



## LIMESTONE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

220 Portsmouth Avenue, Kingston, ON, K7M 0G2

T: 613-544-6920 | Toll Free: 1-800-267-0935 | TTY: 613-548-0279 | F: 613-544-6804  
[www.limestone.on.ca](http://www.limestone.on.ca) | Twitter @LimestoneDSB

### **School Enrolment/School Capacity Committee of the Whole Board Meeting**

**Tuesday, May 9, 2017 at 6:00 pm.**

**Yarker Family School**

*Trustees, Staff and Presenters will be in attendance at Yarker Family School. Trustees and Staff will be accommodated in the Classroom 103 (Kindergarten Room). Presenters will be seated in Classroom 101 and move to the main meeting room prior to their presentation time. The meeting proceedings will be live streamed to Classroom 101. Observers will be accommodated at Odessa Public School where the meeting proceedings will be live streamed.*

#### **Agenda**

##### **Approval of Agenda**

##### **Declaration of Conflict of Interest**

##### **Action Items**

1. Delegation presentations concerning the Pupil Accommodation Review regarding Yarker Family School and Odessa Public School

(There will be 17 presentations. Each presenter or pair of presenters will be given 5 minutes to highlight points from his/her/their presentation. Trustees may ask questions for clarification.)

##### **Other Business**

##### **Next Meeting Date**

June 5, 2017 - Limestone Education Centre

##### **Adjournment**

Paula Murray – Chair | Debra Rantz – Director of Education and Secretary | Paul Babin – Treasurer

***Our Students, Our Future***

**Presentation  
Documents  
Submitted by  
Delegations**

## Delegation Presenters

May 9, 2017

*PARC Members were given preference in the ordering of the presenters. All other presenters were randomly ordered.*

Order	Approximate Time	Presenter(s)	Name of Organization	Presentation on Page
1	6:10	Jon Bennett Jenny Munroe	PARC Members	1
2	6:20	Ace Kilgour (5 yrs old)	Son of PARC Member Jill Kilgour	6
3	6:30	Jill Kilgour	PARC Member	7
4	6:40	Harris Ivens	PARC Member	8
5	6:50	Christie Jefferson Joanne McAlpine	Yarker Colebrook & District Community Association	11
6	7:00	Wayne Goodyer	Private citizen	16
7	7:10	Gail Knowles	Private citizen	47
8	7:20	Dr. Lori Forester	Private citizen	61
<b>RECESS</b>				
9	7:40	Marilyn Fenwick	Private citizen	111
10	7:50	Robin Hutcheon	Rural Schools Matter	113
11	8:00	Eric Smith, Reeve John Wise, D Reeve	Stone Mills Township Council	116
12	8:10	Bryan Brown	Private citizen	119
13	8:20	Eric DePoe	Private citizen	129
14	8:30	Roberta Lamb	Private citizen	132
15	8:40	Beverley Trachy	Private citizen	135
16	8:50	Deborah Richmond Joyce Bierma	Yarker District Community Association	143
17	9:00	Sandra Goodyer (16)	Private citizen	147

We, the PARC, have taken care to propose options meeting with the goals of reviewing the school. We successfully provided innovative ideas to support learning in a rural school. The community demonstrated the great condition of YFS and we understand its value to the students and community as a whole. Our alternate options address the reasons for low enrolment and suggest program improvements for students.

According to Table 1: Present and Historic Enrolment in the FSR, enrolment has been on the decline for the past 4 years. Prior to that, YFS had fine enrolment rates, good enough for the \$676, 247 FDK addition in 2014. Enrolment numbers past 2015 are biased due to the announcement of the LTAP prior to the start of the 2016 school year. However, Senior Staff have decided to repeatedly use 2016 enrolment numbers to build their case. They do not address the reasons for low enrolment.

As a PARC member, parent and community member, listening to the Senior Staff of the LDSB passionately reject our school was disappointing. Hearing Senior Staff state on April 24th that the reason for a decline in enrolment doesn't matter was shocking. Evaluation is an integral part of program planning. Senior Staff's comment that YFS isn't meeting the community's needs and the reason why isn't important is negligent. Evaluation of the reason why parents have chosen to enrol their children elsewhere is critical, therefore without evaluating the problem LDSB is not meeting the community's needs. In due diligence, we took it upon ourselves to do an informal evaluation.

We do think the reason for parents enrolling their children elsewhere is important. We asked, and 56 parents answered. We asked, if you have considered YFS but enrolled your child elsewhere what was your reasoning? 21 people responded. The top 3 reasons for enrolling their children elsewhere were keeping siblings together, French immersion and lack of childcare. Alternate Option 1: Grades 4 and 5 addition addresses the number one reason for parents enrolling their children elsewhere. Additional grades will keep families together longer. Viola! We also suggested French programming. An article in CBC sites the Associate Minister of Education for Early Years and Childcare stating that "starting in September 2017, school boards across the province will have to provide before and after school care for students up to the age of 12". (CBC Sept 2016). LDSB should be using a residence based survey to determine low enrollment and fix it before it spirals into a school closing.

We asked respondents to rank our alternate options as incentives for enrollment at YFS in order of most appealing to least appealing for their family. 45 people responded and the number one incentive to enroll their children at YFS would be the addition of grades 4/5 followed by enriched programming then French then extending bus boundaries.



I'd now like to turn my focus to address the PARC's feedback on FSR comments on Alternate Option 2: Enriched Programming

- New and costly
  - We suggested staffing the school with a teacher, already employed with LDSB, at YFS. No additional staffing cost.
- Preliminary search of programs where children are bused to day programs and some involved residential component
  - This is not what the PARC is proposing. Irrelevant comment.
- Redirects students
  - Attracting families *within* a fair and equitable catchment area for YFS. It is not our goal to redirect, we're proposing an alternate to enhance curriculum and reduce attrition.
- Parents are not likely to send their kids to YFS for grades 4/5 after already rejecting it
  - Again our survey says... it is actually the number one incentive of parents who enrolled their children elsewhere to enroll a child at YFS.
- Transportation would be difficult for parents outside the catchment
  - Relevance?? Grandstanding.
- Critical issue - no curriculum readily available - the board would need to develop
  - LDSB employs teachers with backgrounds in outdoor education. Kevin Reed, Indigenous Lead perfect resource already with LDSB. Already have procedures for gardens... In my opinion, you have competent employees.
- Staffing challenges - requirement of substitute teacher when other schools visit - specialized teacher surplus to staffing the program costs would be significantly higher
  - Again, use the knowledge and skills of teachers already employed with LDSB. A teacher with passion, knowledge and skills in outdoor education could enthusiastically enhance delivery of the mandated Ontario curriculum. Using teachers to their full potential is a lower cost route to offering special programming.
  - In my opinion, Senior Staff are inventing problems. We mentioned *potential* joint-use programming satellite. Let's not get excited about substitute teachers.
- Start-up costs for curriculum development
  - Bring a teacher to the school with a outdoor education background and use existing LDSB resources to enhance the already exceptional academics with indigenous, agricultural and outdoor programming.

**As per Robin's request:** I suggest the Senior Staff redirect their passion for rural schools and become leaders by recognizing the uniqueness of rural communities and create and implement a rural school policy.

## Bussing and Transportation

The bussing and transportation recommendations for Yarker F.S. are not designed to take students from other schools, but we are trying to preserve and reel back, in the students that have left the school in their community.

*"To change the bus boundary would require the Board to change the catchment boundary or pay additional transportation costs to intentionally overlap the bus routes between Yarker F.S. and Newburgh P.S..."*

In the PARC recommendations we are indeed asking for the catchment and therefore the bus boundary be adjusted between Newburgh and YFS (refer to Boundary Proposal). As mentioned in the PARC recommendations the current border excludes County Rd 1 East from Curl Rd to the County Rd 6 intersection which is .44 Km from the center of Yarker. Looking at the geography of the land and the catchment/ transportation route overlaid it would make perfect sense to allow the Yarker bus to travel down cutler to curl and back again on County Rd 1 East making a circular round trip. To my knowledge this will negate the need to overlap busing routes and additional costs described in the FSR. Also the Tri-boards powerful BusPlanning Web application would be able to accommodate this change easily.

Using the BusPlanning Web application reveals an opportunity to help enrollment at Yarker F.S. For example, as of now if a new parent is on Cutler Rd and within 1.7Km of Yarker F.S. inputs their address into the BusPlanning Web application, it returns a result that the family is not eligible for transportation at Yarker F.S., but are eligible for transportation to Odessa P.S. (See Trans. eligibility screenshot p.g.2). This is because the walking policy is 1.6 Km for Jr. Kindergarten to Grade 6. However being a rural area where, for example in the winter, walking for a kindergarten student on snowy roads with no sidewalks, snowbanks created by plows, is nearly impossible. We feel the BusPlanning Web application should be twerked to better serve the needs of rural students in these kinds of situations. Tri-board Trans. will accommodate families within this range but if you were to simply use the Busplanning Web application and not pick up the phone or do further research parents may determine that Odessa is there only option with busing. They may not investigate Yarker F.S. and miss out on one of the gems of the L.D.S.B.

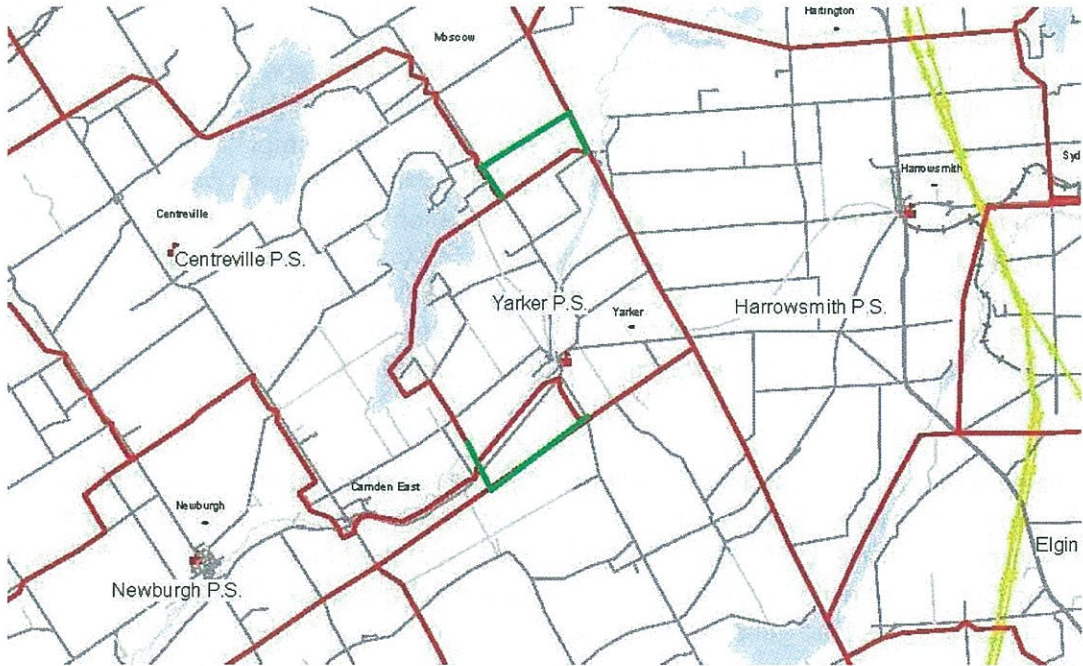
We would rather the Busplanning Web application did not yield results stating that these families are not eligible for pickup within the 1.7KM and less range because TriBoard will do these pickups as is currently the case. The FSR states that the boundary shift along County Rd1 E and Curl Rd. may not yield much of an immediate change, but this catchment shift will yield more students as time goes on. To be successful you need to think long term. The other catchment change we would like to see is the inclusion of McQuay Rd. located 5.1 Km to Yarker and 9.5 Km to its current in catchment school Enterprise P.S. This was not addressed in the FSR but is important as there are numerous homes and children on that road which would make a difference now and into the future. It is important to note that people living here have a Yaker address.

PARC alternate option 1 did state that we support extending the boundary into the Harrowsmith catchment area although it wasn't part of our formal request. H.P.S. is over capacity currently and could possibly end up accepting students from Prince Charles P.S. if the PAR initiates in three years. PARC doesn't know how this might look, but Board staff were kind enough to layout two options in the FSR that we also support if the Trustees determine they are acceptable.

**Table 1: Present and Historic Enrolment**

School Year (Oct 31)	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Yarker FS Enrolment	54	51	55	64	60	68	63	68	51	36	26
From Yarker F.S. catchment	32	24	33	42	47	55	47	48	34	25	19
From out of catchment	22	27	22	22	13	13	16	20	17	11	7
% From Yarker F.S. catchment	59.3%	47.1%	60.0%	65.6%	78.3%	80.9%	74.6%	70.6%	66.7%	69.4%	73.1%
% From out of catchment	40.7%	52.9%	40.0%	34.4%	21.7%	19.1%	25.4%	29.4%	33.3%	30.6%	26.9%

**PARC Boundary Proposal**



Transportation Eligibility: 2016-2017



Street Number:  Street Name:  City:

Board:  Grade:  Program:



Address: 174 CUTLER RD, STONE MILLS  
Yarker PS  
 You are NOT eligible for transportation

Odessa PS  
 You are eligible for transportation

[View School Eligibility](#)

[View larger map](#)

1.3Km from YFS, at approximately 1.8Km eligibility beings. (For example 254 Cutler Rd.)

Ace's Speaking Notes

Introduce himself

Speak about life before he entered school, his experience

Speak about life at Yarker and how it changed him

Express that students need smaller schools and shorter bus rides.

Thank the trustees.

Jill Kilgour Speaking Notes

Open by introducing myself.

Discuss the correlation between what has happened to small farms and what is now happening to small schools.

Speak about the need to restructure how we view education and the need for a new model.

Further explain the alternative option of the community sharing center, how it would work at Yarker and how it benefits the school.

Express the need for outside the box thinking and the evolution of education. We cannot stay where we have been, we must move forward.

Thank the trustees and encourage questions about the alternative option.



## Harris Ivens - Speaking on behalf of PARC to FSR responses on Alternate Option 4

Please do not hesitate to contact me to discuss further:

[harris.iven@gmail.com](mailto:harris.iven@gmail.com)

613 572 5287

Responses below text in italics are taken from the FSR.

### Alternate Option 4: French Immersion Programing

1. *"This would serve to move the excess student spaces in the Board to a different location, but would not decrease the number. The program may attract students from the area presently attending schools in other Boards or being homeschooled. This would decrease the number of excess student spaces in the Board."* FSR

- The board staff are not clear in their wording about moving excess spaces when YFS has sufficient student numbers within it's catchment to match board enrollment averages.
- Excess spaces coming from future growth areas being closer to urban areas (Harrowsmith and Amherstview) will likely be filled anyways with faster growing populations.
- Excess space is one consideration that needs to consider location and future projections which the board staff did not comment on here.
- The changing political climate and re-evaluation of the rural school closure process limit the rationale of this comment in the FSR and PAR process as a whole.

4. *"Opening a French Immersion program in Yarker F.S. would decrease the enrolment at the Amherstview P.S. French Immersion program for the primary and junior grades."* FSR

- The board staff are assumed to be referring to the young students currently living close to Yarker who cannot access the schooling they want locally and currently experience an extended bus ride to access french programming.

### Concerning points 5 - 7 together:

5. *"Given that the Yarker F.S. has 3 permanent classrooms the program would need to be limited in enrolment. Students from grades outside the program and those not*

*accepted due to space would need to go to Amherstview P.S. or The Prince Charles School in Napanee. Portables at Yarker F.S. could be considered.” FSR*

6. *“Expanding the grades to Grade 6 would necessitate severely limiting the enrolment and ensure all multi-grade French language programs.” FSR*

7. *“In a very short time, the French Immersion enrolment would overwhelm the enrolment in the regular English program resulting in one JK- Grade 3 class for regular programming and then necessitating the movement of the students in the regular program to Odessa P.S.”*

- The vision of YFS at over capacity providing a vibrant opportunity to rural communities to have increased access to french programming is a good thing.
- The PARC appreciates the Board Staff’s optimism about enrollment. While the french program is seen to be popular YFS over enrollment is speculative. As identified below staffing difficulties can limit french programming expansion which likely pose a greater constraint than school size.
- Partnering with Harrowsmith and Amherstview is a possibility as YFS can specialize in younger grade ranges, as needed, to maintain an enrolment balance. Once YFS enrollment increased beyond capacity, upper grades could be transferred to Harrowsmith or Amherstview. Immersion or extended french considerations would need to be addressed.
- YFS over-enrollment would result in the transfer of one grade to either of these two schools which are both likely homes for graduating students one year later while YFS maintains or exceeds enrollment capacity and provides a french programming in an environment centered around young children in their most formative years.
- French is the official second language of our country and where there is interest, efforts should be taken to support and celebrate this language and culture.



8. *“At present, the transportation to a French Immersion program is accommodated. Due to the location of Yarker F.S., few bus routes run near the school, making the transportation of students to the program challenging and costly.”*

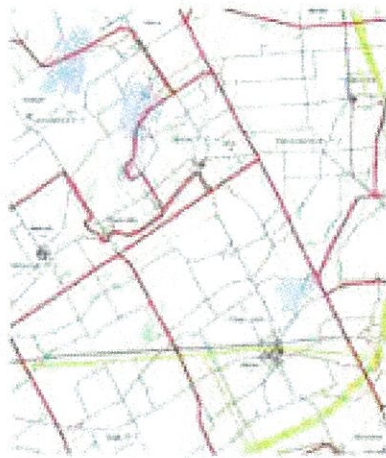
- This comment does not address the current bussing resources and cost already associated with YFS which would be transferred to support the French option.
- If the bus and school were full, this would reduce current bussing costs

10. *“There would be a cost involved in the setup of a new program to purchase learning materials in the French language.”*

- The community could be approached and would likely be willing to fundraise a significant proportion of these costs to maintain YFS as a thriving community based school.

