfully suggest that a change away from a K-8 model at St. Rose will have a negative impact on the school, the community and most importantly, its students.

As I articulated in my prior oral submission to the Committee when I offered a perspective on St Rose for children with special needs, it is my firm belief that St Rose should remain a K-8 school. St Rose consistently provides high quality education and experiences to its students, as reflected in the Fraser Institute rankings and provincial testing, as well as its reputation. It is a community school with wonderful students and teachers. It offers an enriching learning and supportive social environment that works for all kids, both special needs and typical. These qualities are in part the product of its K-8 structure.

It is my hope that this committee will reconsider its recommendation regarding the 7-12 configuration. Failing that, I trust that the WECDSB will not adopt that recommendation, creating instead a solution that keeps St Rose as a K-8 school, with additional students from St Maria Goretti (if closed).

Multiple transitions, particularly in years of early adolescence are problematic. A transition in grade 9 is challenging for students, but anticipated and expected in our area, and in fact in most of Ontario. The creation of a grade 7/8 "junior high" does not eliminate the second transition, regardless of whether the program is housed in the same building as the high school the students may or may not attend. Rather, it requires students to make two difficult transitions in a very short period of time, with the second being made potentially from a place of less security and self-esteem. Moreover, a 7/8 school deprives children of a true "elementary school experience," including the opportunity for regular mentoring of younger students and the

opportunity to mature and grow in a safe, supportive and developmentally appropriate environment. This cannot be understated.

The integration of these children into a high school setting is of significant concern. As a society, we frequently lament that our children are growing up too fast. We express concern that they are being exposed to situations and circumstances that they do not have the maturity or foundation to properly navigate. I expect that whatever the efforts to segregate these students from the general high school population, there will be far more exposure to all aspects of high school life, positive and negative, at an earlier age. From an "ages and stages" perspective, integrating grades 7 and 8 into this culture is risky. For example, there is a wide range of physical and emotional maturity in grades 7 and 8. Research suggests that students who are more physically developed may be exposed to attention and situations that they are not emotionally able to successfully navigate. Moreover, this will take place within a less restrictive and supportive environment than a traditional K-8 school.

Interestingly, many jurisdictions in the United States, which have long embraced the "middle school (grades 6-9)" or "junior high", are now advocating and moving toward K-8 schools because of problems in a middle school setting, including the negative effects of disruption, transitions and culture. American research has shown that students who attend middle schools (as opposed to grade k-8) "lose ground" in reading and math compared to their peers in K-8 schools. Transitions have been found to be particularly damaging for young adolescent students. They are being moved at a time when they need their peers and stability the most. I have linked reports of these studies in the email accompanying this letter and ask that they be attached for reference.

Similar results are being found in Canada. University of Toronto professor, Elizabeth Dhuey, completed a 2012 study on BC schools. She notes that there is insufficient research on the impact of grade configurations on student performance. Significantly, she found that in her study that *"We're not sure why, but the worry is that at age 13 and 14 — often not a great time of life — to add a structural break at school can be bad for students who struggle."* When compared to their K-8 peers, students in middle schools/junior high experience a decline in reading and math. Even more concerning, that decline was found to persist into high school. Weaker students are particularly affected. I have linked Dhuey's study, *How Grade Level Configurations affect Academic Achievement* in the email accompanying this letter and ask that they be attached for reference. In response to these and other studies, Toronto area school boards are moving away from middle schools and junior highs. Rather than embarking on a path that studies suggest has been detrimental to students, I respectfully suggest that the Board should find other options.

Fundamentally, St. Rose is a highly successful school as a K-8. We are again the top ranked local English Catholic grade school in the area. Our formula appears to work. I understand that we are capable of accepting students from St Maria Goretti if it is

closed and incorporating them into our school culture and building as a K-8. St Maria Goretti and St Rose are similarly situated schools in that we are both located in the heart of Riverside. Our children would all live in relatively close proximity to the school, as well as play sports and participate in community activities together. All of this would allow St. Rose to retain its important identity as a community school.

I am also concerned about combining 7/8s from so many schools. This experiment would in effect be imposing both a new model (7-12) with the added stress of integrating a large number of children from diverse school communities and experiences. The transition, especially for students from smaller schools, will be especially jarring and disruptive. If the Board wishes to implement a 7-12, despite the factors weighing heavily against it, it should be done on a smaller scale as a pilot project. The number of schools involved should be small and they should be in close proximity in order to permit a "community" school, while at least mitigating somewhat the transition issues. Using school(s) that need something transformative, either due to physical plant issues or performance issues, may make sense. I fear significant problems attempting to implement an untested 7-12 with so many diverse student bodies, aggravated by the stress of transitions.

In my conversations with other parents, I believe that many will leave St. Rose if we become a K-6 school, particularly as we have available to us an viable alternative at the public board. However, if St Rose remains a K-8, parents in Riverside would have two to three (depending on Maria Goretti determination) contrasting but equally valid K-8 options: St John Vianney, a large school; and St. Rose, a small to medium sized school. This is good for the community, as parents will continue to seek out properties in the area for purchase within these boundaries.

While the recommendation of a 7-12 appears to be intended to "save Brennan" by "filling the building" with 7s and 8s, this is not fixing the issue with Brennan's enrollment. I am a graduate of Brennan High School at a time when Brennan was a very large and dynamic school. I do not want Brennan to close, but I do not want it to stay open at the expense of our elementary children. I think that a strong elementary experience is a necessary perquisite to a successful high school one, as well as creating strong students and individuals with good foundations and good self-esteem. I do not think I am alone in saying that if Brennan High School were to close, I would choose to send my children to St. Joseph's High School. Perhaps, though, solutions should be generated to create specialized programming in order to make Brennan a more attractive option for students.

Ultimately, I am asking the Committee and then the Board to retain St Rose as a K-8 school. I appreciate that difficult decisions must be made that balance the needs of all schools affected and that we all want what is best for our children. St Rose is a school that we should be reluctant to change, as it has a proven track record for being great for students, teachers and the community. I ask that we not underestimate the value to a child of being in the supportive elementary school

environment for as long as possible. We should be loathe to create institutions that deprive kids of the opportunity to learn in an age-appropriate setting that creates the best opportunity for success. We should remember that grades 7 and 8 are important times for growth and maturation, for developing leadership skills and for being somewhat fragile as we learn to navigate early adolescence. In the face of the research about both the negative academic and social impact, we should not embark on a 7-12 model, particularly on the scale proposed.

I reiterate my earlier statement that the culture that produces a great environment for ALL of my kids is one that is created by all that St Rose is - the school, its location, its proximity to the families that attend there, its students, its teachers, its environment. Change these dynamics and you will change the culture - and why would you want to? This is a school of success on so many levels. I respectfully ask that we be left a K-8 school.

