



LIMESTONE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

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October 20, 2016

Dear Yarker & Odessa Families:

I am writing to share some information that might affect your schools in the future.

As you may know, the Board recently undertook a Long-Term Accommodation Plan to outline how the Board might provide stronger program opportunities for our students while improving operating efficiencies. This report includes a number of recommendations concerning school consolidations/closures, new schools/additions and boundary changes over the 15-year planning horizon.

As a result, staff presented an Initial Staff Report on Yarker Family School and Odessa Public School at the School Enrolment/School Capacity Committee of the Whole Board (SE/SCC) meeting on September 28, 2016. The staff report recommends the closure of Yarker FS and the relocation of students to Odessa PS. The Committee approved the following motion, which was confirmed by the Board at its regular meeting on October 19, 2016:

“That the Board approve the conducting of a Pupil Accommodation Review (PAR) for Yarker Family School and Odessa Public School to commence in the fall of 2016.”

This means that the staff recommendations will now be explored through a Pupil Accommodation Review, or PAR. It's important to note that no decisions have been made at this time.

A key component of the Review is the establishment of the Pupil Accommodation Review Committee (PARC) The PARC is the official conduit for information sharing between the school board and the affected school communities. In accordance with *Policy 15: Pupil Accommodation Review* Section 2.2.2, membership on the PARC will include “three parents/guardians, chosen by their respective school councils, one of whom will be the school council chair or designate” from each affected school.

Your School Council Chairs will want time to decide on a selection process that works for your Council and establish your members on the Committee. Your Principal has been asked to communicate the names of your representatives for the PARC and their e-mail addresses to Board staff by October 28, 2016.

As per the *Board Policy 15* the PARC will hold a minimum of four working committee meetings and two public meetings. The tentative dates are as follows:

- PARC Working Committee Meetings: November 2, 2016, December 8, 2016, January 24, 2017 and March 21, 2017;
- PARC Public Meetings: November 30, 2016 and March 7, 2017.

All meetings will be held in the early evening at Odessa Public School, starting at 6:30 p.m. It's expected meetings would last approximately two hours. All meetings are open to the public for observation. Meeting dates, times, locations, agendas, documents and minutes will be posted on the Board's website and e-mailed to PARC members.

If you would like to learn more about the recommendations outlined in the Initial Staff Report, or steps in conducting the Pupil Accommodation Review, you can access it on our website at the following link <http://limestone.on.ca/PARC/PAR> and click on *Initial Staff Report Yarker Odessa September 28, 2016*.

I know that this news may be upsetting to some families. It is never easy to explore a consolidation or closure of a school. The Board recognizes that our schools play meaningful and important roles in our communities and the conversation around any changes to our schools is difficult. It is our responsibility, however, to ensure we are providing equitable programming for all of our students across the district while ensuring a balanced budget.

If you have any questions, please direct them to your Principal. He will forward them to the appropriate Board staff for the record and for response, if needed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Debra Rantz".

Debra Rantz
Director of Education