-----

Supporting material:



Yarker Catchment



Odessa Attendance Area

*\*Both maps are taken from email correspondence with regards to bussing dated February 9th (left) and February 15th (right)*

**LDSB, Delegation, May 9, 2017**

Submitted by:

Christie Jefferson, Chair, Yarker Colebrook & District Community Association (YCDCA)  
Joanne McAlpine, Vice-Chair (YCDCA)

We support and endorse the recommendations from PARC, in particular:  
the following alternative option to closure of Yarker Family School:

- Increase the grades housed at Yarker Family School to include Grades 4 and 5, both starting, as opposed to being phased in, in 2017-2018.
- Extend bus boundaries for Yarker Family School towards Harrowsmith and Curl Road increasing access for families living in the immediate Yarker area.
- Enforce Administration Procedure 305, Student Transfer, Item 1.2.0 at Harrowsmith Public School. This procedure stipulates that Limestone Schools should not accept students from outside their catchment area where the school cannot accommodate them. Harrowsmith Public School, the closest school to Yarker Family School, is at 105% capacity and is projected to remain overcrowded.

Last fall the community and PARC, comprised of parents from Odessa Public School and Yarker Family School and the Principal of both schools, entered into a process in good faith to review the option of closing YFS and transporting the children to OPS.

We naively believed that the Board staff working with PARC would be interested in options to restore YFS to a healthier enrolment and work co-operatively with PARC and the community. Board staff produced only one option, i.e. the closure of YFS, and have hung tenaciously to that option as being the only outcome possible.

If the Board staff had put as much effort into looking at options to closure as they did clinging to closure and challenging the options put forth by PARC, we would no doubt be in a different spot today. We could be celebrating how real community engagement works and the leadership of the LDSB.

We are choosing not to waste our precious 5 minutes challenging the Final Staff Report which is a continuation of the Initial Staff Report, both of which are biased and so negative towards really helping to address the enrolment issue.

Why was Facilitator Bailey front and center at the SSEC on April 24<sup>th</sup> arguing against the alternatives presented by PARC? It was our understanding that her role was to “facilitate” the process rather than be the face of the Final Staff Report.

PARC members, in our view, should have been invited to present their report directly and address any questions members may have. The work of PARC, central to this discussion, is an Appendix while the Staff Report takes precedence and was the one presented to the SSEC Committee. This process was dismissive and disrespectful to the excellent work of PARC, despite words to the contrary offered by senior staff.

It was clear from Director Rantz’ comments at the outset of the recent SSEC meeting and her closing remarks that the Trustees have only one way to vote and that’s for closure. She is encouraging you to reject options which meet the goals set out in the parameters of PARC’s work and provincial guidelines for accommodation reviews. In fact, PARC points out that the closure of YFS fails to meet the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> goal.

Director Rantz mentioned several times that the issue of YFS needs “immediate attention”. Why is that? She acknowledged and so did Ms Bailey that enrollment numbers do fluctuate and that no one knows what will happen in the future. However, despite these assertions, the Initial Staff Report predicted 35 students at YFS for the next 10 years and the projection presented on April 24<sup>th</sup> states 22.

Director Rantz on April 24<sup>th</sup> in answer to a question about the significance of the EQAO score of YFS Grade 3 students summarily dismissed the importance of these results and in fact stated that it is quite likely that the same students would have done equally well if attending a larger school. We submit that this is pure conjecture on Director Rantz’ part. She also stated that these province wide standardized tests are meaningless, like comparing “apples and oranges”. The fact remains, YFS Grade 3 students scored the highest on these standardized tests in the whole of the LDSB and have done so for several years.

Several Trustees raised issues around the current political climate with respect to the disproportionate closure of rural schools, e.g. several calls from opposition parties, numerous community organizations and some Liberal MPP’s for a moratorium on school closures, a revamping of the PARC process and guidelines and for a rural schools policy. There’s a real possibility of changes in the near future especially given the Rural Education Consultations and we would urge the Trustees to consider these eventualities in your deliberations.

Considering the stats presented on April 24<sup>th</sup> re busing, the children who currently walk to YFS were not taken into account with respect to busing times. Would any of you place your 3.5 year-old on a bus for up to 40 minutes one way with high school children? We submit you would not.

There's no guarantee that parents will send their young children to OPS should YFS close nor will they want to be burdened with driving them to Newburgh PS or Harrowsmith PS or Odessa PS.

YFS –OTG capacity is 66, not 72, as consistently reported by staff and that is according to Board policy for primary grades. As PARC noted in alternative options, if Grades 4 & 5 were available at YFS, in conjunction with slight alterations to the western and northern boundaries of YFS, an additional 24 students (the minimum, according to Ms Bailey) from Harrowsmith and a maximum of 15 potential students from Newburgh PS (19 minus the 4 Fr Immersion students) could be attending YFS in September 2017.

This would result in the projected utilization of Harrowsmith for 2017-18 being slightly reduced from 110% to 103%. The projected utilization of Newburgh for 2017-18 would be slightly reduced from 77% to 73% if only 7/15 students chose YFS.

So...24 students from Harrowsmith plus 22 ( the Board's projected enrollment at YFS for 2017-18) plus 7 from Newburgh, the enrollment at YFS would be 53 or 80% utilization. This is a viable option.

It should be noted that it is unclear how the number of 22 was arrived at given that 35 was the projected number of students for 2017-18 in the Initial Staff Report.

The reasons for closing YFS as presented to the community have been moving targets over these last few months. Sometimes it's the enrolment, sometimes it's for programming, sometimes it's the financial savings and the numbers keep changing. PARC and many community members (approximately 150 people attended the public meeting on November 30, 2016 and an estimated 120 attended on March 7, 2017) addressed these issues in their submissions. If an equivalent percentage of Kingston's population turned out for two public meetings, the total number in attendance would be 5,127- hardly an insignificant response to a community issue.

We would urge you to read all the submissions in your package, not only those from organizations, but those from the many individuals who weighed in on this important issue.

Trustees are not accountable to the Director of Education or other Board staff – they are accountable to the community. York Region District School Board, 3<sup>rd</sup> largest in Ontario, considered in the past to be the “golden child in Ontario education”, has been in the media over the last few weeks. Mitzi Hunter sent in trouble-shooters. It was reported: “The administrative side of the school board is struggling...suffering from damaged relationships, low morale, mistrust and lack of strong, principled leadership”. The York Board Trustees were slammed as lacking understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Investigators deplored the Trustees’ lack of “strong and ethical” leadership. “They were troubled both by the lack of response and the Trustees lack of understanding about their responsibility to the community”. Ultimately the Director of Education was fired and a host of recommendations for action by the Trustees are being addressed. (Toronto Star series of articles - Feb 22, 2017)

The community is unanimous in calling for YFS to remain open. We submit that this consensus should carry considerable weight in your decision-making process.

Has the Board looked at other places besides closing YFS for savings of \$247,000 a year? Why look to the best achieving school in excellent condition with the lowest maintenance cost in a rural community as the solution to this shortfall?

Chair of LDSB has been quoted saying that the Board’s primary responsibility is to balance the budget while the Minister of Education, Mitzi Hunter, in a letter to Joanne McAlpine dated April 10, 2017 stated “There is no question that decisions, such as when to close or consolidate a school, are among the most difficult for school boards to make as they try to balance the need for fiscal sustainability with their primary responsibility of supporting student achievement and well-being”.

Our community has been clear. We look to our elected Trustees to show leadership, to listen to PARC, the elected officials and the entire Township - keep YFS open.

The continuation or closure of YFS has a rippling effect on many other aspects of the community, including social and economic. We understand that the Ministry guidelines do not directly take these factors into account but they are real and members of the community have no choice but to consider them. We urge the Trustees to review

carefully the feedback from the Public Meetings, Doyletech, Stone Mills Township and others.

As an example of the impact of this decision, the Yarker Library, which is an integral part of YFS, may have to close. "A complete review of library services was done as part of the county's strategic planning process and a number of factors were considered. ....hours at the Yarker, Bath and Tamworth branches will expand...which will be completed by June 1<sup>st</sup>....County Council at it's February 15 meeting decided to defer until Sept 1 until the future of Yarker Family School is determined." (The Napanee Guide dated April 6, 2017).

Yarker has had an elementary school for 170 years, and for most of its history, the school has been full, and at times had a lengthy waiting list. This recent blip has been created by a number of factors colliding, including the release of the Ameresco Report, which alone dropped enrolment in June 2016 from 37 to 26 in September. We submit that closing Yarker Family School is a permanent solution to what is a very temporary problem.

Do the right thing – If the Ministry has money to build, there's money to repair and maintain. The Board needs to be fiscally responsible to taxpayers who have contributed over \$1 million dollars to YFS in the last 7 years. This Board now has the opportunity to be a champion of rural education. We urge you to join with other Boards in Ontario facing the same challenges and decisions re rural schools – to push together for a moratorium and a rural schools policy.

Please vote to nurture and enhance Yarker Family School, a gem, not only to the Township, but to the LDSB itself.

**Deputation on  
A Broader Context**

**for Yarker/Odessa PAR**

**By Wayne Goodyer May 9, 2017**

**Index:**

**1. Part 1 - Funding Background**

FOI Requests and Background .....	1-4
Watson Report Analysis .....	4
By Family Spreadsheet .....	4-5
Rural Versus Urban Spreadsheet .....	5-6
Addendum #1 – Watson Report Spreadsheet .....	7
Addendum #2 – By Family Spreadsheet .....	8-11
Addendum #3 –Rural Versus Urban Spreadsheet .....	12-14

**2. Part 2 – Funding Background: Spreadsheets**

Commentaries and Additional Spreadsheets Providing Context ....	15
Income Matrix Comments .....	15-16
EQAO Matrix Comments .....	16
Maintenance Matrix “By Students” Comments .....	16
School Profile Information Comments .....	17
Comments on FOI Letters .....	17-18
Conclusions and Observations .....	18-19
Addendum #4 – Income Matrix Spreadsheet .....	20
Addendum #5 – EQAO Spreadsheet .....	21-22
Addendum #6– Maintenance Matrix “By Student” Spreadsheet ...	23-24
Addendum #7 – School Profile .....	25
Addendum #8 – Original Freedom of Information Fee Estimate .....	26-27
Addendum #9 – Most Recent FOI Fee Estimate .....	28-30

## PART 1

### The Funding Background for Yarker Family School, April 6, 2017.

Submitted by Wayne Goodyer. (For inclusion in the P.A.R. Yarker/Odessa package to the Trustees)

My interest was aroused when I was reviewing the Initial Staff Report on Yarker/Odessa in October 2016. I informed Ms. Bailey, the Facilitator, that there seemed to be an error or omission in the Report. The School Information Profile for Odessa featured a Table 2, Facility Renewal Event List showing the renewal needs and the projected needs to 2021 (totaling to \$8,990,270) and a Table 3, archived Event Listing showing actual expenditures for the years 2006 to 2010 (\$944,378). The problem was that while the School Information Profile for Yarker Family School contained a Table 2, Event Listing totaling \$856,638, **there was no corresponding Table 3 showing the Actual Expenditures at Yarker Family School!**

After a series of exchanges and attempts at clarification, Ms. Bailey agreed that the data was not in the Report. Subsequently she determined after conferring with Staff **that there had been no actual expenditures made to address renewal needs at Y.F.S. from 2006 to the present!**

Obviously this aroused concern as the Y.F.S. had experienced the addition of a shared use library in 2012 and a full Kindergarten facility in 2014. As a result of these additions a new septic system, landscaping, new doors, roofing work were obvious to even a casual observer. The facility is obviously in excellent condition. How could this be since none of the events listed as needed had not been addressed?

This began a torturous journey that continues today, April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2017, more than six months since I first observed discrepancies in the Financial Profile of Y.F.S.

I turned my attention to the Ameresco 2016 L.T.P.A.P. and to one of its predecessors, the Watson and Associates L.T.P.A.P. 2007 since they might provide some insight into when they Y.F.S. had last had expenditures made to address its needs.

The Watson Study shows data by family of schools. It confirmed that in the period 2002-2007 comparatively little was spend to address renewal needs at



some schools; notably, the Napanee Family of nine schools had an Event Listing total of \$20,010,454 with only \$554,765 having been spent on Stage 1 and Stage 2 renewals or about 2 ½ % of the needs had been addressed. Notations in the Recommendation and Strategy section (page 2-49) of the Watson Report indicates that the “Prince Charles school is in good condition, has had a recent addition constructed in 1997 and has recently received renewal upgrades.” It is also noteworthy that The Prince Charles is the only school in the Napanee family on municipal water and sewage. It is also a host school for special programs.

Equally concerning was the LaSalle Family of Glenburnie, Joyceville and Storrington. (Renewal Events of \$12,725,676, and Actual spending of \$121,000).

The Ernestown Family was more confusing since Yarker and Amherst Island were the only schools not on municipal water and sewer. **Without data on individual schools is was impossible to identify spending criteria.** The Ernestown Family had renewal needs of \$11,067,616 and Actuals Expenditures of \$977,680 for the six member schools. Were rural schools more expensive to maintain? Did being on municipal services make a school a more inviting investment? Did being identified as Prohibitive to Repair or a P.T.R. candidate cause expenditures to dry up? Did the Board begin to perceive schools more supportable or less supportable based on their level of repair as measured by their F.C.I.?

Since the Ameresco Report also offered data only on families of schools, it was obvious that I would need data on individual schools to put expenditures at Y.F.S. and in other rural schools in context. Perhaps data on individual schools would explain why events such as new doors, roofing, septic and landscaping appeared to have been addressed at Y.F.S. but were still listed on the Renewal Needs List.

After repeated entreaties to both Ms. Bailey and Mr. Fowler for someone to address the shortcomings of the I.R.S. on this matter and the need for better information on the Board’s pattern of expenditures, the drawbridge slammed closed. **On December 20, 2016, I was informed that I would need to submit a formal Municipal Freedom of Information Request to obtain expenditures on individual schools.** I did so and I also asked for an appointment with Mr. Fowler so that I could discuss the procedures involved

in updating Renewal Lists and how other expenditures were tracked and recorded. Mr. Fowler never replied to my request for a meeting nor did he reply to a request for a meeting from Mr. Bryan Brown to discuss matters related to Mr. Brown's analysis of the Ameresco recommendations.

Through phone contacts and chats after P.A.R. meetings Mr. Fowler indicated that much work is done on schools that doesn't apply to the Renewal Needs. Sometimes this work involves a Building Permit and sometimes not. He made it clear that an accurate accounting of these expenditures resulting from special grants was very complicated. While his department oversaw or executed the work, the contractors were paid by the Finance Department so production of accounts would involve considerable searching and coordination between Departments.

By way of illustration, the Stone Mills Township Properties Manager prepared a January 9, 2017 Report for Council in which he outlined the projects completed at Stone Mills schools that were done under building permits since 2013. There were six projects done on four schools including Yarker Kindergarten room (\$486,000) totaling \$1.54 million.

None of these events correspond to events or actual expenditures in the Ministry database for F.C.I. information with two possible exceptions. The first is roof work at Enterprise (Permit 077-2016) for 2/3 of the roof for \$150,000. There is a 2017 Renewal Event for roof covering at \$241,239.

The second event is an event at Enterprise for 2020 at \$62,400 for Elevator and lifts. This may be connected to Permit 054-2015 for accessible washrooms and powerlift at stairway to gymnasium.

Obviously then considerable work must be done above and beyond the ~ \$3.8 million annual grant provided. These other monies were referred to as specials and Mr. Fowler indicated that recently the special grant(s) amounted to \$14 million. The expenditures of these monies would require considerable searching.

**On February 15, 2017, Ms. Susan McWilliams responded to my request with a fee estimate for the retrieval and copying of the requested data. The Cost Fee Estimate was \$126,800.**

Subsequent to my informing Staff that the Ministry data was made available to Watson and Associates, I was informed that Staff could provide the Ministry data on both Renewal Needs and Archived Actuals for all Limestone Schools at no charge. In the recording of the telephone conversation with Ms. McWilliams and Mr. Fowler clearly acknowledged that what they are providing is not everything I asked for. I thanked them for at least a good start and it was made clear that I would share questions about the delivered material and I would specify what further information I needed. In the recording Mr. Fowler outlined the various types of expenditures that would not necessarily be shown in the Ministry record of Actual Expenditures. Some items under \$1000 would be done as maintenance. Items under \$10,000 would not be considered Capital items, and additions and projects wouldn't appear as Renewal Items.

**At the time of this submission, I can offer only preliminary observations based on the data I have received. Please review the attached files that display Renewal Data from various perspectives.**

#### **Watson Report Analysis:**

The “Watson Report Analysis” spreadsheet provides some historical perspective on the link between the level of spending at schools and their eventual fate. It shows schools that were closed and others which were P.T.R. (Prohibitive To Repair) or candidates for P.T.R. that survived. The right hand column shows schools that received sufficient spending on Renewal Items to reduce their Renewal Events liability. For example Lord Strathcona Public School was deemed Prohibitive to Repair by the Ministry but received sufficient renewal money to lower its Renewal Events by over \$1million. (shown as \$1.019 in the column 10 Year Change in Millions) Numbers in red indicate schools that have received funding that lowered their Event Renewal Amounts. Those in black have not received sufficient funding and have experienced increases in the Event Renewal Amounts.

#### **“By Family” Spreadsheet:**

The “By Family” spreadsheet allows Trustees to compare data on families of schools as well as see up to date data on individual schools.

The three right hand columns show results if roofing items are removed from the totals. The rationale for this is the fact that roofing issues are a non-discretionary item that has to be addressed regardless of the school's status as long as the school is open.

This spreadsheet allows Trustees to see where Renewal Needs are and are not being addressed.

Trustees should cross-reference these support levels with schools that are candidates for closure in the Ameresco Report.

For example, examine the Napanee Family of Schools. Only one school is on municipal services, The Prince Charles. If it is removed from the calculations, the level of support falls to 5.7% of the Renewal Needs. Remember, this family as reported in 2007 had Events Needs of \$20,010,454 and Actual Spending of \$554,765, which is a 2.7% level of support.