Thank you,

Cynthia Nantais  
St Rose School parent

**Attachments:**

American Research, see for example:

<http://educationnext.org/the-middle-school-plunge/>

<http://tip.duke.edu/node/867>

*Middle schools too disruptive for weak students, studies show*, Toronto Star (June 10/12)  
[http://www.thestar.com/yourtoronto/education/2012/06/10/middle\\_schools\\_too\\_disruptive\\_for\\_weak\\_students\\_studies\\_show.html](http://www.thestar.com/yourtoronto/education/2012/06/10/middle_schools_too_disruptive_for_weak_students_studies_show.html)

*Dhuey, Middle School or Junior High? How Grade Level Configurations Affect Academic Achievement* (April 2012)  
[http://homes.chass.utoronto.ca/~edhuey/datastore/files/docs/Dhuey\\_MiddleSchool\\_April2012.pdf](http://homes.chass.utoronto.ca/~edhuey/datastore/files/docs/Dhuey_MiddleSchool_April2012.pdf)

<http://educationnext.org/the-middle-school-mess/>

7

Good Evening,

*Steven Moro*

I am here to make sure the voices of my children and all of the children who do not support the current recommendation are heard and to make sure they understand the importance of standing up for what is right.

I was part of the Riverside ARC committee.

During the ARC process we looked at many options and in the end, the option that seemed to resonate most with many of our families was status quo. An option that identified flaws in the current process.

Success of a previous ARC process is questionable (St. Alexander's children, Langlois enrollment, St. Bernard's new school?), and it looks to possibly prove a failure if we continue the current course.

Status quo was also the sole recommendation of the Tecumseh ARC report.

8 communities, represented by informed, educated and dedicated parents, and many of our communities top business leaders recognized the flaw in the current process and recommended the board take a step back and come at this from a different angle.

And yet, both recommendations from the Director of Education failed to recognize the voices of these collective communities.

As a result, our communities now have one common question – WHY?

Why does it appear that you have not listened to our communities?

Why, as a parent, do I feel that all of our children have been pawns in a pre-conceived game to keep Brennan high school from closing?

Why do I feel that the best interests of many hundreds of children and their families are being completely ignored?

With over 70% of SJV students attending St. Joseph's high school why send them to Brennan?

Why the need to rush and have this completed by September, 2014?

Is any of this in the best interest of the student?

**Let's look at the Business Case -**

We asked a senior administrator for the business case.

The response was to the effect of "we have 4,000 empty desks right now and in September we'll have 5,000 empty desks...that is the business case. The Board is going to lose 1,000 students over the summer – so something must be done"

The board points to the Watson Report to justify future – declining – trends.

In comparing the 2008 Watson report to the 2013 Watson report – their numbers were over/under estimated by magnitudes of nearly 40% in some cases. Brennan's numbers were off by over 20%.

Why does this board continue to refer to this faulty data?



In March, the Ministry of Education published their 2014-2015 School Board Funding report.

On page 77 (Windsor-Essex Catholic DSB) it shows projected enrollment for Elementary schools will rise by 1,083 students.

At what looks to be just over \$11,000 per student in funding (MoE report), the difference between the Watson/Boards prediction (losing 1,000) and the Ministry number (gaining 1,000) equates to just over \$22 Million in additional funding. That's a lot of extra money.

And we have not seen any numbers from the Board to indicate that the proposed changes will see any substantial savings. Will the proposed changes save the board any money?

In a recent meeting I had with a City Official, I was advised that the City has plans for a full subdivision that would encompass the Riverside Arena, Riverside Baseball and Concord school property.

The Town of Tecumseh advised of 500 new homes being built in their area that would feed the schools involved in the Tecumseh ARC.

Why would we be closing schools that are near capacity if there's potential to see over 1,000 new students enter the system?

Why would we be closing schools if so many new homes are planned to be built in our community?

The City plans 50 years out – how far out is the Board planning?

Is there really declining enrollment?

If so, why do the numbers reported to the Ministry indicate otherwise?

#### **What about the Future -**

Over the past several months, we have heard comments from children, parents and administration to the effect of:

"...your school will most likely close this June"

"...I will be teaching at Brennan"

"...we all know that elementary children will be at Brennan in the fall"

"They are renovating the woodworking and cosmetology rooms (at Brennan) into a cafeteria for the elementary kids"

"Kids are going to get bussed over to a satellite school at Adstoll arena/Ice Park"

"...SJV won't be affected, SMG/St. Jules will close..."

Whether these comments are based on fact or not, it feels like the Board hasn't been transparent.

We know that the Board announced new funding for St. Piux before the Tecumseh ARC was completed.

Why does it feel like this whole process is fait accompli?

But it shouldn't be – and I request that it not be.

There is still time to change the course.



## So what can/should the board do?

In the Director's recommendation report for Central Windsor – it states:

“If Ministry funding is not secured for a new Catholic Central high school that it would close in 2016 and the students split between existing Catholic High Schools”.

In the 2014 Ministry of Education Funding Report – it does not show any new capital funding for this Board.

So the answer seems simple.

With Brennan at 61% OTG & Assumption at 70% OTG capacity it would seem logical to close Catholic Central immediately.

Move the entire school to Brennan, or split it between Assumption and Brennan.

- Give those (high school) students the better facilities they deserve.
- Stop the current ARC process.
- Leave our most vulnerable, elementary children alone.

This is a win-win-win scenario:

- The elementary children win by not being uprooted.
- The high school students win – Brennan, Assumption and Catholic Central – full schools & better facilities.
- The Board and Trustees win – parents are happy, schools are full, funding is maximized and expenses decreased.

We ask the Trustees to listen to your communities – the ones that elected you.

It appears that this whole process has been a mandated process to fulfil a requirement for community input.

Input that feels like it's being ignored, and should not be.

Take the time to change the course and do what is truly in the best interests of our children.

Thank you.

*Marchi + Janonovski*

Good Evening Chairperson Holland, Trustees and Administration of the Windsor Essex Catholic District School Board, we are here before you this evening to present an alternative option on behalf of several of the parents of the St. John Vianney school community with respect to the East Windsor/Riverside Accommodation Review Process.

One of the challenges for the St. John Vianney school community, is that it is made up of both families in the old Riverside area and many families that have settled and established their communities in the East Windsor area, with the understanding that their children would be able to attend St. Joseph's High School. Currently, many of the St. John Vianney students have siblings that are already students at, or they themselves are enrolled in, St. Joseph's High School, as they fall within this boundary. The St. John Vianney graduating class of 2013 was divided between Brennan and St. Joseph's High School. The community also unfortunately loses a large portion of its graduating class to the secondary schools outside of the Windsor Essex Catholic District School Board, but with the development of St. Joseph's High School, the sense is that more families are choosing St. Joseph's.

Unfortunately, the St. John Vianney community was not aware that consolidation of its grades 7 and 8 students to the Brennan site was an option, and has had little time to respond. The first that parents became aware of this option was when the report was revealed. However, having said this, when the Director's report was released, the school community has seen some interest from its students to be part of the new middle school concept. Especially from students that will be continuing to Brennan for their secondary school education and for families with siblings already enrolled at Brennan. Taking all of this into consideration, the St. John Vianney community would like to respectfully submit the following revised recommendation with respect to the St. John Vianney community, for the Board's consideration:

That regrettably, effective September, 2014, St. Maria Goretti shall close and boundaries are adjusted so that JK to 8 students currently within the St. Maria Goretti boundary east of Lauzon Road shall be accommodated in an integrated school community of JK to 8 at St. John Vianney, and JK to 6 students currently within the St. Maria Goretti boundary west of Lauzon Road shall be accommodated in an integrated school community of JK to 6 at St. Rose; and

Prior to 2014-15 school year, the Board be asked to promote the middle school concept at Brennan to the students in the proposed integrated St. John Vianney school community to build upon interest that has been expressed, and that the students at the proposed integrated St. John Vianney school community be given the option of attending the 7-12 school at the F.J. Brennan site, with Board transportation provided in accordance with policy; and

In addition, prior to the 2014 -15 school year, the Board be requested to promote the middle school concept at Brennan to all feeder grade schools to Brennan High School and city wide, with the middle

school having open boundaries at this time. We are optimistic that interest from these areas, will offset the students that do not transfer from the integrated JK to 8 school community at St. John Vianney.

In closing, the St. John Vianney school community requests that the above noted changes be considered. We are optimistic that many students could transfer from St. John Vianney to the Brennan middle school. The transfer of these students would then help with any overcrowding issues at SJV.

This is being presented on behalf of a group of parents that have come up with a possible resolution.

It is our hope that this proposal along with the other proposals submitted tonight and in prior ARC meetings, be thoroughly reviewed and that every and all efforts are exhausted to ensure that the Board and the Trustees deliberate on these decisions with the whole community in mind and that special attention is given to the children being moved into strange and unfamiliar environments...Please take into account their impressionable and youthful spirits, budding minds and growing bodies....

As that is why we STAND in front of you tonight...Please listen to all and digest the views of this community...So that we remain a strong and united Board from our students to your administration

Fortes in Christo

# Riverside ARC Meeting Apr 15-14

## Delegation Report By: Kelly Vandenberghe

**Delegation Date:** April 15, 2014

**Name:** Kelly Vandenberghe

**Personal Information:** Parent St. Jules, also Riverside ARC member.

Two children, one in grade 2 and one starting JK in Sept 2014.

I also gave previous delegation at the Mar 25-14 board meeting to consider moving the new build to St. Jules property instead of beside a fire station on St. Bernard property.

### Concerns and Questions for Riverside Directors Report:

It is very concerning the board is going to fill Brennan with elementary students and a new administrative program that the Windsor Essex Catholic Board has never done before (just 7/8's) this upcoming September.

- 1) How does this give **time** for any sort of transition committee to form with all communities involved?
- 2) How will the retrofits of Brennan be completed in **time**?
- 3) How will the bussing bays be constructed in **time** to avoid safety concerns?
- 4) How will the teachers, staff and administrative team be selected properly and allowed **time** to organize things before this September?
- 5) Is the upcoming election year a reason the board wants to rush the decision by Sept 2014?
- 6) The current Riverside ARC did not include St. Bernard or Lourdes, despite the committee asking to get them involved, but they are part of the 7/8 option. So the board considers this by leaving the OLD Bernard/Lourdes JK-8 temporarily for one more year. All schools should have this luxury of **time** for a transition period, not just two of all the schools involved.
- 7) If no funding is provided next year to support a new Catholic Central, then closing in June 2016 is possible. What does that mean for the 7/8's at Brennan? Are we moving elementary kids into Brennan pre-maturely?

Rushing to fill Brennan is decreasing public confidence in the board and the ARC process. Are the students really the first priority or is this rush only about money?

What confidence do we have the \$ you save by doing this so fast will be re-invested in the Riverside community schools? How much of the savings is actually going to pay down the capital debt by 2017 instead, of which the schools in Riverside ARC are not even benefiting from?

### History in Review:

- 1) Why did board just spend \$ in upgrades at St. Jules, Maria Goretti and St. Rose for FDK if going to close? Why are you going to again spend \$ on OLD St. Bernard to accommodate all Lourdes students this September to close it 1 year later?

## Riverside ARC Meeting Apr 15-14 Delegation Report By: Kelly Vandenberghe

- 2) It appears the decision to fill Brennan with elementary students was already made before the ARC process even started (as the ARC process is ministry mandated and appears to be more of a formality).
  - a. My neighbour just registered a JK student this year in a public school in St. Jules area because when they called the catholic board office, administration told them to not bother going to Jules because they would be closed within 2 years.
  - b. Last year my daycare on Lauzon Rd had Maria Goretti school contacts who were also telling new families to not bother going as it was also closing.
  - c. Sept 2013, the Windsor Star quotes that Brennan will be the first JK-12 school. It is obvious St. Jules was first slated for this move, and shortly thereafter followed by St. Rose and Goretti (following Watson number projections).
  
- 3) 2009 ARC -- St. Jules/St. Bernard/Our Lady of Lourdes was not successful. The board has not realized any savings from closing Lourdes and the promise of a new school not realized yet 4 years later. The decision to leave St. Jules 'status quo' failed and St. Jules is now part of this Riverside ARC. The board obviously knew the 'status quo' outcome would not work for the old St. Jules building. Now Lourdes and Bernard join before Jules in a JK-6. Would it not be better to consolidate all 3 schools at the same time? What will happen to the St. Jules teachers coming in after the fact? One of the reasons St. Jules is such a great community school is because of its teachers and we want them to move with us. And now the city is building a fire station beside the proposed new school. How is this safe for students? How will this affect pick up/drop off and increased bussing for this area? If you recall my delegation from Mar 25<sup>th</sup>, moving the new build to the St. Jules site makes sense for many reasons. About half of the students affected between the 3 schools WALK to St. Jules and there would obviously be less bussing IF built on St. Jules property. **Time** would allow a review of this request.
  
- 4) Last year's St. Alexander/Langlois ARC was not successful. Langlois is LT 85% capacity and the recommendations to fully renovate it did not happen. The board told the St. Alex students that St. Jules was NOT closing, but here we are and you are going to transition them again. There are about 70 students left from St. Alex and the majority of them chose St. Jules due to walking distance. They clearly want a school within their community. Why are the out of boundary St. Alexander students going to St. Jules not embedded in the transportation recommendations of this Director's report? They agreed to walk to St. Jules, not to get transportation to new St. Bernard or Brennan?

## **Riverside ARC Meeting Apr 15-14**

### **Delegation Report By: Kelly Vandenberghe**

#### **Future Concerns from Decisions Today:**

- 1) If you close St. Jules and don't move the new build to St. Jules property, you are risking losing many NEW families to the public system. Old public school Gordon McGregor also with low enrolments (beside Ford Test Track) will be closing and students from Bernard area will be bussed to public Percy P McCallum (a few blocks away from St. Jules). There will be 4 public schools within walking distance from St. Jules. It is also known that public Cornation and David Maxwell buildings will not be sustained and a brand new public school in the St. Jules area is on the horizon. Given the population in this area compared to St. Bernard area, the catholic board is going to lose students in this area to public schools (new and within walking distance in the community). This will not help Brennan numbers long term.
- 2) If you close Goretti AND eventually close St. Rose, NEW families in this area will attend the new public Suzuki school within walking distance and in the community. The catholic board is again going to lose student numbers. This will not help Brennan numbers. Now that you have announced the possible closure of St. Rose, what NEW families will want to attend a school that might be closing?
- 3) If you make Vianney a JK-6 with 75% of the students slated to attend St. Joseph or they have siblings already there, how many families are going to refuse to transition their kids this many times? So for 7/8 they have to transition and again to high school. This is not good for students. How many will switch to public to avoid multiple transitions?
- 4) Potential future ARCs are the most concerning. Will this Brennan solution work long term? Or are we going to lose so many elementary students that our kids will be faced with a high school ARC and possible closure by the time they are in high school?