Of the 16 schools below 7% (after roofing is removed) shown in yellow, **eight are rural schools not on municipal services. Seven of these eight are candidates for closure in the Ameresco Report.**

### **The “Rural vs Urban” Spreadsheet:**

This file presents support levels in numerical order, least to greatest. The blue cells designate candidates for closure (Ameresco). The red cells designate rural schools. The yellow designates less than 7% support level(after roofing) over a five year period (1.4% per year.)

Trustees might reflect on the following observations:

**Every single rural elementary school in the former Lennox and Addington County is designated as a closure candidate.**

Can Staff and Trustees really claim equality of opportunity when they compare levels of support for rural schools with those in more urban communities?

It appears that the key determinate of a school's future is whether it is on municipal services and whether it houses special programs.

**Remember that these observations are preliminary since the Staff has not provided information on expenditures made from other grant sources.**

Trustees should ask themselves why the details of what has been spent in support of our schools should be withheld from the public and from the trustees themselves?

How can Trustees vote in all good conscience if they are unaware of the funding background of targeted schools?

**The disparities in support clearly indicate the need for a rural schools policy. The Limestone Board should take the initiative and work with rural school communities to devise a policy that recognizes the strengths and the challenges of rural life and the unique support for youngsters that is in evidence in single school rural communities.**

### Watson Report Analysis

School	2006 Status	2006 Renewal Events Millions	2016 Status	2016 Renewal Costs	10 Year Change Millions
WJ Holsgrove	PTR	\$1.300		\$1.063	-\$0.237
Lord Strathcona	PTR	\$3.600		\$2.581	-\$1.019
Frontenac	PTR	\$5.000	Closed	-	
First Ave	CandPTR	\$3.100	Closed	-	
Sydenham	CandPTR	\$2.800		\$1.990	-\$0.810
Central	CandPTR	\$1.750		\$1.792	\$0.042
JE Horton	CandPTR	\$2.600	Closed	-	
Storrington	CandPTR	\$2.500		\$2.022	-\$0.478
Elginburg	CandPTR	\$2.500		\$1.803	-\$0.697
Amherstview	CandPTR	\$4.700		\$4.777	\$0.077
Amherst Island	PTR	\$1.300		\$1.821	\$0.521
Prince Charles ES (Verona)	PTR	\$3.400		\$3.025	-\$0.375
Newburgh	CandPTR	\$2.000		\$2.009	\$0.009
Land O'Lakes	-	\$1.500		\$2.304	\$0.804
Calvin Park	-	\$6.500		N.A	
JG Simcoe	-	\$1.400		\$1.600	\$0.200
Joyceville	-	\$2.500		\$2.200	-\$0.300
Yarker	-	\$0.300		\$0.400	\$0.100
The Prince Charles	-	\$2.000		\$3.000	\$1.000
Centreville	CandPTR			\$1.750	
Tamworth	CandPTR	\$5.000		\$3.089	
Enterprise	PTR			\$1.761	
HH Langford	CandPTR	\$3.500	Closed	-	
Sandhurst	CandPTR		Closed	-	
Selby	CandPTR	\$6.500		\$4.809	
Westdale	CandPTR		Closed	-	
Sharbot Lake	CandPTR		Closed	-	
Clarendon Central	CandPTR	\$4.600		\$1.243	
Hinchbrook	CandPTR		Closed	-	
		\$70.350		\$45.039	

Note PTR = Prohibitive to Repair  
 Note CandPTR = Candidate for PTR



Limestone DSB - Renewal  
 Requirement Listing - VFA Extract  
 All Elementary Schools - March 9  
 2017

# By Family

Watson 2007 Watson 2007		5 Year	10 Year	Total	5 Year	%	Archived	Archived	%	Less
Event Total	Renewal Spent	2012-2016	2017-2022	Renewal	Archived	Renewal	Roofing	Less Roofing	Roofing	%
Asset - Asset Name										
<b>Napanee</b>										
Centreville PS, Building ID 5189-1		\$1,746,311	\$2,329,501	\$4,075,812	\$27,905	1.6%	\$12,433	\$15,472	0.9%	
Enterprise PS, Building ID 10219-1		\$1,883,899	\$2,065,212	\$3,949,111	\$132,379	7.0%	\$8,972	\$123,407	6.6%	
Newburgh PS, Building ID 5114-1		\$1,754,172	\$908,170	\$2,662,342	\$1,202,309	68.5%	\$1,192,655	\$9,654	0.6%	
Selby PS, Building ID 6654-1		\$4,267,312	\$1,958,551	\$6,225,863	\$1,457,373	34.2%	\$588,879	\$868,494	20.4%	
Tamworth PS, Building ID 6758-1		\$3,151,845	\$1,804,700	\$4,956,545	\$0	0.0%	\$0	\$0	0.0%	
The Prince Charles S, Building ID 6773-2		\$3,603,634	\$3,039,489	\$6,643,123	\$498,824	13.8%	\$254,310	\$244,514	6.8%	
<b>Napanee</b>	<b>\$20,010,454</b>	<b>\$16,407,173</b>			<b>\$3,318,790</b>	<b>20.2%</b>	<b>\$2,057,249</b>	<b>\$1,261,541</b>	<b>7.7%</b>	
<b>Ernestown</b>										
Amherst Island PS, Building ID 10215-1		\$1,783,165	\$400,525	\$2,183,690	\$429,765	24.1%	\$379,765	\$50,000	2.8%	
Amherstview PS, Building ID 5342-1		\$6,074,691	\$2,696,555	\$8,771,246	\$198,408	3.3%		\$198,408	3.3%	
Bath PS, Building ID 5380-1		\$3,411,490	\$2,387,894	\$5,799,384	\$178,492	5.2%	\$20,193	\$158,299	4.6%	
Fairfield ES, Building ID 5808-1		\$2,714,278	\$1,334,072	\$4,048,350	\$65,629	2.4%	\$23,621	\$42,008	1.5%	
Odessa PS, Building ID 5026-2		\$5,975,971	\$3,004,081	\$8,980,052	\$948,084	15.9%		\$948,084	15.9%	
Yarker Family School, Building ID 10183-1		\$405,736	\$452,420	\$858,156	\$0	0.0%	\$0	\$0	0.0%	
<b>Ernestown</b>	<b>\$11,067,616</b>	<b>\$977,680</b>			<b>\$1,820,378</b>	<b>8.9%</b>	<b>\$423,579</b>	<b>\$1,396,799</b>	<b>6.9%</b>	
<b>Frontenac</b>										
Collins Bay PS, Building ID 5617-1		\$3,222,486	\$1,068,876	\$4,291,362	\$423,009	13.1%	\$258,557	\$164,452	5.1%	

Wayne Goody

8



R Gordon Sinclair Memorial PS, Building ID 6553-1	\$1,710,766	\$1,898,821	\$3,609,587	\$813,442	47.5%	\$56,420	\$757,022	44.3%
James R Henderson PS, Building ID 6056-1	\$2,912,873	\$2,710,614	\$5,623,487	\$799,132	27.4%	\$18,755	\$780,377	26.8%
Module de l'Acadie	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0	\$0	
Welborne Avenue PS, Building ID 6871-1	\$947,779	\$6,246,670	\$7,194,449	\$783,402	82.7%	\$631,830	\$151,572	16.0%
<b>Frontenac</b>	<b>\$7,470,204</b>	<b>\$225,223</b>	<b>\$8,793,904</b>	<b>\$2,818,985</b>	<b>32.1%</b>	<b>\$965,562</b>	<b>\$1,853,423</b>	<b>21.1%</b>

Bayridge PS, Building ID 5386-1	\$2,175,322	\$4,252,393	\$6,427,715	\$1,238,664	56.9%	\$601,801	\$636,863	29.3%
Cataraqui Woods ES, Building ID 10192-1	\$322,660	\$1,476,145	\$1,798,805	\$59,546	18.5%	\$59,546	\$0	0.0%
Lancaster Drive PS, Building ID 6145-1	\$763,442	\$3,874,650	\$4,638,092	\$17,131	2.2%	\$17,131	\$17,131	2.2%
W. J. Holsgrove PS, Building ID 6013-1	\$1,052,715	\$1,328,057	\$2,380,772	\$327,292	31.1%	\$130,739	\$196,553	18.7%
Truedell PS, Building ID 6794-1	\$756,277	\$2,028,131	\$2,784,408	\$309,220	40.9%	\$309,220	\$309,220	40.9%
<b>Bayridge</b>	<b>\$5,041,522</b>	<b>\$970,226</b>	<b>\$5,070,416</b>	<b>\$1,951,853</b>	<b>38.5%</b>	<b>\$792,086</b>	<b>\$1,159,767</b>	<b>22.9%</b>

Centennial PS, Building ID 5522-1	\$635,599	\$4,003,104	\$4,638,703	\$409,063	64.4%	\$85,586	\$323,477	50.9%
Lord Strathcona PS, Building ID 6187-1	\$1,076,449	\$2,159,044	\$3,235,493	\$323,735	30.1%	\$323,735	\$323,735	30.1%
Polson Park PS, Building ID 6477-1	\$531,953	\$1,934,627	\$2,466,580	\$1,266,443	238.1%	\$184,015	\$1,082,428	203.5%
Calvin Park	0	0	0	\$0		\$0	\$0	
<b>Loyalist</b>	<b>\$12,708,344</b>	<b>\$1,080,830</b>	<b>\$2,244,001</b>	<b>\$1,999,241</b>	<b>89.1%</b>	<b>\$269,601</b>	<b>\$1,729,640</b>	<b>77.1%</b>

Central PS, Building ID 5537-1	\$1,503,915	\$1,871,601	\$3,375,516	\$335,381	22.3%	\$335,381	\$335,381	22.3%
Module Vanier	0	0	0	0		\$0	\$0	
Rideau PS, Building ID 6573-1	\$2,308,441	\$5,709,332	\$8,017,773	\$268,569	11.6%	\$268,569	\$268,569	11.6%
Sydenham PS, Building ID 6754-1	\$1,228,355	\$3,381,677	\$4,610,032	\$216,989	17.7%	\$216,989	\$216,989	17.7%

9



Winston Churchill PS, Building ID 6925-1	\$550,461	\$3,318,363	\$3,868,824	\$1,435,217	260.7%	\$457,383	\$820,939	149.1%
John Graves Simcoe PS, Building ID 6677-1	\$801,179	\$2,885,798	\$3,686,977	\$255,982	32.0%		\$255,982	32.0%
Marysville PS, Building ID 6931-1	\$131,244	\$920,973	\$1,052,217	\$60,457	46.1%		\$60,457	46.1%
Rideau Heights PS, Building ID 6572-1	\$1,892,269	\$3,575,376	\$5,467,645	\$404,054	21.4%	\$272,887	\$131,167	6.9%
<b>Kingston Ce</b>	<b>\$9,401,483</b>	<b>\$627,506</b>	<b>\$2,976,649</b>	<b>\$730,270</b>	<b>35.4%</b>	<b>\$272,887</b>	<b>\$2,089,484</b>	<b>24.8%</b>

Glenburnie PS, Building ID 5891-1	\$1,497,225	\$1,852,362	\$3,349,587	\$97,163	6.5%	\$93,825	\$3,338	0.2%
Joyceville PS, Building ID 6467-1	\$1,978,391	\$1,767,005	\$3,745,396	\$148,075	7.5%	\$144,356	\$3,719	0.2%
Storrington PS, Building ID 6741-1	\$1,861,279	\$3,973,981	\$5,835,260	\$274,559	14.8%		\$274,559	14.8%
<b>LaSalle</b>	<b>\$12,725,676</b>	<b>\$121,000</b>	<b>\$519,797</b>	<b>\$238,181</b>	<b>9.7%</b>	<b>\$238,181</b>	<b>\$281,616</b>	<b>5.3%</b>

Elginburg & District PS, Building ID 5778-1	\$1,560,709	\$1,835,902	\$3,396,611	\$476,478	30.5%		\$476,478	30.5%
Harrowsmith PS, Building ID 5971-1	\$1,430,690	\$4,371,205	\$5,801,895	\$749,482	52.4%	\$134,250	\$615,232	43.0%
Loughborough PS, Building ID 6190-1	\$1,551,591	\$3,068,204	\$4,619,795	\$1,264,681	81.5%		\$1,264,681	81.5%
Perth Road PS, Building ID 6452-1	\$2,341,568	\$4,345,576	\$6,687,144	\$572,260	24.4%		\$572,260	24.4%
Prince Charles PS, Building ID 6495-1	\$2,674,749	\$2,071,608	\$4,746,357	\$730,690	27.3%	\$8,884	\$721,806	27.0%
<b>Sydenham</b>	<b>\$11,621,217</b>	<b>\$368,977</b>	<b>\$3,793,591</b>	<b>\$143,134</b>	<b>39.7%</b>	<b>\$143,134</b>	<b>\$3,650,457</b>	<b>38.2%</b>

Clarendon Central PS, Building ID 5591-1	\$1,131,840	\$503,509	\$1,635,349	\$188,426	16.6%		\$188,426	16.6%
Land O Lakes PS, Building ID 6148-1	\$1,884,750	\$3,525,695	\$5,410,445	\$176,569	9.4%		\$176,569	9.4%
<b>"Sharbot Lk"</b>	<b>\$12,220,268</b>	<b>\$346,060</b>	<b>\$364,995</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>12.1%</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$364,995</b>	<b>12.1%</b>

10

Elementary Totals \$79,209,481 \$104,340,469 \$183,549,950



Limestone DSB - Renewal Requirement  
 Listing - VFA Extract  
 All Elementary Schools - March 9 2017

## Rural Vs Urban

Family	Asset - Asset Name	Sewer Piped/Sewer Well/Septic	2012-2016 5 Year	Less Roofing Archived	Less Roofing %
Colours	Destined for Closure	Well/Septic			Under 7%
Napanee	Tamworth PS, Building ID 6758-1	Rural	\$3,151,845	\$0	0.0%
Ernestown	Yarker Family School, Building ID 10183-1	Rural	\$405,736	\$0	0.0%
Bayridge	Cataraqui Woods ES, Building ID 10192-1	Urban	\$322,660	\$0	0.0%
LaSalle	Joyceville PS, Building ID 6467-1	Rural	\$1,978,391	\$3,719	0.2%
LaSalle	Glenburnie PS, Building ID 5891-1	Rural	\$1,497,225	\$3,338	0.2%
Napanee	Newburgh PS, Building ID 5114-1	Rural	\$1,754,172	\$9,654	0.6%
Napanee	Centreville PS, Building ID 5189-1	Rural	\$1,746,311	\$15,472	0.9%
Ernestown	Fairfield ES, Building ID 5808-1	Urban	\$2,714,278	\$42,008	1.5%
Bayridge	Lancaster Drive PS, Building ID 6145-1	Urban	\$763,442	\$17,131	2.2%
Ernestown	Amherst Island PS, Building ID 10215-1	Rural	\$1,783,165	\$50,000	2.8%
Ernestown	Amherstview PS, Building ID 5342-1	Urban	\$6,074,691	\$198,408	3.3%
Ernestown	Bath PS, Building ID 5380-1	Urban	\$3,411,490	\$158,299	4.6%
Frontenac	Collins Bay PS, Building ID 5617-1	Urban	\$3,222,486	\$164,452	5.1%
Napanee	Enterprise PS, Building ID 10219-1	Rural	\$1,883,899	\$123,407	6.6%
Napanee	The Prince Charles S, Building ID 6773-2	Urban	\$3,603,634	\$244,514	6.8%
Kingston Central	Rideau Heights PS, Building ID 6572-1	Urban	\$1,892,269	\$131,167	6.9%
Granite Ridge	Land O Lakes PS, Building ID 6148-1	Rural	\$1,884,750	\$176,569	9.4%
Kingston Central	Rideau PS, Building ID 6573-1	Urban	\$2,308,441	\$268,569	11.6%
LaSalle	Storrington PS, Building ID 6741-1	Rural	\$1,861,279	\$274,559	14.8%
Ernestown	Odessa PS, Building ID 5026-2	Urban	\$5,975,971	\$948,084	15.9%
Frontenac	Welborne Avenue PS, Building ID 6871-1	Urban	\$947,779	\$151,572	16.0%

Granite Ridge	Clarendon Central PS, Building ID 5591-1	Rural	\$1,131,840	\$188,426	16.6%
Kingston Central	Sydenham PS, Building ID 6754-1	Urban	\$1,228,355	\$216,989	17.7%
Bayridge	W. J. Holsgrove PS, Building ID 6013-1	Urban	\$1,052,715	\$196,553	18.7%
Napanee	Selby PS, Building ID 6654-1	Rural	\$4,267,312	\$868,494	20.4%
Kingston Central	Central PS, Building ID 5537-1	Urban	\$1,503,915	\$335,381	22.3%
Sydenham	Perth Road PS, Building ID 6452-1	Rural	\$2,341,568	\$572,260	24.4%
Frontenac	James R Henderson PS, Building ID 6056-1	Urban	\$2,912,873	\$780,377	26.8%
Sydenham	Prince Charles PS, Building ID 6495-1	Rural	\$2,674,749	\$721,806	27.0%
Bayridge	Bayridge PS, Building ID 5386-1	Urban	\$2,175,322	\$636,863	29.3%
Loyalist	Lord Strathcona PS, Building ID 6187-1	Urban	\$1,076,449	\$323,735	30.1%
Sydenham	Elginburg & District PS, Building ID 5778-1	Rural	\$1,560,709	\$476,478	30.5%
Kingston Central	John Graves Simcoe PS, Building ID 6677-1	Urban	\$801,179	\$255,982	32.0%
Bayridge	Truedell PS, Building ID 6794-1	Urban	\$756,277	\$309,220	40.9%
Sydenham	Harrowsmith PS, Building ID 5971-1	Rural	\$1,430,690	\$615,232	43.0%
Frontenac	R Gordon Sinclair Memorial PS, Building ID 6553-1	Urban	\$1,710,766	\$757,022	44.3%
Kingston Central	Marysville PS, Building ID 6931-1	Rural	\$131,244	\$60,457	46.1%
Loyalist	Centennial PS, Building ID 5522-1	Urban	\$635,599	\$323,477	50.9%
Sydenham	Loughborough PS, Building ID 6190-1	Urban(W)	\$1,551,591	\$1,264,681	81.5%
Loyalist	Poison Park PS, Building ID 6477-1	Urban	\$531,953	\$1,082,428	203.5%
Kingston Central	Winston Churchill PS, Building ID 6925-1	Urban	\$550,461	\$2,731,043	496.1%

Balance	\$79,209,481	\$0	\$0	\$19,564,279	\$5,619,662
Ernestown SS, Building ID 5026-1				\$256,545	\$256,545
North Addington Education Centre (Sec), Building ID 6360-1				\$1,410,572	\$258,926
Total				\$21,231,396	\$6,135,133

14

## **Part 2.**

### **Funding Background: Spreadsheets.**

#### **Commentaries on additional Spreadsheets providing context for Yarker.**

Trustees should feel free to do their own comparisons and to ask Staff for any missing data. We community members have done our best to obtain information and to present it in spreadsheets that encourage different perspectives.