## **Riverside ARC Meeting Apr 15-14**

### **Delegation Report By: Kelly Vandenberghe**

#### **Summary:**

Do not rush the 7/8's to go to Brennan this upcoming September.

**Time** would allow the following recommendations:

- 1) **Time** to allow a system-wide ARC process review
- 2) **Time** to review the objective of the boundary policy to achieve the greatest good for the greatest number of students
- 3) **Time** to ensure the long term future of catholic education for our children and eliminate future ARC risks
- 4) **Time** to ensure value to student is first priority before immediate financial short term incentives
- 5) **Time** to enhance public confidence in the Windsor-Essex board catholic education board
- 6) **Time** to consider changing the new elementary school build from St. Bernard site to St. Jules site
- 7) **Time** to investigate other options for Brennan instead of sending elementary students. Find community partners to lease the space as an alternative.
- 8) **Time** to finalize Catholic Central new build before filling Brennan unnecessarily.
- 9) Or at least **Time** to prepare 7/8 new administration program with a transition committee.

The elementary schools have the **time**. Brennan has been running LT 85% capacity to date, but it is still viable with over 600 students, so it also has **time**.

**No one wants to see their kids transition again from future ARCs because of the decisions today. Take the time to do it right for the students and mitigate risks. We are asking you to take the TIME to review the bigger picture.**



**Marc Williams**

**WECDSB Special Meeting - regarding ARC process**

**I address you this evening with great respect, for what you do and the difficult decisions you have to make. Your jobs are not easy. My respect for you is not based on whether or not I agree with you, but whether or not you take the time to listen and make informed decisions - giving reasons for what you decide.**

**My comments tonight are not mine alone, but represent many parents, who feel that their voice doesn't matter.**

**Preparing for tonight I found something that I feel is important, something that is not new to anyone of you.**

**AN EFFECTIVE SCHOOL BOARD :**

- knows why it exists, what difference it aims to make in the community and develops a plan for this purpose;
- maintains a focus on student achievement and well-being;
- functions as a team;
- serves as a role model for the education system and the community;
- makes informed decisions;
- strives for excellent communications with its partners and constituents;
- has a clear sense of the difference between its role and that of senior management;
- understands the distinction between policy development and implementation;
- is accountable for its performance;
- holds the director of education accountable for effectively implementing the policies of the board;
- monitors the effectiveness of policies and implementation plans; and ensures that local provincial and federal politicians understand local issues and needs, and encourages them to make education a high priority

**My hope this evening, is that the current Board of Trustees, listens to the parents here tonight and take the time to read all of the submissions regarding this ARC. You will hear many varying comments - some related to the effects these changes will have on their own children - special needs**

issues, transportation issues, the destruction of communities, the lack of vision of the Board, the lack of true input by the public, the perception that each of the ARCs, and those of the past, are merely a necessary hurdle, that the Board must endure, before it can proceed with it's own plan.

The Education Act states that the responsibility of individual trustees is - to bring to the board the concerns of parents, students and supporters of the board and to consult with them on the board's multi-year plan. I realize that it is not always that simple, but sometimes it is.

Trustees carry a dual responsibility, that is recognized in the Education Act and was underscored in the Governance Review report of 2009:

"As a member of the board, an individual trustee is expected to act within the board's by-laws and be loyal to the board's decisions. However, as elected persons, trustees are also expected to advocate for the interests of their constituencies."

Each person sitting here this evening and the previous evenings, care about their children's education and feel strongly that the recommendations put forth are not in their best interest. We have elected you to listen to us, to advocate for us and to represent us, when push comes to shove regarding questionable decisions - you are to act for us. Which schools to close, or whether to close a school at all, is such a circumstance. These 3 ARCs are just the occasion for which we elected you. It is too bad that when we need you the most, some of you will not be there vote.

As you are aware, some of the recommendations are contingent on Ministry Funding and if it is not granted, then boundaries will be shifted - affecting the neighbouring ARC recommendations. Case in point - if Catholic Central is not approved for funding, the students will be spread amongst other schools, including Brennan. Brennan has been recommended to take on grades 7 and 8, to fill the school. What then if Catholic Central students are to attend, will there be portables at Brennan? From the news as recent as today, this may be the case. What is the plan? Are the 7s and 8s still needed to fill the space? This needs to be questioned.

**There is an overwhelming feeling amongst the parents, that the Board is rushing these decisions. Time and time again, deficiencies have been brought up about the recommendations, yet no one wants to address them.**

**I recommended at one of the public meetings, that the process stop....that the Board look at the entire group of schools that it controls and do an ARC of it all, not every year do one, but do one Board ARC and plan things for the next 15 to 20 years. If the Public Board can look at things this way, why can't you.**

**There are currently too many unanswered questions, questions that need to be answered before going forward. You the Trustees need to ask the questions of Administration as our elected representatives. Get the answers and make an informed decision.**

**Two years ago I shared a poem with you, written in the 1930s by Peter Winbrow and I ask that you listen again and in the end, hopefully you find a friend in the glass.**

# The Man In The Glass

Peter "Dale" Winbrow Sr

When you get what you want in your struggle for self  
And the world makes you king for a day,  
Just go to the mirror and look at yourself  
And see what that man has to say.

For it isn't your father or mother or wife  
Whose judgment upon you must pass.  
The fellow whose verdict counts most in your life  
Is the one staring back from the glass.


You may be like Jack Horner and chisel a plum  
And think you're a wonderful guy.  
But the man in the glass says you're only a bum  
If you can't look him straight in the eye.


He's the fellow to please-never mind all the rest,  
For he's with you clear to the end.  
And you've passed your most dangerous, difficult test  
If the man in the glass is your friend.

You may fool the whole world down the pathway of years  
And get pats on the back as you pass.  
But your final reward will be heartache and tears  
If you've cheated the man in the glass.

Correspondence received  
for the Director of Education  
and/or Trustees

East Windsor-Riverside  
ARC

From:  ~~Dayna Marignani@gmail.com~~  
Director of Education

April-05-14 5:51:44 PM  

Subject: Opposed to recommendation

To:  **Eileen Belanger**  **Beth Marshall**  **Paul Picard**  **Director of Education**

Dear Mr. Picard,

My husband and I are very opposed to sending the gr.7 and gr.8 students from St.John Vianney to Brennan high school. This was not a recommendation that was supported as part of the accommodation review meetings that we attended. We feel that many parents, especially from St.John Vianney were not given accurate information and we only heard of this dramatic change of events through our young children in kindergarten and gr.3.

We specifically moved into this area so our children could attend both St.John Vianney and then St.Joseph High School. Brennan is very far from our home off Greenpark and we would not be comfortable sending our children on a bus to a high school that they have no intention of attending.

As a Director, your role is to put the students first and keep parents adequately informed. We should not have to hear this disappointing news from our children. Our daughter came home in tears over this.

We still have faith that you will reconsider this decision and put families first. St.John Vianney has no enrolment issues and our children are very happy to be a part of this caring community. If the decision is made to hastily send these children to Brennan, we will have to strongly consider moving our children to the public board.

Regards,

Mrs. Dayna Marignani

Sent from my iPad

*Jeff & Tina Faubert*  
*Apr. 15/14*

SINCE I AM NOT ALLOWING TO SPEAK AT TONIGHT MEETING CAUSE I SUBMITTED MY REQUEST TO LATE TO BE PUT ON THE AGENDA. I WAS NOT GOING TO SPEAK BUT BECAUSE OF COMMENTS HEARD LAST NIGHT I DECIDED TO TRY AND PUT A REQUEST IN BUT WAS NOT ACCEPTED. I AM A PARENT OF 4 STUDENTS THAT ATTEND ST ROSE. I DO NOT AGREE WITH THE GRADE 7 & 8 STUDENTS TO ATTEND BRENNAN HIGH SCHOOL.

I ATTENDED LAST NIGHT CENTRAL ARC MEETING. I HEARD POINTS THAT MAKE MYSELF FEEL THAT MR. PICARD RECOMMENDATION TO PLACE GRADE 7 & 8 STUDENTS IN TO BRENNAN IS JUST TO FORCE THE MINISTRY TO GIVE THE BOARD FUNDING TO BUILD A NEW CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL. MR. PICARD SAID THAT HE WANTS A NEW CATHOLIC CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL DOWNTOWN. THAT HE ALSO DOESN'T TRULY RECOMMENDS MOVING THE CATHOLIC CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS TO OTHER HIGH SCHOOLS CAUSE HE FEELS THEY WILL NOT GO PASS THREE PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL TO ATTEND BRENNAN. BUT HE IS ASKING US, THE PARENTS, TO SEND OUR GRADE 7 & 8

/

STUDENTS PASS TWO TO THREE PUBLIC GRADE SCHOOL TO ATTEND A RETRO FITTED RUSH MIXED MIDDLE SCHOOL AND HIGH SCHOOL COMBINED. WHY SHOULD OUR 12 YEAR OLDS BE FORCE TO ATTEND SCHOOL WITH 18 YEAR OLDS WHEN THE BOARD CAN COMBINE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WITH HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS AND ASK FOR FUNDS TO FIX UP THE HIGH SCHOOLS. REMEMBER MR PICARD SAID HE DOESN'T THINK THE HIGH STUDENTS WILL TRAVEL BUT I REMEMBER WHEN THE BOARD ONLY HAD TWO HIGH SCHOOL AND STUDENTS TRAVEL ACROSS THE CITY TO ATTEND THESE SCHOOLS. I ALSO RECALL MR PICARD SAYING THAT THE BOARD HAS TO HAVE UNITED STAND TO GET FUNDING FOR A NEW HIGH SCHOOL AND THAT THE MINISTRY WILL NOT TALK UNTIL THE ARC PROCEEDS IS DONE. BRENNAN AND ASSUPMTION HAS ROOM FOR CATHOLIC CENTRAL STUDENTS. SO IS THIS THE WAY MR. PICARD FEELS HE CAN GET THINGS DONE. BY RUSHING TO PLACE OUR GRADE 7 & 8 STUDENTS IN TO BRENNAN AND TELL THE MINISTRY THAT WE NO LONGER HAVE ROOM TO FIT CATHOLIC CENTRAL STUDENT IN TO OTHER SCHOOLS AND WE NOW MUST HAVE



THE FUNDING TO BUILD HIS NEW CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL.

IF THE TRUSTEES GO AHEAD AND APPROVE THIS RECOMMENDATIONS WILL OUR GRADE 7 & 8 STUDENTS TRULY HAVE A FAIR TIME TO USED THE OUTDOOR FIELDS AND AREA WHEN THEY ARE ALREADY USED BY THE HIGH SCHOOL, MR. PICARD SAIDS THIS IS WHY WE NEED A NEW CATHOLIC CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL SO THEY HAVE THE SAME AS OTHER HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN THE CITY, WILL OUR 7 & 8'S HAVE THE SAME AS OTHER 7 & 8'S IN THE CITY.

AS FOR ALLOW FOR SOME GRADE 8'S TO TAKE SOME GRADE 9 COURSES HOW WOULD THIS WORK, THE STUDENT GETS UP FROM HIS GRADE 8 CLASS AND LEAVE AND GO TO A GRADE 9 CLASS DISRUPTING THAT CLASS WHEN WOULD HE KNOW WHEN TO LEAVE IF BELLS ARE DIFFERENT WHAT ABOUT IMPORTANT STUFF MISSED IN GRADE 8 AND THEN THE DISRUPTIONS WHEN THE STUDENT RETURNS, IS THIS FAIR TO ALL OTHER STUDENTS IN THAT CLASS.

AS FOR OUR ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS WE KNOW SOME MAY HAVE TO CLOSED BUT CAN WE HAVE THINGS PLANNED AND IN PLACE BEFORE WE RUSH TO CLOSED THESE SCHOOLS. YES THE RIVERSIDE AREA HAS THREE SCHOOLS CLOSE TO EACH OTHER AND I BELIEVE THE PARENTS REALIZE THIS BUT GIVE US MORE THAN ONE MONTH TO PREPARE OUR CHILDREN TO MOVE TO ANOTHER SCHOOL. WHY SHOULD SOME STUDENTS HAVE TO REQUIRE GOING TO THREE SCHOOLS TO GET THEIR CATHOLIC EDUCATION. FOR EXAMPLE IF A STUDENT LIVES IN EAST RIVERSIDE HE OR SHE WOULD ATTEND ST JOHN VIENNEY TILL GRADE 6 MOVE TO BRENNAN FOR 7 & 8 THEN MOVE TO ST JOE'S FOR 9 TILL 12, SO DOES THE BOARD NOT THINK THAT US THE PARENTS MIGHT NOT MOVE TO THE PUBLIC BOARD LIKE MR. PICARD FEELS ABOUT CATHOLIC CENTRAL STUDENTS WILL, IT NOT LIKE THE OLD DAYS WHERE OUR SCHOOL WE MORE INVOLVED WITH OUR SACRAMENTS IN GRADE SCHOOLS.


WILL MR. PICARD CHANGE HIS WORDING REGARDING ST ROSE SCHOOL CLOSING IN HIS RECOMMENDATION LIKE HE DID LAST NIGHT

NIGHT FOR IMMACULATE CONCEPTION SCHOOL TO REVISIT IT NOT JUST JUMP AND CLOSE IT, IF AND WHEN THE NUMBERS COME AVAILABLE TO MOVE IN TO ST JOHN VIENNEY NOT TO JUST CLOSE AND MOVE STUDENTS LIKE CATTLE, HERDING THEM FROM ONE PLACE TO ANOTHER.