The New Addenda are:

- Addendum # 4 – Income Matrix
- Addendum # 5 – by EQAO
- Addendum # 6 – Maintenance Matrix by Students
- Addendum # 7 – School Profile
- Addendum # 8 – Original Freedom of Information fee estimate
- Addendum # 9 – Most Recent F.O.I. fee estimate

#### **Income Matrix.**

##### **Addendum # 4 Comments:**

This spreadsheet breaks schools into four groups: rural designated for closure, rural not designated for closure, urban designated for closure and urban not designated for closure. For each school information is provided on their rural (on well and septic) or urban (on municipal water and sewer). Information on the median income using StatsCan data. Median Family Income averages are presented for the four groups and the rural/urban designation.

This table shows the variation in median family income between targeted rural schools and other groups. Eight of the ten rural designated for closure have median family incomes of \$59,615 to \$66,000. For Stone Mills Township census data is for the entire township. Median incomes generally decline as we move north. Within Yarker, the median of \$59,615 is misleading as professional households often have median incomes over \$100,000 but numerous households have incomes below \$30,000.

The table also shows that with the exception of the John Graves Simcoe area, urban neighborhoods threatened with closure have much higher levels of resources and thereby more options in coping with neighborhood school closures.

**It is worth noting that of the 17 rural schools listed, 10 are targeted for closure. Of these 10 rural schools, 6 have median family incomes under \$60,000 with the average for the closure groups being \$61,801. Closure of school will further**



**disadvantage children many of whom already face significant academic and social challenges.**

### **E.Q.A.O. Matrix.**

#### **Addendum # 5 Comments:**

This spreadsheet allows trustees to examine the level of support to Ministry Event Needs (less roofing) in the context of closure designations and rural/urban setting.

In the group receiving less than 7% of Needs addressed (16 schools), eight of them are closure candidates and seven of them are rural with 6 of those in the Lennox and Addington County. Some schools in the group have been well maintained in the past and have low needs such as Lancaster or are newer schools such as Cataraqui.

Some schools designated for possible closure have received considerable investments.

R. Gordon Sinclair	44.3%
Truedell (nearby)	40.9%
J. Graves Simcoe	32.0%
Prince Charles Verona	27.0%
Selby 27.4%	20.4%
W.J. Holsgrove	18.7%

When E.Q.A.O. scores are referenced along with location. Selby and Truedell show strong E.Q.A.O. scores and should avoid closure. Trustees should identify rural schools that deal with disadvantaged circumstances and yet score at or above the Board E.Q.A.O. average.

### **Maintenance Matrix By Students.**

#### **Addendum # 6 Comments:**

This spreadsheet adds the computation of Renewal Event spending per O.T.G. and per pupil enrolled. It adds another layer of data (cost per O.T.G. and cost per pupil to Addendum # 4, Income Matrix.

Expenditures per pupil for rural schools were consistent for both targeted and non-targeted schools:

Rural closure targeted schools get \$1670.54 per pupil.  
Rural non-targeted schools get \$1652.75 per pupil.

Targeted urban schools were higher at \$1930.31 per pupil. Non-targeted urban were lowest at \$1479.02 but this group also has 6663 pupils, an average of 350 pupils per school. Most disturbing of the data, is the low level of support for Tamworth, Yarker,

Glenburnie, Newburgh, Centreville, Amherst Island and Enterprise. The average for these schools is \$64.09 per pupil. All are targeted for closure and have been for some time.

## **School Profile Information.**

### **Addendum # 7 Comments:**

This spreadsheet enables trustees to compare profile characteristic between schools targeted for closure and those not targeted.

Note: no information was available for John Graves, Simcoe, Marysville and Amherst Island. Perhaps Senior Staff can fill in the blanks for you.

Of the 12 targeted schools, 9 are at least 90% bused, one is 75% bussed and W.J. Holsgrove and Truedell had majority walk in.

Of the 12 targeted for which we had data, 11 had no special programs. This means that they are vulnerable to losing enrolment if special programs are located elsewhere. Only Collins Bay had a Special Program for Junior autism.

The earliest start time was Yarker with a start time at 8:15 a.m. This is unacceptable since it is a primary facility. With Newburgh at 9:00 a.m., Harrowsmith at 9:05 a.m., parents may have pulled children to schools with later start time, particularly JK pupils. If older siblings are attending other schools with later times the parents will send both to the same school at the same start time.

## **Comments on FOI Letters (Addendum 8 and Addendum 9).**

These two letters represent the start and the most recent communications on My Freedom of Information Request. I have not replied to the April 28<sup>th</sup> letter as it arrived too close to deputations and I need to consult with community on both revenues and possible appeal of the fees.

It is particularly frustrating that Ms. McWilliams and Mr. Fowler are now able to offer TMA system data. **Both this and the earlier delivery of Renewal data are electronically stored and could have been made available eight weeks ago!** This would have possibly provided some financial background requested by PARC and myself.

Incidentally the quotation for fees in the two letters, are inconsistent with one another. It defies logic that a full disclosure of data on 370 projects for 45 or more elementary schools for the period 2000 to 2016 would cost \$126,000 but a full search for Yarker (a three room school) from 2012 to 2016 (182 work orders) carries a fee of \$11,060. By the explanation offered in the April 28<sup>th</sup> letter, a full search of all elementary schools would now cost over \$4.5 million!



The following quotation speaks volumes:

**“Our financial system is designed to collect and report school operations and maintenance expenses on a consolidated basis and not on a school-by-school basis.”**

Unfortunately school closures are done on a school-by -school basis.

This is unacceptable!

### **Conclusions and Observations.**

**It does not matter to the Board how successful a school is on EQAO scores. It is not a factor in the Ameresco or Watson L.T.P.A.P.s.**

**The median family income appears to be a determinant in school closure decisions. After the next round the Board will have closed 12 schools in low income areas since 2007, 9 of them rural.**

**Six schools identified as P.T.R. in 2007 were preserved by increased renewal expenditures. All six were in Frontenac County.**

**Only three schools in L. and A. County have received significant renewal funding, The Prince Charles, Selby and Odessa. A review of the benefits of amalgamation is an argument for another day.**

**Location of special programs supports enrolment in favoured schools and depletes enrolment in others. Location of special programs in Kingston schools has hurt enrolment at Glenburnie, an outstanding rural school now on the chopping block.**

**A major factor in school closure is whether or not the school is on well and septic system...in other words, rural. Note that all possible consolidations have already happened in remote areas.**

**While many schools receive the bare minimum, others, often in advantaged neighborhoods, have been significantly supported with expenditures of 50% to 496% of their Renewal Needs.**

**There is no good explanation for the delay in making full accounting information available to myself and to the PARC. Both the V.F.A. info on Actual Renewal Expenditures and the T.M.A. info (offered on the Friday before the delegation deadline) have been available all along. I have not seen the TMA data yet but it might have been helpful to the PARC. The lengthy paper trail on this F.O.I. is the basis for a review of Board accounting practices.**

**No vote to close Yarker or any other school should be taken until the Board puts its accounting in order and is able to document expenditures back to at least the year 2000, for all schools not just those under review.**

**The Board is balancing the books on the backs of our least advantaged youngsters. Research on child wellbeing does not support the close and consolidate option for less advantaged youngsters. The Board needs to develop a Rural Schools Policy and declare a moratorium on closures. The tragedy is that schools have been closed without background accounting and no follow up documentation has been done to judge the efficacy of these consolidations. The Board should be tracking the achievement and psychosocial adjustment of the children moved from community schools into Southview, Molly Brant and Granite Ridge. The Board's inability to document the positive impacts of closures parallels its inability to document the funding backgrounds of its schools.**

**Sadly, this entire PARC process has made it clear to me why communities are demanding 360 performance reviews.**

# Income Matrix

Family	Asset - Asset Name	Sewer	Median	Average	Average
	Close/ Open		family Income	Category	Rural/Urban
Ernestown	Close	Amherst Island PS,	Rural	\$62,099	
Napanee	Close	Centreville PS, Building ID 5189-1	Rural	\$59,615	
Napanee	Close	Enterprise PS, Building ID 10219-1	Rural	\$59,615	
LaSalle	Close	Glenburnie PS, Building ID 5891-1	Rural	\$70,297	
Kingston Central	Close	Marysville PS, Building ID 6931-1	Rural	\$66,965	
Napanee	Close	Newburgh PS, Building ID 5114-1	Rural	\$59,615	
Sydenham	Close	Prince Charles PS, Building ID 6495-1	Rural	\$70,297	
Napanee	Close	Selby PS, Building ID 6654-1	Rural	\$50,281	
Napanee	Close	Tamworth PS, Building ID 6758-1	Rural	\$59,615	Close/Rural
Ernestown	Close	Yarker Family School, Building	Rural	\$59,615	\$61,801
Granite Ridge	Open	Clarendon Central PS, Building	Rural	\$43,269	
Sydenham	Open	Elginburg & District PS,	Rural	\$70,297	
Sydenham	Open	Harrowsmith PS, Building ID 5971-1	Rural	\$70,297	
LaSalle	Open	Joyceville PS, Building ID 6467-1	Rural	\$85,135	
Granite Ridge	Open	Land O Lakes PS, Building ID 6148-1	Rural	\$45,826	
Sydenham	Open	Perth Road PS, Building ID 6452-1	Rural	\$70,297	Open/Rural
LaSalle	Open	Storrington PS, Building ID 6741-1	Rural	\$70,297	\$65,060
					Rural
					\$63,143
Frontenac	Close	Collins Bay PS, Building ID 5617-1	Urban	\$81,910	
Kingston Central	Close	John Graves Simcoe PS, Building	Urban	\$35,247	
Frontenac	Close	R Gordon Sinclair Memorial PS, Building	Urban	\$95,703	
Bayridge	Close	Truedell PS, Building ID 6794-1	Urban	\$84,931	Close/Urban
Bayridge	Close	W. J. Holsgrove PS, Building ID 6013-1	Urban	\$86,676	\$76,893
Ernestown	Open	Amherstview PS, Building ID 5342-1	Urban	\$62,099	
Ernestown	Open	Bath PS, Building ID 5380-1	Urban	\$62,099	
Bayridge	Open	Bayridge PS, Building ID 5386-1	Urban	\$81,422	
Bayridge	Open	Cataraqui Woods ES, Building	Urban	\$71,969	
Loyalist	Open	Centennial PS, Building ID 5522-1	Urban	\$60,403	
Kingston Central	Open	Central PS, Building ID 5537-1	Urban	\$56,520	
Ernestown	Open	Fairfield ES, Building ID 5808-1	Urban	\$62,099	
Frontenac	Open	James R Henderson PS, Building ID 6056-1	Urban	\$82,758	
Bayridge	Open	Lancaster Drive PS, Building ID 6145-1	Urban	\$125,939	
Loyalist	Open	Lord Strathcona PS,	Urban	\$97,625	
Ernestown	Open	Odessa PS, Building ID 5026-2	Urban	\$62,099	
Loyalist	Open	Polson Park PS, Building ID 6477-1	Urban	\$50,940	
Kingston Central	Open	Rideau Heights PS	Urban	\$35,247	
Kingston Central	Open	Rideau PS, Building ID 6573-1	Urban	\$86,621	
Kingston Central	Open	Sydenham PS, Building ID 6754-1	Urban	\$83,446	
Napanee	Open	The Prince Charles School	Urban	\$50,281	
Frontenac	Open	Welborne Avenue PS, Building ID 6871-1	Urban	\$92,126	
Kingston Central	Open	Winston Churchill PS, Building	Urban	\$86,621	Open/Urban
Sydenham	Open	Loughborough PS, Building ID 6190-1	Urban(W)	\$70,297	\$72,664
					Urban
					\$73,545

Total \$2,838,510

Overall Average \$69,232

Source: City of Kingston Neighbourhood and Community Profiles; Census Trends Stats Canada



Limestone DSB - Renewal Requirement  
Listing - VFA Extract  
All Elementary Schools - March 9 2017

**By EQAO**

Family	Asset - Asset Name	Sewer	EQAO Average	5 Year Renewal 2012-2016	Archived Amt Less Roofing	Archived % Under 7%
Colours	Destined for Closure	Piped/Sewer				
Napanee	Tamworth PS, Building ID 6758-1	Well/Septic Rural	64.0%	\$3,151,845	\$0	0.0%
Ernestown	Yarker Family School, Building ID 10183-1	Rural	88.7%	\$405,736	\$0	0.0%
Bayridge	Cataraqui Woods ES, Building ID 10192-1	Urban	73.7%	\$322,660	\$0	0.0%
LaSalle	Joyceville PS, Building ID 6467-1	Rural	55.3%	\$1,978,391	\$3,719	0.2%
LaSalle	Glenburnie PS, Building ID 5891-1	Rural	65.7%	\$1,497,225	\$3,338	0.2%
Napanee	Newburgh PS, Building ID 5114-1	Rural	43.0%	\$1,754,172	\$9,654	0.6%
Napanee	Centreville PS, Building ID 5189-1	Rural	65.3%	\$1,746,311	\$15,472	0.9%
Ernestown	Fairfield ES, Building ID 5808-1	Urban	43.3%	\$2,714,278	\$42,008	1.5%
Bayridge	Lancaster Drive PS, Building ID 6145-1	Urban	82.3%	\$763,442	\$17,131	2.2%
Ernestown	Amherst Island PS, Building ID 10215-1	Rural	n/a	\$1,783,165	\$50,000	2.8%
Ernestown	Amherstview PS, Building ID 5342-1	Urban	62.7%	\$6,074,691	\$198,408	3.3%
Ernestown	Bath PS, Building ID 5380-1	Urban	72.7%	\$3,411,490	\$158,299	4.6%
Frontenac	Collins Bay PS, Building ID 5617-1	Urban	47.3%	\$3,222,486	\$164,452	5.1%
Napanee	Enterprise PS, Building ID 10219-1	Rural	50.7%	\$1,883,899	\$123,407	6.6%
Napanee	The Prince Charles S, Building ID 6773-2	Urban	41.7%	\$3,603,634	\$244,514	6.8%
Kingston Central	Rideau Heights PS, Building ID 6572-1	Urban	62.0%	\$1,892,269	\$131,167	6.9%
Granite Ridge	Land O Lakes PS, Building ID 6148-1	Rural	58.0%	\$1,884,750	\$176,569	9.4%
Kingston Central	Rideau PS, Building ID 6573-1	Urban	69.3%	\$2,308,441	\$268,569	11.6%
LaSalle	Storrington PS, Building ID 6741-1	Rural	62.3%	\$1,861,279	\$274,559	14.8%
Ernestown	Odessa PS, Building ID 5026-2	Urban	46.3%	\$5,975,971	\$948,084	15.9%
Frontenac	Welborne Avenue PS, Building ID 6871-1	Urban	56.0%	\$947,779	\$151,572	16.0%
Granite Ridge	Clarendon Central PS, Building ID 5591-1	Rural	n/a	\$1,131,840	\$188,426	16.6%

21



Kingston Central	Sydenham PS, Building ID 6754-1	Urban	69.3%	\$1,228,355	\$216,989	17.7%
Bayridge	W. J. Holsgrove PS, Building ID 6013-1	Urban	62.0%	\$1,052,715	\$196,553	18.7%
Napanee	Selby PS, Building ID 6654-1	Rural	82.7%	\$4,267,312	\$868,494	20.4%
Kingston Central	Central PS, Building ID 5537-1	Urban	66.7%	\$1,503,915	\$335,381	22.3%
Sydenham	Perth Road PS, Building ID 6452-1	Rural	71.3%	\$2,341,568	\$572,260	24.4%
Frontenac	James R Henderson PS, Building ID 6056-1	Urban	76.3%	\$2,912,873	\$780,377	26.8%
Sydenham	Prince Charles PS, Building ID 6495-1	Rural	47.0%	\$2,674,749	\$721,806	27.0%
Bayridge	Bayridge PS, Building ID 5386-1	Urban	68.7%	\$2,175,322	\$636,863	29.3%
Loyalist	Lord Strathcona PS, Building ID 6187-1	Urban	67.3%	\$1,076,449	\$323,735	30.1%
Sydenham	Elginburg & District PS, Building ID 5778-1	Rural	70.3%	\$1,560,709	\$476,478	30.5%
Kingston Central	John Graves Simcoe PS, Building ID 6677-1	Urban	52.0%	\$801,179	\$255,982	32.0%
Bayridge	Truedell PS, Building ID 6794-1	Urban	79.3%	\$756,277	\$309,220	40.9%
Sydenham	Harrowsmith PS, Building ID 5971-1	Rural	73.3%	\$1,430,690	\$615,232	43.0%
Frontenac	R Gordon Sinclair Memorial PS, Building ID 6553-1	Urban	65.3%	\$1,710,766	\$757,022	44.3%
Kingston Central	Marysville PS, Building ID 6931-1	Rural	n/a	\$131,244	\$60,457	46.1%
Loyalist	Centennial PS, Building ID 5522-1	Urban	50.3%	\$635,599	\$323,477	50.9%
Sydenham	Loughborough PS, Building ID 6190-1	Urban(W)	61.0%	\$1,551,591	\$1,264,681	81.5%
Loyalist	Polson Park PS, Building ID 6477-1	Urban	63.7%	\$531,953	\$1,082,428	203.5%
Kingston Central	Winston Churchill PS, Building ID 6925-1	Urban	80.0%	\$550,461	\$2,731,043	496.1%

Average EQAO Rural Schools	64.1%
Average EQAO Urban Schools	63.3%
Average EQAO Schools to be Closed	62.5%
Average EQAO Schools to Remain Open	64.2%
Average EQAO Rural Schools to be Closed	63.4%

22



# Maintenance Matrix By Students

Family	Asset - Asset Name	Sewer	2012-2016	5Yr Archived	5Yr Archived	5Yr Archived	5Yr Archived	5Yr Archived	OTG	Mtce	2016/17	Mtce	Avg /	Avg /
		Piped/Sewer	5 Year	Roofing	Less Roofing	Less Roofing	Less Roofing	Less Roofing	OTG	Per Student	Enrollment	Per Student	OTG	Enrol
	Destined for Closure	Well/Septic	Renewal	5 Year	Roofing	Less Roofing	Less Roofing	Less Roofing	OTG	Per Student	Enrollment	Per Student	OTG	Enrol
Napanee	Tamworth PS, Building ID 6758-1	Rural	\$3,151,845	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	190	\$0	141	\$0		
Ernestown	Yarker Family School,	Rural	\$405,736	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	72	\$0	35	\$0		
LaSalle	Glenburnie PS, Building ID 5891-1	Rural	\$1,497,225	\$97,163	\$93,825	\$3,338	\$3,338	\$3,338	233	\$14	134	\$25		
Napanee	Newburgh PS, Building ID 5114-1	Rural	\$1,754,172	\$1,202,309	\$1,192,655	\$9,654	\$9,654	\$9,654	164	\$59	121	\$80		
Napanee	Centreville PS, Building ID 5189-1	Rural	\$1,746,311	\$27,905	\$12,433	\$15,472	\$15,472	\$15,472	141	\$110	117	\$132		
Ernestown	Amherst Island PS, Building ID 10215-1	Rural	\$1,783,165	\$429,765	\$379,765	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	72	\$694	25	\$2,000		
Napanee	Enterprise PS, Building ID 10219-1	Rural	\$1,883,899	\$132,379	\$8,972	\$123,407	\$123,407	\$123,407	141	\$875	93	\$1,327		
Napanee	Selby PS, Building ID 6654-1	Rural	\$4,267,312	\$1,457,373	\$588,879	\$868,494	\$868,494	\$868,494	285	\$3,047	239	\$3,634		
Sydenham	Prince Charles PS, Building ID 6495-1	Rural	\$2,674,749	\$730,690	\$8,884	\$721,806	\$721,806	\$721,806	265	\$2,724	182	\$3,966		
Kingston Cent	Marysville PS, Building ID 6931-1	Rural	\$131,244	\$60,457	\$144,356	\$60,457	\$60,457	\$60,457	72	\$840	22	\$2,748	\$1,133.11	\$1,670.54
LaSalle	Joyceville PS, Building ID 6467-1	Rural	\$1,978,391	\$148,075	\$144,356	\$3,719	\$3,719	\$3,719	279	\$13	172	\$22		
Granite Ridge	Land O Lakes PS, Building ID 6148-1	Rural	\$1,884,750	\$176,569	\$176,569	\$176,569	\$176,569	\$176,569	208	\$849	115	\$1,535		
LaSalle	Storrington PS, Building ID 6741-1	Rural	\$1,861,279	\$274,559	\$274,559	\$274,559	\$274,559	\$274,559	259	\$1,060	213	\$1,289		
Granite Ridge	Clarendon Central PS,	Rural	\$1,131,840	\$188,426	\$188,426	\$188,426	\$188,426	\$188,426	69	\$2,731	28	\$6,730		
Sydenham	Perth Road PS, Building ID 6452-1	Rural	\$2,341,568	\$572,260	\$572,260	\$572,260	\$572,260	\$572,260	271	\$2,112	272	\$2,104		
Sydenham	Elginburg & District PS,	Rural	\$1,560,709	\$476,478	\$476,478	\$476,478	\$476,478	\$476,478	262	\$1,819	250	\$1,906		
Sydenham	Harrowsmith PS, Building ID 5971-1	Rural	\$1,430,690	\$749,482	\$134,250	\$615,232	\$615,232	\$615,232	331	\$1,859	346	\$1,778	\$1,374.18	\$1,652.75
Frontenac	Collins Bay PS, Building ID 5617-1	Urban	\$3,222,486	\$423,009	\$258,557	\$164,452	\$164,452	\$164,452	268	\$614	97	\$1,695		
Bayridge	W. J. Holsgrove PS, Building ID 6013-1	Urban	\$1,052,715	\$327,292	\$130,739	\$196,553	\$196,553	\$196,553	118	\$1,666	131	\$1,500		
Kingston Cent	John Graves Simcoe PS,	Urban	\$801,179	\$255,982	\$255,982	\$255,982	\$255,982	\$255,982	233	\$1,099	181	\$1,414		
Bayridge	Truedell PS, Building ID 6794-1	Urban	\$756,277	\$309,220	\$309,220	\$309,220	\$309,220	\$309,220	236	\$1,310	236	\$1,310		
Frontenac	R Gordon Sinclair Memorial PS,	Urban	\$1,710,766	\$813,442	\$56,420	\$757,022	\$757,022	\$757,022	268	\$2,825	227	\$3,335	\$1,498.87	\$1,930.31
Bayridge	Catawaqui Woods ES,	Urban	\$322,660	\$59,546	\$59,546	\$59,546	\$59,546	\$59,546	421	\$0	404	\$0		
Ernestown	Fairfield ES, Building ID 5808-1	Urban	\$2,714,278	\$65,629	\$23,621	\$42,008	\$42,008	\$42,008	443	\$95	300	\$140		
Bayridge	Lancaster Drive PS, Building ID 6145-1	Urban	\$763,442	\$17,131	\$17,131	\$17,131	\$17,131	\$17,131	374	\$46	374	\$46		
Ernestown	Amherstview PS, Building ID 5342-1	Urban	\$6,074,691	\$198,408	\$198,408	\$198,408	\$198,408	\$198,408	543	\$365	538	\$369		
Ernestown	Bath PS, Building ID 5380-1	Urban	\$3,411,490	\$178,492	\$20,193	\$158,299	\$158,299	\$158,299	372	\$426	256	\$618		
Napanee	The Prince Charles S, Building ID 6773-2	Urban	\$3,603,634	\$498,824	\$254,310	\$244,514	\$244,514	\$244,514	502	\$487	446	\$548		
Kingston Cent	Rideau Heights PS, Building ID 6572-1	Urban	\$1,892,269	\$404,054	\$272,887	\$131,167	\$131,167	\$131,167	443	\$296	224	\$586		
Kingston Cent	Rideau PS, Building ID 6573-1	Urban	\$2,308,441	\$268,569	\$268,569	\$268,569	\$268,569	\$268,569	516	\$520	514	\$523		
Ernestown	Odessa PS, Building ID 5026-2	Urban	\$5,975,971	\$948,084	\$948,084	\$948,084	\$948,084	\$948,084	490	\$1,935	332	\$2,856		
Frontenac	Welborne Avenue PS, Building ID 6871-1	Urban	\$947,779	\$783,402	\$631,830	\$151,572	\$151,572	\$151,572	490	\$309	471	\$322		
Kingston Cent	Sydenham PS, Building ID 6754-1	Urban	\$1,228,355	\$216,989	\$216,989	\$216,989	\$216,989	\$216,989	164	\$1,323	164	\$1,323		
Kingston Cent	Central PS, Building ID 5537-1	Urban	\$1,503,915	\$335,381	\$335,381	\$335,381	\$335,381	\$335,381	187	\$1,793	186	\$1,803		
Frontenac	James R Henderson PS,	Urban	\$2,912,873	\$799,132	\$18,755	\$780,377	\$780,377	\$780,377	531	\$1,470	578	\$1,350		

Wayne Goodyer

23



Bayridge	Bayridge PS, Building ID 5386-1	Urban	\$2,175,322	\$1,238,664	\$601,801	\$636,863	29.3%	398	\$1,600	350	\$1,820
Loyalist	Lord Strathcona PS, Building ID 6187-1	Urban	\$1,076,449	\$323,735		\$323,735	30.1%	225	\$1,439	188	\$1,722
Loyalist	Centennial PS, Building ID 5522-1	Urban	\$635,599	\$409,063	\$85,586	\$323,477	50.9%	329	\$983	299	\$1,082
Loyalist	Polson Park PS, Building ID 6477-1	Urban	\$531,953	\$1,266,443	\$184,015	\$1,082,428	203.5%	380	\$2,848	420	\$2,577
Kingston Cent	Winston Churchill PS,	Urban	\$550,461	\$1,435,217	\$457,383	\$2,731,043	496.1%	291	\$9,385	197	\$13,863
Sydenham	Loughborough PS, Building ID 6190-1	Urban(W)	\$1,551,591	\$1,264,681		\$1,264,681	81.5%	547	\$2,312	422	\$2,997
			Totals/Averages			\$15,697,826		12,083	\$1,316	10,040	\$1,782
											\$1,288.87
											\$1,479.02

24

<b>Addendum #7 - School Profile Addendum #7</b>				
<b>School</b>	<b>Grades</b>	<b>School Hours</b>	<b>Walk or Bussed or both</b>	<b>Special Programs at school</b>
Amherstview Public School	JK - 8	8:50 to 3:20	60% bussed French Immersion	French Immersion
Bath Public School	JK - 8	9:10 to 3:40	mostly bussed	No special programs
Bayridge Public School	JK - 8	9:05 to 3:25	50% bussed/ 50% walk	No special programs
Calvin Park Public School	GR 7 - 8	8:20 to 2:35	bussed	Core/Challenge/Leap/Atlas
Centennial Public School	JK - 6	9:05 to 2:35	both walk and bussed	School to Community
Centerville Public School	JK - 8	8:50 to 3:20	bussed	No special programs
Central Public School	JK - 6	9:00 to 3:30	walk to school	No special programs
Collins Bay Public School	JK - 8	9:00 to 3:30	bussed	Junior Autism Program
Ecole Sir John A. Macdonald Public School	JK - 6	9:15 to 3:40	both walk and bussed	French Immersion
Elginburg Public School	JK - 8	9:05 to 3:35	mostly bussed	No special programs
Enterprise Public School	JK - 8	8:55 to 3:15	bussed	No special programs
Fairfield Public School	JK - 8	8:45 to 3:15	walk to school	No special programs
Glenburnie Public School	JK - 8	8:55 to 3:35	bussed	No special programs
Granite Ridge Education Centre	JK - 12	8:20 to 2:40	most bussed	No special programs
Harrowsmith Public School	JK - 8	9:05 to 3:30	all bussed	7/8 French Immersion/ TLC Program
W.J. Holgrove Public School	JK - 8	9:00 to 3:30	some children bussed	No special programs
Joyceville Public School	JK - 8	9:05 to 3:35	all bussed	No special programs
Lancaster Drive Public School	JK - 8	8:30 to 3:00	walk and bus (2 buses)	Autism Classes
Land O'Lakes Public School	JK - 8	8:35 to 2:55	most bussed	No special programs
Newburgh Public School	JK - 8	9:00 to 3:30	both walk and bussed (50%)	No special programs
Molly Brant Public School	JK - 8	8:30 to 3:00	most are bussed	No special programs
Odessa Public School	JK - 8	8:05 to 2:25	mostly bussed	Challenge/Senior LD/ Nexus
Perth Road Public School	JK - 8	9:05 to 3:35	all bussed	No special program
Prince Charles Public School	JK - 8	9:05 to 3:40	most bussed	No special programs
Polson Park Public school	JK - 6	9:10 to 3:40	French bussed/English walk	French Immersion
R. G. Sinclair Public School	JK - 8	8:50 to 3:30	walk/ mostly bussed	No special programs
Rideau Public School	JK - 8	9:05 to 3:35	50% split walk and bussed	French Immersion JK to 6
Rideau Heights Public School	JK - 8	8:30 to 2:30	majority walk/some busses	Inclusion Coach
Southview Public School	JK - 8	9:15 to 3:35	bussed	LD Program
Sydenham Public School	JK - 8	8:55 to 3:25	walk in	No special programs
The Prince Charles School	JK - 8	8:05 to 2:30	both walk and bussed	DLC Students/School to Community/ French Immersion
Welborne Avenue Public School	JK - 8	9:05 to 3:35	bussed	Autism class grade 4/ School to Community
Selby Public School	JK - 8	9:15 to 3:40	all bussed	No special programs
Storrington Public School	JK - 8	8:50 to 3:35	all bussed	No special programs
Tamworth Public School	JK - 8	8:45 to 3:15	w and majority bussed	No special programs
Truedell Public School	JK - 8	9:00 to 3:30	most walk/ 2 busses (about 50)	No special programs
Winston Churchill Public School	JK - 8	9:00 to 3:30	mostly walk	SOAR Program
Yarker Family School	JK - 3	8:15 to 2:30	walk and bus	No special programs
Missing: John Graves Simcoe PS, Marysville PS, Amherst Island PS				



Addressed #8  
Wayne Goodyer



## LIMESTONE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

220 Portsmouth Avenue, Kingston, ON, K7M 0G2  
T: 613-544-6920 | Toll Free: 1-800-267-0935 | TTY: 613-548-0279 | F: 613-544-6804  
www.limestone.on.ca  
Twitter @LimestoneDSB

February 15, 2017

Mr. Wayne Goodyer  
Box 78 Yarker  
K0K 3N0

Re: Freedom of Information Request – Board File No. FOI 069 – Fee Estimate

Dear Mr. Goodyer:

Further to our telephone conversations, I am responding to your request for access to information held by this institution made under the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (MFIPPA), received January 9, 2017, together with the \$5.00 application fee for the following:

*"I'm requesting the records of the actual expenditures made by the Limestone District School Board to address the Facility Renewal Needs of all of their elementary schools from 2000 to 2016. These Facility Renewal Needs are updated every five years through inspections carried out on behalf the Ministry of Education. I specifically need the actual expenditures for specific work undertaken and completed by the Limestone District School Board to address facility renewal needs. These expenditures would reduce the Facility Condition Index for schools on which work was completed. This is because the liability shown against the school would be reduced by the value of the specific work completed on that school."*

Pursuant to s. 45 of the MFIPPA, I am providing you with a fee estimate to search, prepare, copy, and ship the records covered by your request. As per our discussions, there are a significant number of documents to search and compile to respond to your request. Such documents are both in electronic form and hard copy, the latter of which are filed in Facility project records and in accounting batch files.

There are approximately 370 projects that would fall within your request and each project includes multiple documents such as work orders, contracts and invoices. Many of these documents are currently stored in our archives and are sorted by finance batch numbers, which will require extensive time to review and collect.

In order to accurately assess your request, I estimate the fees required to narrow your search to your requested documents to be broken down as follows:

Search/Preparation:	370 projects @10 hours/project x \$30.00 per hour	\$111,000
For 370 projects, there are approximately 79,000 associated documents.		
Photocopying:	79,000+ records X \$0.20 per page	<u>\$15,800</u>
<b>TOTAL Cost Fee Estimate:</b>		<b>\$126,800</b>

Paula Murray – Chair | Debra Rantz – Director of Education and Secretary | Paul Babin – Treasurer

*Our Students, Our Future*

26



To search, review and collect the data requested would require approximately 4 persons for the 3700 hours, which equates to 925 hours to complete the search or 26 weeks based on a 35 hour work week.

The costs outlined above are in accordance with the Regulations made under MFIPPA. In accordance with section 7.1 of Regulation 460, where the fee estimate is \$100 or more, an institution may request a deposit equal to 50% of the estimated fee before taking any further steps to process the request. Please forward a deposit in the amount of \$53,400.00 by cheque or money order, payable to:

The Limestone District School Board  
Freedom of Information and Privacy Coordinator  
220 Portsmouth Avenue  
Kingston, ON K7M 0G2

MFIPPA provides that all or part of the fee can be waived if, in our opinion, it is fair and equitable to do so, in certain circumstances. Please notify me as soon as possible if you wish to proceed with a request for a fee waiver.

I am responsible for the decision to deny and/or grant access to this information, based on the above. You may ask for a review of the fee estimate within 30 days of receiving this letter by writing to:

The Information and Privacy Commissioner/Ontario,  
2 Bloor Street East, Suite 1400,  
Toronto, Ontario, M4W 1A8, Tel.: 416-326-3333 / 1-800-387-0073.

If you decide to request a review of this estimate, please provide the Commissioner's office with the following: the file number listed at the beginning of this letter; a copy of this decision letter; a copy of the original request for information you sent to our institution and an appeal fee of \$25.00 payable to the Minister of Finance.

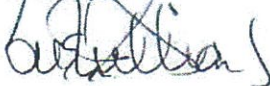
If you require further information, please contact me at the following address:

Ms. Susan McWilliams,  
Freedom of Information and Privacy Coordinator  
220 Portsmouth Avenue  
Kingston, ON K7M 0G2

Telephone: 613-544-6925, ext. 243

Please quote the identification number above on all correspondence or when communicating with me.