SO IN CLOSING WILL IT BE MR. PICARD AND THE TRUSTEES DECISION TO USE OUR EAST WINDSOR STUDENTS AS CHESS PIECES IN ORDRE TO GET YOUR WAY TO RECEIVE FUND FOR A NEW CATHOLIC CENTRAL HIGH FOR CENTRAL WINDSOR STUDENTS, OR WILL YOU THE TRUSTEES VOTED TO LEAVE OUR ELEMENTARY STUDENTS WITH THE EXPERIENCE THEY SHOULD GET LIKE OTHERS THE SAME AGE IN THE CITY. YOU HAVE A FIX FOR ENROLLMENT IN OUR HIGH SCHOOLS CATHOLIC CENTRAL, BRENNAN AND ASSUMPTION. LET SPEND THE NEXT COUPLE OF YEARS DOING YOUR BOUNDARY REVIEW FOR HIGH SCHOOLS AND LEAVE OUR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STATUS QUO.



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From: "Cindy King" <cindyking@peoplespost.com> 4/16/...   
Director of Education

Subject: St Bernard Elementary School Grades 7/8 change

To:  **Eileen Belanger**  **Beth Marshall**  Paul Picard  
 Director of Education

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Hello,

I am a parent of a student at FJ Brennan High School and St Bernard Elementary. Unfortunately I missed the meeting at Brennan discussing the middle school proposal because I was out of the country. Arriving last night, I discovered some of the discussions that took place.

I want to be very truthful and honest with you, I am 100% **against** this idea.

Just to give a little bit of history, I was a Brennan graduate when Brennan East had to open because the enrolment was so big. I have had 3 children attend St Bernard from 1999 to present. My first child graduated from St Bernard and went to Herman High because the feeder school at the time was Catholic Central. Brennan lost 80% of that class to Herman because the board wanted to push them in another direction. Brennan was not an option and now has a small enrolment. Now I have my second child at Brennan because that was changed. I now only have a one child at St Bernard, and she has at least 1 more year if this comes into process.


We have been waiting for years for a new school and to my understanding that is still on route, but with the recent changes. My daughter wants to graduate from her school just like her brothers did. The board is destroying the most precious thing these smaller school have, and that is unity. The Grade 8 look out for the smaller kids, they help teachers. Smaller kids make friends with older kids. Everyone knows one another. Parents know teachers, children and other parents and that took years of development. I always wanted a consistent environment for my children. I moved from school to school when I was younger. I do not want that for my child.

I wanted my children to continue in the catholic faith, in a smaller school that works like a close community.




Depending on the board's decision and if this proposal with go through, I have a big decision to make. The catholic board will lose my child and my taxes. I will have them continue at the public system or at a private school until her graduating time. I feel by that time, the catholic high school system will not be considered again for secondary education.

I must look out for the best education and circumstances for my child and not the great good of the catholic budget.


Maybe times are changing and perhaps the schools have to move with the times, perhaps I am still old fashion, but schools should focus on "what is best for the kids".

Cindy King  
  
Windsor

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From: **Mark Kereliuk**   4/15/14 3:08:00 PM 

Subject: **Re: Written Submission for April 15 Special Board Meeting**

To: **Beth Marshall** 

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~~Thanks for replaying back to me Beth~~

To the Catholic District School Board:

Hello, my name is Mark kereliuk and I have one child currently attending St. Maria Goretti Catholic Elementary School and one child who is currently attending Walkerville Centre For the Arts in Grade 9. My youngest son Sean is currently in Grade 6 and will be immediately affected by a decision to close St. Maria Goretti.

The matter that I wish to address the School Board with is in regards to my eldest son Eric. Eric attended St. Maria Goretti for his Kindergarten years while we rented in the Riverside area. Both those years were wonderful growth years for Eric, but unfortunately we were forced to relocate and Eric attended another school for 1st grade. It was at this time that we noticed that Eric wasn't behaving like most children and his responses to situations were handled very different as well. Eric would have outbursts at school, and it being a large school with many students, he was frequently put by himself away from the other children. We had numerous meetings with his teacher and the School Principal but things did not improve. We knew that a change had to happen.

My Wife and I set a course of action that completely changed how my Son's education would occur.



We moved back to the Riverside area and returned Eric to St. Maria Goretti where he had flourished previously. We had Eric tested, where he was diagnosed with Aspergers Syndrom Autism. The designation with the School board today however states that Eric is on the Autistic Spectrum. With the help of the good Teachers and different Principals, as well as the smaller school size, which allowed for more personal one on one time with Eric, he proceeded to once again flourish over the next six years!


During his grade 8 year Eric decided he wanted to pursue his love of Art and Drama and auditioned at the famed Walkerville Centre for the Arts in both of those disciplines. Although we were very optimistic about his chances of getting accepted in the program as there were many who auditioned every year who were not accepted into the program, we tried to hold onto Eric's enthusiasm. Then the letter came just before Christmas of last year. He had been accepted in both disciplines.

Today Eric is an A student through his first semester, and loves his new school and friends. I truly believe that the smaller size school of St. Maria Goretti and the Extra time being able to spend with Eric afforded him the chances and growth that he has received. I also believe that closing down this school and forcing kids to go to a large 7 thru 12 school at Brennan would take away the same opportunity that Eric was able to receive.

I would like to formally say that the recommendations by Mr. Picard to close all these schools in favour of a mega school at Brennan as a business move only and not in the best interests of the students as they keep saying is their main concern!


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From: **Beth Marshall**   
Mark Kereliuk 

Subject: **Fwd: Fwd:** 

To: **Beth Marshall**

Cc: *Nicki Kereliuk*

Attachments:  Attach0.html / Uploaded File (10K)

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To whom this may concern,

My name is Nicki, and I am speaking on behalf of bothered parents for the grade 7 to 8 integration into F.J. Brennan Catholic High School. I'm now 22 years old, but I was also a casualty of this back in 2003 until 2005.

I attended Roseland Public School until the 6th grade, and from there, us 7th graders (including students from Southwood Public School and Northwood Public School) were forced into a new curriculum at Vincent Massey Secondary School – known to us then as Massey Elementary – after running out of space in our buildings.

The years I was merged into a high school were the best and worst years of my life – the best only because I met a lot of great people from different schools (that I talk with to this day.) The worst for many reasons including the following...

For starters, I had the opportunity to switch to St. Christopher Catholic Elementary (being in district of school) and I chose to stick with the small core of friends I had from Roseland – I regret that to this day, because as soon as Massey Elementary came to be, I was badgered entirely and was often visiting the child and youth worker due to depression.

I have never been inside a room with a worker as often as I was when I attended this new "school"; because it's such a variety of ages at the school, there was a limitless amount of bullying that constantly went on between grades, including getting verbally abused by the high school students who thought we might have been in their way.

We had limited access to areas of the school. 1 or 2 washrooms in 1 or 2 hallways. We were only granted admittance to one of the three gyms in the school – the gym that didn't have air conditioning. There were no longer extra recesses, just a standard, short lunch break, where we were only allowed to sit in half of the cafeteria and couldn't leave past the cement block if we were to go outside. There were minimal extra curricular activities; the school play being my favourite, and the slacking teachers giving up each year because they were legitimately bored. Boredom to one might have been life saving to another.