Sincerely,



Susan McWilliams, MIR, CHRL  
Manager Human Resources &  
Freedom of Information

c.c. File

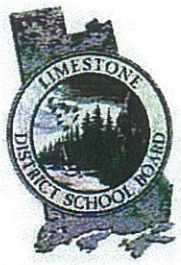
Paula Murray – Chair | Debra Rantz – Director of Education and Secretary | Paul Babin – Treasurer

*Our Students, Our Future*

27



Wayne Goodyer #9  
*Wayne Goodyer*



## LIMESTONE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

220 Portsmouth Avenue, Kingston, ON, K7M 0G2  
T: 613-544-6920 | Toll Free: 1-800-267-0935 | TTY: 613-548-0279 | F: 613-544-6804  
www.limestone.on.ca  
Twitter @LimestoneDSB

April 28, 2017

Mr. Wayne Goodyer  
Box 78  
Yarker, ON K0K 3N0

**Re: Freedom of Information Request –Board File No. FOI 069**

Dear Mr. Goodyer:

We are in receipt of your April 19, 2017 correspondence which is a follow up to my email of April 11, 2017, and letter of April 6, 2017 responding to your questions concerning the VFA data extract materials provided to you in early March, as well as your additional questions concerning the Library building owned by the Township of Stone Mills.

We have reviewed your April 19, 2017 correspondence in concert with previous correspondence received from you, specifically March 22, 2017, February 19, 2017 and your January 4, 2017 MFIPPA Access/Correction Request Form.

Based upon our review, we understand that you are adjusting and reducing the scope of the information you are now requesting from the Board for a full accounting of all maintenance/renewal work completed at Yarker Family School from 2006 to 2016.

In the event you wish to make any further Freedom of Information Requests from the Board, we require the information request or change to be on the MIFIPPA form versus an email to ensure the Board has a detailed description of the requested records and preferred method of access to records.

On March 11, 2017, the Board provided you with a VFA Extract from the provincial system for all open and operating Limestone DSB elementary schools. This extract provided a listing of renewal projects entered into the VFA database from 2009 to March 2017. There are no renewal projects in this listing identified for Yarker Family School.

We are able to provide you with a data extract from the Board's TMA system for maintenance conducted at Yarker Family School for the period September 1, 2012 to August 31, 2016. We realize that this is a subset of the 10-year timeline you are requesting; however, this information was readily available from our TMA database. Accessing older records in the TMA system is possible; however, it would require additional staff time and additional fees.

Our Facility Services department uses TMA to receive and track maintenance requests from schools to address building maintenance and repair for site issues. Such requests are set up in the system as a work order and may be dispatched to maintenance/trade staff working in the Facility Services department or to a third party contractor.

Paula Murray – Chair | Debra Rantz – Director of Education and Secretary | Paul Babin – Treasurer

*Our Students, Our Future*

28



Each work order is assigned a unique system number, and includes the date requested, the date completed and a description of the request.

The TMA system also has the ability to capture staff hours, labour costs (using a standard rate), material and other costs, as well as contractor costs, which are then added together under a total cost. However, the Facility Services department uses this system primarily to track maintenance requests from schools and to provide a history of maintenance and repairs conducted at a school site. Over the past few years, maintenance/trade staff are asked to record the time spent on work orders and if possible to identify other costs, such as the cost of specialized materials acquired to complete the work order. In addition, if the work is being assigned to a contractor, the cost of the contractor has, in some cases, been added into the system.

The TMA data extract being offered identifies the maintenance work conducted at Yarker Family School for the period September 2012 to August 2016. Some expenditure type information is provided in the extract however, this is not a full accounting as you have requested.

The fee for providing this information is as follows.

Search/Preparation	1.5 Hours x \$30 per hour	= \$45.00
Redacting	1.0 Hour x \$30 per hour	= \$30.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$84.75</b>

Unfortunately, a single folder is not available in our financial system to provide the costs of maintenance work at a specific school site, such as Yarker Family School. Our financial system is designed to collect and report school operations and maintenance expenses on a consolidated basis and not on a school-by-school basis. Our financial system and processes adhere to the Ministry of Education's code of accounts and financial reporting requirements, including Public Sector Accounting Standards.

To provide you with a full accounting of the maintenance work at Yarker Family School, significant staff time would be required to gather the 182 work order supporting documents, such as staff time sheets, material and contractor invoices as many of these documents are stored in payroll or accounting batches in our warehouse. The time estimated is as follows:

Search/Preparation	182 work orders @ 2 hour each x \$30.00 per hour	= \$10,920
<i>Please note: For these work orders, it is estimated that there are approximately 700+ associated documents</i>		
Photocopying:	700+ records x \$.20 per page	= \$ 140
<b>Total Cost Fee Estimate</b>		<b>= \$11,060</b>

To search, review and collect the data requested would require approximately 364 hours, which would take about 11 weeks based upon a 35-hour workweek. The Board would also have to hire and train this person, as there is no one individual in Facility Services available to compile this data. It is estimated that it could take an additional four to five weeks to hire this person.

Should you wish to proceed with the data extract from the Board's TMA system for maintenance conducted at Yarker Family School, please advise and I will forward you the information upon confirmation. You can then forward a cheque or money order in the amount of \$84.75, payable to:

Paula Murray – Chair | Debra Rantz – Director of Education and Secretary | Paul Babin – Treasurer

*Our Students, Our Future*

29



The Limestone District School Board  
Freedom of Information and Privacy Coordinator  
220 Portsmouth Avenue  
Kingston, ON K7M 0G2

The Cost Fee Estimate outlined above is in accordance with the Regulations made under MFIPPA. In accordance with section 7.1 of Regulation 460, where the fee estimate is \$100 or more, an institution may request a deposit equal to 50% of the estimated fee before taking any further steps to process the request. As such, should you wish to proceed with your request for a full accounting of the maintenance work at Yarker Family School, please forward a deposit in the amount of \$5,530.00, by cheque or money order, payable to Limestone District School Board at the above address.

MFIPPA provides that all or part of the fee can be waived if, in our opinion, it is fair and equitable to do so, in certain circumstances. Please notify me as soon as possible if you wish to proceed with a request for a fee waiver.

I am responsible for the decision to deny and/or grant access to this information, based on the above. You may ask for a review of the Cost Fee Estimate within 30 days of receiving this letter by writing to:

The Information and Privacy Commissioner/Ontario,  
2 Bloor Street East, Suite 1400,  
Toronto, Ontario, M4W 1A8, Tel.: 416-326-3333 / 1-800-387-0073.

If you decide to request a review of this Cost Fee Estimate, please provide the Commissioner's office with the following: the file number listed at the beginning of this letter; a copy of this decision letter; a copy of the original request for information you sent to our institution, and an appeal fee of \$25.00 payable to the Minister of Finance.

If you require further information, please contact me at the following address:

Ms. Susan McWilliams  
Freedom of Information and Privacy Coordinator  
220 Portsmouth Avenue  
Kingston, ON K7M 0G2

Telephone: 613-544-6925, ext. 243

Please quote the identification number above on all correspondence or when communicating with me.

Sincerely,

*Susan McWilliams*

Susan McWilliams, MIR, CHRL  
Manager Human Resources &  
Freedom of Information

c.c. File

Paula Murray – Chair | Debra Rantz – Director of Education and Secretary | Paul Babin – Treasurer

*Our Students, Our Future*

30



## **The Impact of Closing the Yarker Family School on the Child**

**May 1, 2017  
by Gail Knowles**

### **Executive Summary**

This paper covers how the closing of the Yarker Family School will affect the children who are students there.

The scholastic advantages of going to the YFS will be discussed first, followed by a look at the benefits of attending the school on childrens' physical and mental health. The province's funding formula and method of providing money has the effect of closing a school in good physical shape that provides a first class education with devastating effects on students will be discussed at the end.

### **Part I - The Advantages of attending the Yarker Family School**

#### **1. Scholastic Achievement**

There is nothing in the Final Staff Report that demonstrates the impact on students if Yarker Family School is closed, even though senior staff repeatedly say the primary reason is to improve programming and to save money. There are many other reasons for keeping the school open.

Jimerson (2006, 7) identified characteristics of small schools that have a positive impact on the academic, social, and emotional growth of students:

- greater participation in extracurricular activities is linked to academic success;
  - small schools are safer;
  - kids feel they belong;
  - small class size allows more individualized instruction;
  - good teaching methods are easier to implement;
  - teachers feel better about their work;
  - mixed-ability classes avoid condemning some students to low expectations;
  - multiage classes promote personalized learning and encourage positive social interactions.
- [from Wright, p. 358]

Research reveals small and rural schools as successful in meeting and often exceeding the government's assessment standards and that small rural primary schools, their communities and clusters might offer a model to larger urban schools

Yarker family school fulfills the PK- 3 curriculum successfully, even at an extremely high level, as is evidenced by both the EQAO scores and the Ministry curriculum guides. Director Rantz reported that we cannot consider the EQAO scores because YFS is so small.

Yes, YFS is small but the year of the reported 100% in literacy for grade 3 at Yarker is one when there were 10 students to take the test, and so those results count. Ms. Rantz also said that the EQAO scores are for individual students and cannot be used to compare schools. The EQAO is a standardized test. Standardized tests are used to compare groups of students and do not retain the results of individual students. The scores available are for schools, not students. They are used to compare schools.

The EQAO put out a report comparing high-achieving and low-achieving schools (not students, but schools) in 2012. In this report, available on the EQAO website, teachers in high-achieving schools report the following characteristics:

1. Students take pride in this school. 90% of teachers agree
2. There is strong school spirit in this school. 80%
3. Students at this school respect one another. 82%
4. There is co-operation at this school among students. 88%
5. There is co-operation between students and teachers. 91%
6. There is co-operation between teachers and parents. 86%
7. Staff consistently enforces rules for student conduct. 74%
8. The school culture promotes success for all students. 91%
9. Had support of other staff in work toward math improvement goals. 73%

The Principals in high-achieving schools reported:

1. Parents or guardians participated in school activities 85% of principals agree
2. Parent showed support for teachers' efforts 93%
3. Parents volunteered in classroom activities 83%
4. Parents worked collaboratively with teacher to meet learning goals 80%

We find all of these characteristics at YFS. Why would we not want our children moved to a low-achieving school that does not feature these characteristics? What plans are in place to challenge children from the YFS until the time when the receiving school's students come up to their level of achievement?

If the reason for closing the YFS is to increase academic achievement by the receiving school this aim will not be met by sending YFS students to Odessa where the EQAO scores are significantly lower. There will be no scholastic gains by sending well educated students there.

Rural schools serve a vital role in recreating communities in a highly mobile, industrialized society. According to Lyson (2005, 26), "It is important for policy makers, educational administrators, and local citizens to understand that schools are vital to rural communities."

Multi-grade or family grouping is cutting edge pedagogy. Two main types of strategies were identified: practices that (1) aim to reduce or (2) capitalize on students' heterogeneity. The results illustrate how differently multi-grade teaching can be realized and how it can effectively support individual student learning. This is increasing the awareness of the professional skills required in high-quality teaching practices in multi-grade teaching.

The Ministry curriculum guides for PK-3 emphasize socialization, family, neighbourhood. Every aspect of the Kindergarten 2016 curriculum includes community, family, friends, the outdoors,

playful learning, communicating with parents, the role of the local community. Odessa is not our local community. Yarker is.

Here are some sample statements from the Grade 1-3 curriculum guides:

**a) Language**

Most of what primary students know about language comes from listening and speaking with others, being read to by adults, and interacting with media texts such as advertisements, television programs, video games, songs, photographs, and films. The expectations for language build upon the prior knowledge and experience that students bring to Ontario classrooms from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Because this base of knowledge, experience, and skills varies from student to student, it is important for instruction to be differentiated to meet the needs of individuals and small groups of students.

**b) Math**

Throughout Grades 1, 2, and 3, students will:

**PROBLEM SOLVING** • apply developing problem-solving strategies as they pose and solve problems and conduct investigations, to help deepen their mathematical understanding;

**REASONING AND PROVING** • apply developing reasoning skills (e.g., pattern recognition, classification) to make and investigate conjectures (e.g., through discussion with others);

**SELECTING TOOLS AND COMPUTATIONAL STRATEGIES** • demonstrate that they are reflecting on and monitoring their thinking to help clarify their understanding as they complete an investigation or solve a problem (e.g., by explaining to others why they think their solution is correct);

**REFLECTING** • select and use a variety of concrete, visual, and electronic learning tools and appropriate computational strategies to investigate mathematical ideas and to solve problems;

**CONNECTING** • make connections among simple mathematical concepts and procedures, and relate mathematical ideas to situations drawn from everyday contexts;

**REPRESENTING** • create basic representations of simple mathematical ideas (e.g., using concrete materials; physical actions, such as hopping or clapping; pictures; numbers; diagrams; invented symbols), make connections among them, and apply them to solve problems;

**COMMUNICATING** • communicate mathematical thinking orally, visually, and in writing, using everyday language, a developing mathematical vocabulary, and a variety of representations.

**c) Social Studies, Grade 1**

In Grade 1 social studies, students will examine various roles, relationships, and responsibilities, how and why these may change, and how they are connected to one's identity, culture, and sense of self. They will develop their appreciation of the need to treat all people, as well as the built and natural environment, responsibly and with respect.

Students will also examine their local community, its characteristics and services, and how it meets the needs of the people who live and work there. Students will be introduced to the social studies inquiry process, and will use this process when conducting investigations

related to roles, relationships, and responsibilities, and to their local community. In addition, students will learn how to use the basic elements of maps to help them extract information from and construct maps for specific purposes.

**d) Social Studies, Grade 2**

In Grade 2 social studies, students will develop their understanding of their local community and begin to examine the global community. Students will explore a variety of traditions within their families and their local communities, developing an understanding of how these traditions contribute to and enrich their own community and Canadian society.

They will also study communities around the world, developing an awareness of the relationship between location, climate, physical features, and how people live in various communities. Students will use the social studies inquiry process to investigate traditions, ways of life, and relationships with the environment in local and global communities, and they will develop their ability to extract information from and construct maps for specific purposes.

**e) Social Studies, Grade 3**

In Grade 3 social studies, students are introduced to some of the diverse communities that existed in Canada between approximately 1780 and 1850. Students will explore what life was like for different groups of people during that time period and will compare the lives of these people to those of present-day Canadians. They will use primary sources such as journals, letters, maps, and paintings to investigate how people in early Canada responded to challenges in their lives.

Students will also learn about the physical and municipal regions of Ontario. They will explore the relationship between the natural environment, land use, and employment opportunities, and how different uses of land and resources affect the environment. Students will continue to develop their spatial skills, extracting information from graphs, globes, and maps, constructing print and digital maps, and using mapping programs to help them determine the relationship between the environment and land use in both the past and the present.

**f) The Arts**

The emphasis in the primary grades should be on exploration of the student's self, family, personal experiences, and world.

Most of what primary students know about the arts comes from listening and speaking with adults; experiences in the home, school, and community; and interacting with media such as advertisements, television programs, video games, songs, photographs, two- and three-dimensional art works, and films. The expectations for the arts build upon the prior knowledge and experience that students from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds bring to Ontario classrooms.

Because this base of knowledge, experience, and skills varies from student to student, and because students will have varying levels of prior exposure to the elements, skills, forms, genres, and traditions of the arts, it is important for instruction to be differentiated to meet the needs of individuals and small groups of students. Exposure to a broad range of stimuli that reflect diversity is also crucial: efforts should be made to honour the cultural traditions of students from all groups in the community.



**g) Daily Physical Activity**

Research suggests that children can be motivated to participate in physical activity for the following three key reasons: Enjoyment. Development of competence in physical skills. Social acceptance.

**h) Health & Physical Education**

Children's early learning experiences have a profound effect on their later development. The health and physical education program for Grades 1 to 3 therefore focuses on the foundational knowledge and skills that students will need in order to develop physical and health literacy and acquire the commitment and capacity to lead healthy, active lives. Through participating in health and physical education in the classroom and gymnasium, out of doors, in schoolyards and school gardens, and in the community, students learn to make healthy active living a part of everyday life.

The expectations in these grades provide opportunities for students to strengthen their oral language and knowledge of subject-specific vocabulary, their kinesthetic awareness and understanding of movement concepts, their capacity for imagining, pretending, and reflecting, and their higher-order thinking skills. All of this learning builds on the foundation laid in the learning expectations of the Kindergarten program, particularly in the areas of Personal and Social Development and Health and Physical Activity.

**i) Science**

Young children have an inherent curiosity about things in nature. This topic takes advantage of that curiosity by beginning a study of a variety of living things, including humans. The focus is on investigating the basic needs and characteristics of living things, observing their similarities and differences, and developing an understanding of their general characteristics.

Students will discover that all living things have some similar needs, and many also have unique needs. Students will recognize that humans have a special responsibility for maintaining a healthy environment, so that they and other living things can continue to have their needs met by that environment. Students will learn why all living things are important and why they should be treated with care and respect. During discussions of human physical and sexual characteristics, care should be taken to ensure that a positive discussion takes place.

**Part II - Advantages to a Child's Physical and Mental Health of attending the Yarker Family School**

**a) Positive Experiences with Nature**

Talking with rural children reveals they are very aware of their natural surroundings, the quiet open spaces, their farm animals and domestic pets. They are accustomed to planting seeds, growing their own food, harvesting, in short the natural life cycle that happens every year. They are used to having a parent work from home on the farm who is there much of the time. It is a comfort to either walk to school with friends or a parent or take their bicycle up the lane way after their short bus ride home from school. These kids are used to a certain amount of teasing from siblings and class mates but they know everyone at school. They are a family.

When they go to a larger school away from the comfort and security of their home community they find noise, violence and bullying and that's just during the ride to and from school. A rude age in appropriate gesture by a teen generates a big guffaw that could be disturbing to a 4 year old who may wonder why everyone's laughing whether to laugh with the crowd.

Adults find that being bumped from a job they love is very upsetting and disturbing. It takes quite a long time to recover from the lost and to adjust to the new job. What about someone who is 5 years old who has attended the Yarker Family School all her academic life who suddenly finds herself in a big penitentiary sized school?

### **b) Support of Parents**

Part of a parent's role is to provide minimal disruption to the lives of their children. We feel it is important to allow our kids to be young and child-like for as long as possible. Childhood is a marvellous time and we want them to enjoy the experience as long as possible.

Changing school has many psychotic-like symptoms like hallucinations, delusions and thought interference. It can be a very stressful experience. Such a significant change leads to feelings of low self-esteem and a sense of social defeat. Fitting in for someone who is naturally shy can be very difficult.