Almost instantaneously, my grades started depleting and the teachers were grazing by as if it wasn't an issue. At that time, I also stopped caring; as long as I made it through the 2 years there, I was perfectly fine. This was the worst time of my education, as it didn't teach me precautions for high school – when I finally entered secondary school (not at Massey, might I add, but Holy Names Catholic High School) I failed an important class and had to eventually retake it the following year, continuously fighting through each assignment, test, and exam. I found the teachers didn't spend enough individual times with the students, nor was there tutoring.

This program of the merging schools started in 2001, and ended approximately 6 years later once the prior schools made more room.

This is my opinion only, but I feel very strongly about this. And I have evidence to prove how I had to bounce back in my life, especially with my education. I believe the 7th and 8th grades are two of the most important in a child's life, as it's preparing them for a bigger world. I wish I had had a dress rehearsal to that reality.

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**NICKI KERELIUK**  
Photographer & Designer

[REDACTED]



After the first ARC meeting, I left wondering why an ARC process is even being conducted in the Riverside District. Every school in the area is above the 85% capacity except Brennan. I was impressed with the level of enrollment in our area Catholic Grade Schools. I wanted to be part of this ARC Committee not only as a business owner in the Pillette area, but as a father with two girls that attend St. John Vianney. I also wanted to have a voice and express any concerns about any changes that may occur in the Windsor-Essex Catholic District School Board.

Over the last several months I have listened to many options and opinions. I was never sold on the thought of a Kindergarten to Grade 12 School at Brennan. The school was never built to accommodate this type of configuration. If the board was building a new school, it may make more sense to have a K to 12 school or consolidate more than one school.

The committee then put a recommendation of having a grade 7 to 12 school. This was another idea I did not think would work very well. I do think Brennan is a very important part of our history for Windsor, the Riverside area and the Catholic School System. I also believe having Brennan is good for the local community. As a business owner in the area it is very sad and disappointed to see Brennan in this dilemma. Brennan is an asset to our community and is also a contributor to the success of the many small businesses in the Pillitte Village BIA. This being said, I don't think our grade schools should suffer the consequence. A closure, or multiple closures of grade schools to keep Brennan open is not in the best interest of our grade school students and the current and future students of Brennan.

With funding of over \$11,000 per student will we really be ahead if we move or grades sevens and eights. Every 100 students we lose it will cost us over one million ever year in lost funding. Imagine how many students we might possibly lose by drastically changing our school system. I know the School Board has said historic precedent in the city has shown almost 100 per cent of students stay in the Catholic system after a school is closed but this is a totally different scenario. I have had many parents tell me if this happens they will move their kids to the Public School Boards. Are we willing to take a gamble on our Catholic Education.

In the option to turn Brennan into a 7 to 12 we would also be impacting St. Rose and St. Maria Goretti in a negative way. Everybody loves there small community schools and I understand as time goes on we will have less small schools and more consolidated schools to decrease cost. We just invested \$300,000 at St Maria Goretti to accommodate the full day kindergarten. So if we close the school now that money would have been wasted. The board only expects to possibly get \$280,000 for the sale of this building if this school were to close. That does not make sense to me from a business perspective. With a utilization rate of 87% we should keep this school open and monitor future enrolment and make

changes or a closure a topic of discussion at a later date. Why impact a full school of students, their parents and the riverside community when it's not necessary. Now we are asking St. Maria Goretti to split their school in three.

In this same option regarding St. Rose. Removing grade 7's and 8's from the school could change the dynamics in a very negative way. I don't think just because it works in one area it will work in our area. Every city or town is different and I don't think making a change like this is a risk worth taking right now. This could backfire and accelerate the decline numbers from the Catholic Board to the Public Board. Do we want to close more schools then we have to? St. Rose also has a good thing going for them. They are ranked 142 out of 3030 schools with a 8.6 out of 10 on the most current Fraser report. We need to give St. Rose a lot of credit for achieving such a high score. Why change something that is good and working? I don't think this is the time to make a drastic change to our students and take a gamble on system that is working.

St. John Vianney is a big grade school with over 600 students. As I said earlier, I have two daughters who attend there. I am very impressed with the quality of education they receive. The staff is amazing and I was surprised to see such a big school functions as if it is a school with under 200 students. The school has made great strides in technology. I always know when my daughters have used a smart board or an iPad at school because that's the first thing they talk about when they get home. I understand technology is not everything, but in today's age it is a big part of the equation for a good education. I was glad to know the recommendations the ARC Committee made would keep St. John Vianney k to 8 and know my daughters would have the same positive experiences as I did in grade 7 and 8. Year after year I looked up to the grade 7's and 8's when I was in grade school and I could not wait until I could share the same positive leadership skills to other younger students. Prior to the directors report I thought to myself, if St. John Vianney was changing to a k to 6 and the 7's and 8's had to be moved I would be very upset and disappointed. I would be very against this change.

That being said, if I would not want it happen to me I could not support the same thing for other families, schools or school communities. That is why I did not vote in favor of the ARC Committee's first recommendations option 1 on establishing a grade 7 to 12 school at F.J. Brennan. Many people on the ARC Committee were also not in favor of this and that is why a second Option was added . I did vote in favor of Option 2 which is to keep St. Maria Goretti, St. Rose, St. John Vianney and F.J. Brennan remaining status quo. Consolidating St. Jules, Our Lady of Lourdes and St Bernard in a K-8 school on the new St. Bernard site.



We have lots of parents at St. John Vianney who live in the Banwell area. Does it make sense for them to send kids all the way to Brennan only to move them again in two years so they can go to St. Josephs. Seventy percent of the St. John Vianney graduates go to St. Josephs. This will be a huge inconvenience to parents and not fair to all these grade school students. Some parents will have to send their kids to three different schools, it will be hard on the kids to. Brennan will be a long bus ride for some on the students who live near the Banwell area. This is not what I would consider value to students. Many parents at St. John Vianney are not aware or understand the changes that might occur in September. If I was not on the ARC Committee I don't think I would have known or found out until it was too late. I purposely chose to move near St. John Vianney so my kids can be close to their school and they would be able to walk to school. Parents need siblings to stay together so they can be involved in the same school activities. Parents also rely on the older sibling to be responsible for their younger sibling(s), for example if they need to walk them to and from school. If I knew this was in going to happen I would have made different choices in where I would have bought my house. Most families have two working parents this will be impossible for parents to have to travel between three different schools.

I understand enrolment will continue to decline year over year and schools will have to close but the future of our students, our school board, our community and our local economy will all suffer if not done properly. There are many reasons why we cannot support closures of any grade schools in the riverside area. The enrolment numbers are not low enough to justify any closures. Why not wait a few more years and reevaluate the situation. What is the hurry? Why should schools in the riverside area suffer because of boards overall excess capacity of over 4300 spaces. We should focus on keeping Brennan open and promote the school. They have great EQAO test results. They have great students and teachers. They have a good facility. We need to give Brennan more programs to draw in more students. Catholic Central is also in a ARC review and a recommendation to close has been made that school in June of 2016. According to the directors report for the Central Windsor Area building a new Catholic Central is dependent upon Ministry funding. If funding is not secured boundary adjustments at F.J. Brennan, Holy Names and Assumption, to accommodate the secondary students in the Central Area and would provide alternative accommodations options. They forecast Assumption will have 206 available spaces in 2016, Holy Names will still be over utilized and F.J Brennan will have 409 available spaces in 2016. Brennan will not have these spaces Brennan adds grades seven and eight to it school. Given the state of our province funding does not look so promising for the new Catholic Central. What will we do with 800 Catholic Central students in September 2016. They will be in the same position as the students at St. Jules and aging school and nowhere to go.