This is hard on any parent trying to cope with the child's sense of loss and the trauma of such a big change. Professional counselling and drastic steps like calming drugs are sometimes needed. This is not a good way to start a life.

If the new school is not on a parent's route home the child cannot be picked up on an adult's way home. It's hard for a parent to volunteer at the school, or participate in school activities. This leads to isolation by parents who are excluded from this part of their child's education.

### **b) Freedom from Bullying**

The Odessa Public School has a reputation, deservedly or not, of students with behavioural issues. Bullying, either experienced or talked about amongst students, can have a devastating effect on anyone but especially on very young children. These events stick with a child for the rest of his life.

Everyone knows everyone else by name at the Yarker Family School. In some cases students are related to one another which adds an extra bond. This is a source of comfort especially if someone doesn't feel well, hasn't understood a lesson and needs a little extra help, finds it difficult to find the second mitten, find they cannot get into the bus because their legs are too short and any other of life's little difficulties.

Wendy Craig of Queen's University and Debra Papler of York University wrote an article "Responding to Bullying, What Works?" They found that it is very difficult for a child to stop or prevent the torment of bullying because they lack the power and experience. Adults are expecting children to stop the bullying by themselves instead of helping. There are repercussions from reporting inappropriate behaviour that a child can't always handle by himself. The authors' paper also revealed that children witness a lot of bullying never seen by adults and kids do intervene, but not every time.

Where is the school board and the adults in all of this? It cannot be up to a 4 year old who is new to the school to report bullying. There needs to be adult supervision especially in large schools like Molly Brant where knives are routinely brought into school and students urinate on the walls which partially explains the bad smell throughout the school. Catchment boundaries must be enforced for this school because the board is having difficulty filling all the seats.

One local child reported an incidence of bullying she witnessed. Once she had recovered from the shock of seeing such an act she reported what she saw to the teacher. The teacher told the student that she was to mind her business. This adult didn't do anything and sent the message to the child that she was expected to handle the bullying by herself.

The LDSB has a 'no bullying' policy. Does the board have extra playground and school room supervision to prevent bullying? Even adults find it difficult if they see someone being beaten up on the street. Why should students be the only ones tasked with preventing bullying? Where is the plan for improved supervision and overall response by adults to bullying?

Spending over an hour on a bus with children of all ages and life experiences is very stressful. The age of children in a classrooms is limited, why not limit the age on the bus too. Being driven away from the security of one's home and family with only one adult on the bus is disorienting. The bus driver cannot go back into the bus and discipline students so any behaviour is okay.

#### **c) Easy Access to Physical Exercise**

Walking to and from school like students do now to the Yarker Family School increases a child's physical stamina, leads to an increase in self confidence, better health and less risk of serious diseases. Some children do farm chores after school.

Yarker Family School students go outside to a grassed playground during recess. They use the equipment supplied by the community and many kids return after school to play on the slides. Going to the paved area in Odessa where there is competition for the swings, a chance of injury from the hard surface and the noise and competition of so many students, has a devastating effect on a rural child.

#### **d) Less Stress**

While learning has it's own stressors like being successful taking tests and answering questions at the blackboard, knowing everyone at the school is a comfort. Being close to home provides a sense of community and belonging not provided when a child is bused with strangers many miles and hours away to an urban environment. Being able to relieve any stress by being able to go outdoors is a wonderful benefit.

When a child is shipped to another community there is a feeling of dislocation and loss which can lead to depression. Many times the child is too short to see out the window and she is being jostled three to a seat over bumpy roads with many stops to get to school. Sitting for more than an hour without having access to a bathroom then being teased at the end of the trip for an accident is not forgotten.

If it's a matter of programming, bring the programs to the Yarker Family School, not the children to the program. Electronic devices, photo teleconferencing, the Internet have been available for

some time now and are trusted sources of information. Busing children to the programs is a rather feeble excuse for closing a well run school that works well that is beneficial to students and teachers.

#### **e) More Sleep**

Significant research is available about the connection between sleep, school performance and behaviour. It is alarming that the school board is willing to increase the length of bus rides and rob our children of much needed sleep is perfectly acceptable. No wonder children fall asleep on the bus on the way home and find learning for the first few hours of the day difficult.

“Sleep quality, feeling rested at school and less distinct bedtimes were clearly related to school functioning. Another result was that children who had no difficulty getting up displayed more achievement motivation. Being open to the teacher’s influence and achievement modification depended mainly on sleep characteristics.” (“Time in bed, quality of sleep and school functioning of children”, Meijer, Habekothe, Van Den Wittenboer, 2000.)

“Significant correlations between sleep-quality measures and brain performance measures were found, particularly in the younger age group. Children with fragmented sleep were characterized by lower brain performance measures, particularly those associated with more complex tasks such as continuous performance test and a symbol-digit substitution test. These children also had higher rates of behavior problems as reported by their parents on the Child Behavior Checklist. These results highlight the association between sleep quality, neuro-behavioral function, and behavior regulation in child development; and raise important questions about the origins of these associations and their development and clinical significance.” (from Sleep, Neurobehavioral Functioning, and Behavior Problems in School-age Children”. Avi Sadeh, Reut Gruber, Amiram Raviv)

The 2016 Participation Report Card reveals some disturbing facts on how Canadian children are coping:

- 85 % of our 3 to 4 year olds spend more than 1 hour a day on screen
- 33 % of Canadian children aged 5 to 13 have trouble falling asleep and or staying asleep
- 31 % of school children are sleep deprived.
- 91% of 5 to 12 year olds do not get 60 minutes of heart pumping exercise they need each day.
- Every hour kids spend in sedentary activity delays bedtime by 3 minutes.
- Chronic sleep loss is linked to higher rates of depression and suicidal thoughts.

#### **f) More Access to After School Programs**

A school activity must by necessity involved everyone at the Yarker Family School. Small number of teachers, parents and students requires that everyone participates. No one is left out and everyone feels part of the team. This is such a comfort to the child, provides a social experience for the parent and everyone has fun together.

Getting on a bus the minute the school bell signals the end of the day eliminates after school teams or other activities. This is very stressful and frustrating for a pupil with a particular aptitude or desire to participate. If the parent or another adult isn't able to drive the child back to

school for the game and if there are no extra teachers to supervise the game, the child cannot take advantage of the after school program.

**g) Taxpayer Dollars are Spent at Home**

Residents of Yarker support the Yarker Family School by paying taxes. Their tax dollars are spent at the school for salaries, maintenance, utilities and directly benefit the students, the community, and the tax payer. Board Director Rantz says that the rest of the residents in the area covered by the board are subsidizing the Yarker Family School. If there is no school in Yarker, residents will be subsidizing schools while being deprived of the opportunity and privilege of having a school in our community. This is not reasonable to expect residents to do that.

The review of the Yarker Family School seems to be about money and as Chair Murray said recently, about balancing the books. Director Rantz estimates the board has been subsidizing the Yarker Family School for \$1M over the past 5 years. That money covers salaries and utilities. Since the plan is to return teachers to other elementary schools, the annual savings amounts to about \$110,000 if the school is closed. The school board wants to risk our childrens' mental and physical health by removing them from their community to a big urban school for the sake of saving \$110,000. This is outrageous. Have we learned nothing from history?

The funds for the Junior Kindergarden room that was added a few years ago to the Yarker Family School came from the province. If the school is closed taxpayers will continue to pay for the addition for the full period of the loan. Residents will be unable to use the room they are continuing to pay for especially if the building is sold and demolished.

**b) Access to the Library**

Yarker Family School children can go into the library any time it is open because the school and the library are connected by a corridor. Easy access develops a child's interest in learning because the librarian has Story Time throughout the week. She reads students a story and encourages everyone to browse through the collection and borrow whatever books take their interest. This would not be possible if the school and possibly the library were closed.

One time a promised program in Harrowsmith was not available because of weather conditions. The teacher made arrangements for the students to have an extra Story Time with the librarian and all the children rushed into the library anticipating a new story and fun with the library staff. They were excited to be able to participate in this change of program, not possible if the school and the library weren't there.

**Part III - The Provincial Capital Funding that Deprives Students of The Chance to Attend the Yarker Family School**

Besides all of the school's other wonderful attributes, the Yarker Family School (within the Limestone District School Board family of schools) has a very low FCI of 20%, which is good. It means the school is in relatively good shape and has a considerable life expectancy ahead of it. This percentage is one of the lowest in the Limestone District School Board's inventory of elementary schools.

The FCI is based on the Ministry's Condition Assessment which is done every five years. Details about the school are available on the Ministry of Education's website at [http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/renewal\\_data.html](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/renewal_data.html)

Yarker Family School's Facility Condition Index is low, due largely to the investments made in the Yarker Library (2012) and the Full Time Kindergarten (2014). There are many larger schools with much higher FCI numbers which are not being considered for closure (Odessa 41%, Amherstview 43%, Prince Charles 48%).

The Facility Condition Index is calculated by dividing a school's 5 Year Renewal Cost by its Replacement Cost. In the case of the Yarker Family School, the Facility Condition Index is 20% (5 Year Renewal Cost of \$404,219 / Replacement Cost of \$2,014,789).

Renewal Needs are expenses for a school's critical repairs and includes a wish list of expenditures that would bring a school up to standard. The Ministry's Condition Assessment Program is linked directly to funding through various renewal grants. When a school is closed, the 5 year renewal costs disappear.

So, why would the board want to close a school with an FCI of only 20% and 5 year renewal costs of only \$404,219? It all comes down to the province's various capital funding programs.

When school boards apply for capital funding, more money is forthcoming from the province if the cost of renewing their schools is high. If a school board closes a school that has few operational needs and is inexpensive to maintain, the board's overall renewal needs are driven up. Schools that are in poor shape that need expensive repairs are kept open to bolster the board's funding application.

School boards across this province are desperate to reduce their capital renewal backlogs. The LDSB renewal backlog is estimated to be in the \$350 million range. Is this why Yarker Family School is targeted to be closed? Because the YFS does not offer enough of a financial incentive to take a bite out of the board's backlog?

Wouldn't it make better financial sense to keep newer schools open with fewer maintenance issues than the other way around? Might reduce the LDSB's large renewal backlog too.

The use of capital funding to clear up the renewal backlog was confirmed at the regular LDSB meeting of January 11, 2017. "In response to a question, Manager [of Facility Services] Fowler clarified that Renewal Funding is money received by school boards on an annual basis for regular maintenance, capital items or operational needs. SCI [School Condition Improvement] funding is additional money specifically to deal with the backlog of major renovations and replacement needs."

Not only would saving schools that are in reasonable good condition like the ones in Stone Mills Township be a better use of taxpayer dollars, our children could continue to receive a good education close to home, fully supported by their teachers, parents, volunteers and the community.



We need to work together to change the current Harris-era capital renewal funding guidelines that reward school boards that close schools with few maintenance issues to keep their renewal costs high. The Ministry may have added money to the pot but the rules haven't been changed. Until they do, schools in good condition will continue to be targeted for possible closure.

## **Conclusion**

The Limestone District School Board needs a rural school policy. There is a big difference between small rural schools and urban ones. Rural children are different than urban kids. Closing a small school and sending children to a large urban one can be devastating to any child, especially one accustomed to the safety and security of a school close to home where they know everyone.

The lasting impacts of the Limestone District School Board's closure of Yarker Family School, will be felt by every student at the school. These children will experience:

- the loss of activity time as a result of the longer bus ride
- the loss of activity for being deprived of the chance to walk or ride a bike to school
- the loss of time to play which is integral to learning and imagination
- the loss of sleep and its effects on their performance and behaviour
- the loss of time in community
- the loss of a sense of security and control
- more time spent on the bus without intermediating adults (bullying – whether physical, or psychological of the pupil or others around him or her)
- the sense of anomie (a sense of normlessness, that nothing is predictable or regular in the day's activities)

The children affected by this possible closure will be in mourning for a lengthy period, which is not conducive to learning, fitting it or enjoying school.

The future of this province and this country depends on happy, confident, self aware, well educated adults performing at their best. We will need a workforce that gets along with others, is imaginative, productive and community minded. How can we achieve this if there are no small rural schools to nurture our children so they can be the fine adults we need in the future?

Keeping the Yarker Family School open achieves all of these wonderful results.

## Biography

- i. Reenergizing Small Communities: A Vital Role for Rural Schools  
by Kathleen Anne Wright  
The Educational Forum • Volume 71 • Summer 2007 • 345-360
- ii. Respect and responsibility: Review of research on small rural schools in England by Linda M. Hargreaves  
International Journal of Educational Research 48 (2009) 117–128
- iii. Characteristics of High- and Low-Achieving English-Language Schools  
By Rhona Shulman, M.A., and Michael Kozlow, Ph.D., EQAO Research Bulletin #8 February 2012
- iv. Reenergizing Small Communities: A Vital Role for Rural Schools  
by Kathleen Anne Wright  
The Educational Forum • Volume 71 • Summer 2007 • 345-360
- v. Multi-grade teaching practices in Austrian and Finnish primary schools  
Eeva Kaisa Hyry-Beihammera & Tina Hascherb / International Journal of Educational Research 74 (2015) 104–113
- vi. Kindergarten 2016
- vii. Language 2006
- viii. Math 2005
- ix. Social Studies 2013
- x. The Arts 2009
- xi. Daily Physical Activity 2005
- xii. Health & Physical Education 2015
- xiii. Science 2007
- xiv. (Referred to but not quoted) Guiding Children's Friendship Development by Kathleen Cranley  
Gallagher, Young Children November 2013, 26-32

speaking Note for Gail Knowles, May 3, 2017

### **The Effect of Closing the Yarker Family School on the Child**

Closing a small comfortable school where every teacher and child knows everyone and everyone knows the child and the teacher has a devastating effect on the scholastic and mental health of the youngster.

The year the Grade 3 standardized testing was conducted, there were 10 students who took the test. Yarker Family School students scored highest in all of the schools across the Limestone District School Board. While the small number of students being tested has been dismissed by Director Rantz, it is the same number as Collins Bay and Centreville Public Schools and just slightly lower than Sydenham and Tamworth Public Schools.

EQAO test scores compare schools and boards with one another. If you close the top performing school wouldn't the overall average across the board decline? That can't be good for the board's reputation in the province.

If closing the Yarker Family Schools is about the lack of programs at the school, it would be interesting to see what programs are missing from the curriculum that would have helped students there achieve better results. These high achieving students will be forcibly removed from the comfort and security of the school in Yarker to attend a school where the achievement is significantly lower. There is no mention of the extra help supplied to students at the receiving school to bring them up to Yarker standards or what the Yarker students will do while they are waiting until the others are up to their level of achievement.

Besides the academic advantages there are many reasons why children enjoy attending the Yarker Family School. They have a positive experience with nature, the full support of their parents and teachers, students have an easy access to physical exercise and they experience less stress and have more sleep. They have greater access to after school programs and outings and there is a freedom from bullying.

We all want the same things: to keep our children safe and secure, to keep them close by so we can keep an eye on them, to allow them to be youngsters as long as possible, and to instil a strong sense of belonging and community. Above all, we want our kids to have a first class education. All of this is available at the Yarker Family School.

Director Rantz seems to be in a big hurry to get this all finished quickly. What's the rush? You've already delayed the review of the rest of the schools in Stone Mills and Selby until after the election. Why not delay your decision about the Yarker Family School until after the election, too?

New information is coming in all the time. Do you have enough information about multiple grade classrooms, the future of the library, the number of extra buses needed, the best size of school for the best scholastic achievement, the effect of large noisy schools on rural children? Can you make an informed decision about the Yarker Family School?

If you truly want to balance the budget join us, your constituents as we petition the Minister of Education to change to the Harper-era funding model that rewards school boards for closing

schools in good condition that are the right size for children to receive a first class education.  
Help us press the ministry for a rural schools policy.

We want to keep the Yarker Family School open and we hope you do too.



Delegation to the Limestone District School Board Regarding Yarker Family School Closure, May 9, 2017

The Merits and Myths Surrounding Small Versus Large Schools

Speakers notes:

Truths About Small Schools:

- The magic number of 150
- Increased safety
- Better teaching
- Higher achievement academically
- Increased parent and community involvement

Myths About Large Schools:

- Large schools mean greater equality and diversity of friends
- Large schools mean better and more learning opportunities
- Large schools generate an economy of scale
- Large schools offer better teacher satisfaction
- Large schools have more parent and community involvement

Differences in rural versus urban schools

Conclusion:

- Aspirations of large schools versus the reality they create
- Small schools ensure children's right to physical and emotional safety
- Small schools personal approach is positive influence on children

- Existing small schools should be retained
- Support single school small communities
- Consider the socio-economic impact of school closures along with all other factors considered
- Acknowledge and design small schools that retain a close family atmosphere and high scholastic achievement
- Develop and implement a rural schools policy that accounts for the differences between urban and rural schools

Limestone District School Board can be a leader in the Ontario Education System

**A Review of Literature Examining the Merits of Small Schools**

**March 6, 2017**

“the political debate is turning from a focus on results towards greater concern about social cohesion, child welfare, mental health and poverty. And the case for children’s welfare at small schools is very strong.”

Mike Baker writing for The Guardian Newspaper (2008),

## Table of Contents

Introduction	Page 3
Background	Page 3
Discussion of the Ministry's Assumptions	Page 3
MOE Assumption #1 - Larger Schools Can Take Advantage of Economics of Scale	Page 3
MOE Assumption #2- Larger Schools Offer More Programs	Page 5
MOE Assumption #3: Larger Schools Offer More Extracurricular Programs	Page 7
MOE Assumption #4 - There is no Difference Between Rural and Urban Life	Page 7
MOE Assumption #5 - Students Have More Friends at Large Schools	Page 8
MOE Assumption #6 - Teacher Satisfaction is Better in Large Schools	Page 9
MOE Assumption #7 - Parental Involvement is Greater in Large Schools	Page 9
Optimum Schools Size	Page 10
Quality of Education	Page 12
Social Equality	Page 13
Conclusion	Page 13
Recommendations for the School Board	Page 14
References	Page 15
Appendix A - EQAO Education Quality and Accountability Assessment	Page 16
Appendix B - The Human Cost	Page 17
Appendix C - Why is the Yarker Family School under Threat of Closure?	Page 18
Appendix D - One Parent's Experience with a School Closure	Page 20

## **A Review of Literature Examining the Merits of Small Schools**

March 5, 2017

### **Introduction**

The Ontario Minister of Education, Mitzie Hunter, has spent considerable time recently explaining her ministry's reasons for closing schools in the province. Her speeches and correspondence contain many assumptions that support her arguments.