Why are we having all these separate ARCs when the outcomes will affect not only schools in the ARC but many others? How can we change St. Bernard's and Our Lady of Lords and take their grade 7's and 8's away without the input of those school communities. We don't always need to make these drastic changes so quickly. Why can't we come up with a game plan for the whole Windsor Catholic School board instead of a bunch of small changes that will have a big affect on our students and on our

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communities. All the pieces of this puzzle the School Board is creating need to fit together properly. Will taking grade seven and eight out of our grade schools achieve this goal? As a business owner bringing more students to this area would be great. But what's best for my daughters come before what's best for my business . We need come up with the best options for our students. I believe a good Catholic education is important and is still relevant in our communities. We need to be very careful in the decision that we make because it will affects students and the quality of education we will be able to provide. Once again why do our grade schools in the riverside area need to suffer when there Utilization rate is so high? Do we what to accelerate the declining enrollment in our Catholic School Board?

Terry Yaldo,

Parent

Catholic School Council Member

ARC Committee Member

Business Owner

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From: [REDACTED] Dania Fazekas <dfazekas@yahoo.ca> 4/22/14 4:04:29 PM   
Director of Education  
Dania Fazekas <dfazekas@yahoo.ca>

Subject: Brennan 7-12 recommendation

To: [REDACTED] Eileen Belanger [REDACTED] **Beth Marshall** [REDACTED] Paul Picard  
[REDACTED] Director of Education

Cc: [REDACTED] barbara\_holland@wecdsb.on.ca

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Hello,

I just wanted to take a moment to inform you that my daughter, who attends the wonderful school St John Vianney, will regretfully be attending Hetherington Public School if the trustees vote in favour of your wishes as opposed to the parents, students and community.

We moved within St. John Vianney's school boundary in order to have my daughter remain at this exceptional school, but with no incentive to stay in the Catholic system, the next choice is public which is still within our neighbourhood. Not to mention the fact that I do NOT want her attending a 7-12 model that is being rushed to completion in a few months time. How can the "incentives", busing, traffic issues, etc... etc. be in place and up to the highest quality that our children deserve in such a short time?


A decision made in your favour will leave me no choice but to abandon the Catholic school system, for a school that is still within walking distance, and a system that affords me the choice as to how my daughter is educated.

Thank you,

Dania Fazekas

Sent from Yahoo! Mail for Windows 8

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From: **"John Renaud"** <j.renaud@wecdsb.com> Apr-25-14 12:12:12 PM   
Director of Education

Subject: 'Our children are pawns' – Hundreds show up for contentious me...

To: **Eileen Belanger** **Beth Marshall** **Paul Picard**  
Director of Education

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Paul Picard  
Director WECDSB

Hello Mr. Picard..

I live on the first block of Coventry from the closed Concord School ,formerly a satellite School of Brennan and before that the GR 7/8 St. Louis School, for Riverside Catholic Students.

A new family moved across from me with three young children the eldest in Gr 6 at St.Rose and plans for the youngest to follow him through the grades.

When parents say they will transfer their students to the nearest Public School if their school is to be closed and their kids to be bussed to a distant school or gr. 7/8's together in one school "Brennan" ... around here, they have done it & will continue to do so.

The Public Board purchased St. Louis Schools from the WECDSB and pumped a few hundred thousands to upgrade it and some local Catholic School parents moved their kids to it . A few years later the WECDSB → moved the students from Riverside area closed schools by bus including Concorde School temporarily to a closed Public School at a distance then into the new David Suzuki School. Some Catholic parents transferred their children there also.

With difficult choices you with Administration have to make about this and others described in the above article, was any discussion given to the possibility to discuss a transfer of Schools with the Public Board? The Catholic Board would purchase the closed Concorde School, make necessary repairs, clean up and place a unique program at the former Concorde that you consider to do at Brennan for the Gr. 7/8 . This would hopefully keep most of these Catholic Students to not transfer to the Public Schools.. .

Respectfully, John Renaud. UW Alumni, Retired WECDSB..

Dear Mr. Picard,

April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2014

This letter is written with the utmost respect for you and your colleagues. I am the parent of a son who attends St. John Vianney School in the riverside area. My son is currently in 6<sup>th</sup> grade. I recently learned that my son and the rest of his class will possibly be moved to F.J. Brennan High school to complete grade 7 and 8 before transitioning on to high school. The assumption is that my son will choose to stay at F. J. Brennan for grades 9-12 since he may already be there for grades 7 and 8. However, there are more factors to consider. My son has an older sister who is currently at St. Joseph's High school and a younger brother who is in French Immersion who will also be attending St. Joseph's in the future. Furthermore, St. Joseph's High school is a new facility that promotes academic excellence and is located in an excellent neighbourhood. Hence, I will also send my son from St. John Vianney to St. Joe's. This is a decision that was made prior to the start of the ARC talks.

Having said that, if my son is forced to leave St. John Vianney next year, how will this affect his future? Based on what I have read, students who switch to a "middle school" instead of continuing on in a K-8 grade school have lower success rates in math and English scores, have a decrease in self esteem and an increase in the amount of misconduct or behavioural issues. These studies were not American based but mostly from the province of British Columbia where a variety of "middle schools" consisting of varying grades exist. One thing rings true. Students who attended K-8 schools overall had better outcomes. Higher scores in math and reading, higher self esteem, and less behavioural issues/truancy. These findings continued on into the high school years with the students who were followed.

I am very impressed with the amount of time and effort that parents, school faculty and the Board are putting forth to come up with a solution. May I suggest that the basis for all decision making should be in the best interest of the students. I have been told that F. J. Brennan will be a "Centre for Excellence" offering students a culinary arts program, an enhanced hockey program and a Chrome Book for every grade 7-8 student who attends. At present, my son currently has internet access via a Chrome Book at St. John Vianney. Looking into the future, if given the choice between teaching my son how to cook and play hockey or having a more solid foundation in math and reading with higher self esteem, any parent with common sense would agree that the latter is in the best interest of our children.

Please do not underestimate the value of our current K-8 school system. The literature supports this model for higher success rates for students academically, socially and spiritually. It also demonstrates negative effects on students in middle schools that continue on into high school. Please do not jeopardize my child's future and the future of hundreds, possibly thousands of students for the sake of an old building, or even a failing high school with low enrolment. The perceived money that may be saved now will be spent in the future trying to clean up the mess of the past.

If budgetary cuts must be made, I propose that one of two things happen. Firstly, **LEAVE THE GRADE SCHOOLS ALONE!** Amalgamate the two Catholic high schools that are not doing well- F.J. Brennan and Catholic Central at an agreed upon site. If this option does not work, my second proposal would be to stop enrolment at F.J. Brennan for any grade 9 students in September of 2014 and close Brennan after the remaining students graduate in 3 more years. Thank you very much for your time and consideration in this matter.

Sincerely Yours,

Yvette Gebriel