This paper is a review of the available literature and anecdotal evidence to see if Ms Hunter's assumptions are justified. This paper also tries to answer the following questions:

- a) are small schools better or worse than large schools?
- b) will closing the Yarker Family School meet the Limestone District School Board's aim of saving money while providing a first class education?

After the discussion of the Ministry's assumptions there are three sections that explore optimum school sizes, quality of education and social equality.

### **Background**

Large schools were popular in the 1960s with the industrialization and professionalization of education. Gallagher (1995: 67) (as quoted by Lauzon and Leahey) noted that "Schools were now more distant, in many respects, from many of the community members whose children they were intended to serve." The costs of education rose over time which were not completely covered by the province's funding formulae ... and they still aren't.

The current Ministry of Education is trying to convince Ontarians and school boards across the province that new larger schools in urban areas are superior to small rural schools in every way.

### **Discussion of the Ministry's Assumptions**

#### **MOE Assumption #1: Larger Schools Can Take Advantage of Economies of Scale**

According to Wikipedia, economies of scale or microeconomics is

"In microeconomics, economies of scale are the cost advantages that enterprises obtain due to size, output, or scale of operation, with cost per unit of output generally decreasing with increasing scale as fixed costs are spread out over more units of output."



In education, this means putting the maximum number of students in a minimum number of schools (like the Harrowsmith Public School where the participation rate is over 100%) with the minimum number of teachers and administrative staff.

Lauzon and Leahey noted that money can be saved by reducing the number of teachers and administrators across a school board thus increasing the ratio of teachers to students. Provincial deficits, lower corporate taxes and economic globalization mean boards must be economically accountable and follow business models.

This means that there are no cost savings if the same number of teachers are needed whether a school is closed or not if provincial student to teacher ratios are to be met. As for reductions in administrative costs, Nachtigal (1992) (as quoted by Lauzon and Leahey) "found that the number of administrative staff actually increased as a result of the greater bureaucratic demands of the consolidated system."

An increase in bureaucratic structure required to run a large educational system and increased busing costs mean there are no saving when a school is closed if economies of scale and business models are used as a guide.

The LDSB's Initial Staff Report did not call for a reduction in teaching or administrative staff. Therefore, It would appear that closing the Yarker Family School would not save any money once the retention of staff, the increase in busing expenses, the possible decrease in scholastic achievement by Yarker students, and the cost to close the building have been considered.

As has been suspected, savings from consolidation is a contentious issue especially amongst parents and community members. Lauzon and Leahy note that:

"The alleged savings that can be realized at this point appear to have more to do with rhetoric and ideology than it has to do with empirical realities of what we currently know."

A review of available literature, correspondence from the provincial government and prepared press releases show this to be true.

Large institutions and large class sizes have been tried at universities. However, Saiz (2014) points out that:

"Administrators may capture the economies of increasing returns to scale, and this strategy may work for them and their budgets, but it also exposes where power lies within the university. Larger class sizes and higher student to faculty ratios provide large benefits to administrators; some benefits to faculty; but only few, if any, benefits to students."

If one of the aims of the LDSB's current review of the Yarker Family School is to reduce financial liability, reducing the number of teachers and administrative staff would be a good place to start. However, Saiz states that an increase in class size means there is less instructor-student interaction, less student involvement in classes, reduced student satisfaction, lower attendance, less civility, more cheating, higher drop-out rates and decreased student learning.

Economies of scale must also include quality of learning. If saving money negatively impacts on the education of children very little has been saved. As well, the expense of extra buses, the

cost of actually closing a school and the question of what to do with the empty building afterwards are seldom factored into the cost of the school.

As Grauer discovered:

“Large school increased costs include:

Increased drop out rates

Increased violence

Decreased sense of social safety and connectedness

Lower teacher satisfaction and higher teacher turnover

Lower achievement in college

Less happiness”

**The closure of the Yarker Family school would generate the least amount of savings of any closure contemplated or executed by the Limestone District School Board.**

The school’s Facility Condition Index is low at 20%. This means the school is in relatively good shape and has a considerable life expectancy even though the board has documents that show that very little or no money has been spent on the building over the last 10 years.

The provincial Condition Assessment Program stipulates that if the Limestone District School Board closes schools that cost very little to maintain they can apply for more capital funding from the province (Knowles, 2017) (see Appendix C). This means the board must keep some potentially high cost schools open to justify their applications to the province for capital funding and renewal grants. A review of actual spending indicates the grants are disproportionately spent on preferred schools while other schools like the Yarker Family School are consistently neglected.

## **MOE Assumption #2: Larger Schools Can Offer More Programs**

Whenever the question of school closures is discussed Minister Hunter mentions that the reason large schools are better than small ones is students’ access to programs. The types and number of programs and their participation rate is never mentioned.

Surely if there was a need for JK and public school students to learn a second language other than French for example, there are other ways to access these lessons, like having a spoken conversation over the Internet using the software application Skype, video teleconferencing, correspondence courses, shared videos on YouTube and so on.

All of these digital opportunities are currently available at the Yarker Family School. There is no need to move children to these programs; bring the programs to the students.

Since Grade 3 pupils at the Yarker Family School scored #1 in the EQAO standardized testing in the LDSB, what programs are these students missing that would educate them better or help them achieve higher results?

In an article for the New York Times, author Holly Epstein Ojalvo asked students who were just about to graduate from high school to discuss whether they had better experiences at small schools vs large ones. One of the students said:

“Another thing that is real great about small schools is that since the classroom consists of a smaller number of kids, the staff was able to supply better tools for learning. We always had the newest (MAC) computers, nice books (and lots of them) and new, unused text-books.”

Another student noted:

“the number of people, the large-school atmosphere, this uncomfortable sense of over-competitiveness, the lack of soft skills on the part of administration, particularly the overly-masculine emphasis on SPORTS (football, wrestling), the loudness of footsteps and the cafeteria, and because of its size, this need to create some kind of stream-lined process of academic learning, testing, credit-earning, GPA, and a need to PROVE to parents and the community that their large school produces RESULTS.”

As Diane Weaver Dunne (2000) pointed out:

“The largest schools have five or ten times as many students as did the smaller schools but typically offered about twice as many courses. In addition, much of the material covered in specialized courses at large schools is taught within regular courses at small schools.”

While conducting his literature review on whether children have a sense of connectivity and safety while at school, Stuart Grauer found:

“Learning is more equitably distributed in smaller schools (Clotfelter, 2002). Small schools create more opportunities for participation per capita; a larger percentage of students participate and they participate in more kinds of activities. Small schools need a large percentage of students to fill each activity, and they engage a broader cross-section of students, helping reduce social and racial isolation (Fouts, Abbor, & Baker, 2002).”

In other words, to make a school activity like the pumpkin festival at the Yarker Family School a success, every student, teacher, and parent must be involved along with many community members. Students go to a local farm every spring and plant pumpkin seeds. Extra seeds are planted for kids who will be starting school in Yarker in the fall so each child has his or her own pumpkin plant. All the plants are weeded and tended throughout the season and then in the fall everyone goes to the farm to pick the pumpkins. The produce is sold as a fund raiser for the school and some is donated to area residents.

Complete participation by everyone at the school in this activity makes it a success, builds a team spirit, helps everyone get to know one another, provides a useful educational experience, is a source of pride in achievement, boosts self-esteem and benefits the community. In a large school participation would be limited to certain grades and those who weren't in those grades would be left behind.

### **MOE Assumption #3: Larger Schools Can Offer More Extracurricular Programs**

There is the idea that a large school can offer more clubs, sports and other after hour activities than a small school. These activities depend on teacher or community member participation either as a voluntary activity. If no teachers are available after school the activity does not take place.

Students who live a the Yarker area, but attend a school in Odessa or elsewhere must get on their buses immediately after school because there is only one bus. Parents are not always available to pick their children up from school after a weekly club meeting which means the student loses out on the chance to participate.

However, once the parents and children are at home in the evening or on the weekends they will sometimes return to the Yarker school playground or the library as a family outing.

If there is only one team in the Odessa school students must compete for places on the team since a second team would probably not be started to accommodate more players. These teams feature participation by relatively few students. In a small school with a lower student population everyone gets a chance to try out and even the student with the smallest talent is encouraged to participate. Every child feels needed.

There is a lovely example of this. All of the Grade 8 students from Enterprise were members of the soccer team when there was a board tournament. The whole school played or were involved somehow on the team.

### **MOE Assumption #4: There is no Difference between Rural and Urban Life**

The rural experience is different than life in the city. Closing a rural school where there is only one school in the community has a much greater significance and impact than closing a school in Kingston or another urban area.

Miller (1995) (as quoted in Lauzon and Leahy) states there is a misguided belief that "community development should be economic development." However, this does not consider the differences between rural and urban communities, since there is no national or provincial policy. Rural life has unique characteristics, qualities and needs that are not the same as life in urban areas.

Howley (1997) (as quoted by Lauzon and Leahy) argues:

"a different logic is needed in considering rural schooling if the development of these institutions are to actually benefit rural communities. ... in general, there is a scepticism that rural school needs are different."

Yarker students are accustomed to venturing outside, wandering and exploring, visiting local farms, walking along the Cataraqui Trail. The result of the loss of familiar surroundings can cause severe anxiety, feelings of helplessness neither of which are hardly conducive to learning.



Imagine the contrast felt by children in Yarker between playing outside in a grassed playground in the peace and quiet of the countryside with the crowded noisy concrete playground in a city.

Throughout the Pupil Accommodation Process the school board has ignored the very real needs of rural students and clearly demonstrated the scepticism Howley refers to.

### **MOE Assumption #5: Students Can Have More Friends in Large Schools**

As Grauer noted, "People naturally seek relationships first, and large institutions have a way of adding limits, lines and hard edges to those relationships." Students from Odessa are accustomed to the competition and noise of larger classes in a larger school, close to their homes now. Mix in some Yarker children who have never competed for teacher attention.

This might be a perfect fit for some students. For others who are accustomed to a quiet rural way of life, just a long ride on the bus with no adult supervision with kids of all ages could cause culture shock.

It takes a long time to adapt to the increase in the number of students per teacher. There is the difficulty leaving classmates behind if they are assigned to another classroom and getting to know new classmates and teachers is not easy. Where is the full support of peers, teachers, parents and community volunteers?

For many Yarker students there is also a risk of alienation, feelings of insecurity and inadequacy if they are sent to a large school. Small schools give students a sense of belonging which may not be felt in a larger school. Feeling alienated by a big school has a negative effect on confidence, self-esteem, sense of control of a situation and feeling responsible for doing well. A student who is shy or who looks different from the norm faces taunting, insults and other forms of bullying both on the bus and at school.

Grauer discovered

"A smaller-scale, personal approach can make a positive difference in our children's education. Students deserve to be free from worry about physical and emotional safety and to be confident that their teachers and administrators know them well and can guide their development of skills and knowledge."

Baker concluded in 2008:

As Ofsted reported, small schools have a positive ethos that fosters "a family atmosphere", "good standards of behaviour" and "close links with parents and the community". That sounds like a recipe for solving many current problems, not only in rural areas but also, perhaps especially, in urban areas too.

## **MOE Assumption #6: Teacher Satisfaction is Better in Large Schools**

This is not always true. A small classroom in a small school means a teacher can

- get to know students personally,
- give a little more explanation to someone who didn't completely understand a lesson,
- control content and tailor classes if a few children have a special interest while still teaching the full curriculum,
- spend less time disciplining and more time teaching,
- alert a parent right away if there's a problem,
- ensure no child is left out, and
- generally focus on the child and his or her education.

Lee and Loeb (2000) found

“By knowing students better, teachers are likely to worry more about their failures, provide more help direct toward improvement, take responsibility for disciplining everyone and invest more fully in improving the whole school.”

Good teacher involvement with students, open communications between teachers, students parents, board members and the community, respect for one another and teacher satisfaction all have a positive influence on learning, as evidenced by Yarker Family School's #1 ranking in standardized test score results.

This is born out by a review of the literature: Glass (1982), Fried (1982), Barker, Lauzon and Leahy and Jordan (2015), Lee and Loeb (2000), Cotton (1996) and Ojalvo (2010).

## **MOE Assumption #7: Parental Involvement is Greater in Large Schools**

This has proven not to be the case. Any event taking place after school hours at the Yarker Family School is very well attended by parents and community members. Parking is at a premium during these events and the school is full of people. Parents are involved in helping their children with their school work, walking them back and forth to school if they live in Yarker, going with the students on outings, taking their kids to the library when it's open in the evening or on Saturday, helping raise money for special events by baking cakes and cookies for sale, and generally participating every way they can.

The scholastic success of students at the Yarker Family School is due in no small part to the involvement and commitment by parents. Teachers and parents form partnerships for the good of the student because both care about the child's progress. The success of the whole school depends on this partnership and the school becomes a source of pride, a cultural centre that provides identity and stability for the community (Lauzon and Leahy).

A few adults who attended the school in Yarker were asked about their experiences at the school. To a person they still fondly remember their days at the school and said they feel the experience has served them well over the years.

The possibility of losing the Yarker Family School is the source of considerable stress and anxiety amongst students, teachers, parents and the community. The librarian at the Yarker Branch of the library is also worried about the future. Amongst other things, she reads to the students during story times, helps them choose books, encourages learning and literacy which will all be lost if the school closes.

Lauzon and Leahy found

“Parents in the vacated communities had less parent-teacher contact than the host communities and participated in less school activities”

What a loss!

## **Optimum School Size**

According to Meir (1996) (as quoted by Layzon and Leahy) the optimal school size is between 300 and 400 students. The Odessa Public School capacity (On the Ground) is 490 which means if the school is completely full it would be larger than the optimal school size.

If all the students from the Yarker Family School were bused to the Odessa PS, the enrolment will only increase at Odessa from 332 in 2015-16 (a utilization rate of 67%) to 368 or a utilization rate of 75%. This is above the 65% benchmark set by the province as the indication when a school must be reviewed for closure. However if some students go to a school other than the one in Odessa the utilization rate goes down.

If fewer than 100% of students from Yarker go to Odessa that school may well be at risk for closure itself some time in the future. Ironically, when a school's population approaches the province's 65% benchmark for closure it also reaches the optimal school size suggested by Meir.

**The province's system is set up to close schools in the optimum range for learning.**

The table below shows some interesting findings. (The complete table is available in Appendix A.)

Of the top 20 schools in the LDSB family of schools, 18 have fewer than 3 classes of Grade 3 students (based on 20 children per class). Seventeen of these top 20 schools have 1-2 classes of Grade 3 pupils. These top schools fall into the optimum school size.

It is also interesting that of the top 20 schools, Yarker, Selby, Harrowsmith, Bath, Perth Road, Elginburg, Glenburnie and Centreville are all in rural areas. Is it safe to say that children attending small rural schools do well in EQAO test scores?

The average size of these nine successful rural schools is 206 pupils. Smaller schools are vital to childrens' and the community's life in rural areas. Since the board has no rural schools policy they plan to celebrate these wonderfully successful small schools by closing them.

<b>EQAO - Education Quality and Accountability Assessment</b>							
<b>Grade 3 Assessment (2014-2016 Results)</b>							
EQAO Rank			Students	Reading	Writing	Math	My Avg
1	Yarker FS	Yarker	10	100%	95%	71%	88.7%
2	Selby PS	Selby	18	86%	88%	74%	82.7%
3	Lancaster Drive PS	Kingston	35	82%	84%	81%	82.3%
4	Winston Churchill PS	Kingston	20	80%	82%	78%	80.0%
5	Truedell PS	Kingston	17	78%	85%	75%	79.3%
6	JR Henderson PS	Kingston	61	78%	79%	72%	76.3%
7	Cataraqui Woods ES	Kingston	40	73%	88%	60%	73.7%
8	Harrowsmith PS	Harrowsmith	34	73%	87%	60%	73.3%
9	Bath PS	Bath	32	74%	78%	66%	72.7%
10	Southview PS	Napanee	68	68%	79%	70%	72.3%
11	Perth Road PS	Perth Road	26	79%	67%	68%	71.3%
12	Elginburg&Dist PS	Elginburg	32	76%	71%	64%	70.3%
13	Sydenham PS	Kingston	13	78%	78%	52%	69.3%
14	Rideau PS	Kingston	49	72%	70%	66%	69.3%
15	Bayridge PS	Kingston	34	70%	73%	63%	68.7%
16	Lord Strathcona PS	Kingston	20	65%	70%	67%	67.3%
17	Central PS	Kingston	21	77%	69%	54%	66.7%
18	Glenburnie PS	Glenburnie	18	60%	79%	58%	65.7%
19	RG Sinclair Mem PS	Kingston	27	69%	69%	58%	65.3%
20	Centreville PS	Centreville	10	74%	65%	57%	65.3%

As shown above, having a large school is not necessarily an advantage. Giessen (as quoted by Lauzon and Leahey) notes: "larger schools are more likely to have a greater number of suspensions and more long term suspensions than smaller schools." Irmsher (1997) (as quoted by Lauzon and Leahey)

"concludes that larger schools have poorer attendance than smaller schools; dampen enthusiasm for involvement in school activities; have lower grade averages and standardized scores; have higher dropout rates; and have more problems with violence, security and drug abuse."

Add to this the negative effects of long bus rides with the quality of the educational experience and chance of scholastic success for youngsters goes down significantly.



## Quality of Education

In standardized testing of Grade 3 students, Yarker pupils scored #1 in the LDSB. Odessa Public School pupils scored 39th out of a total of the 43 schools across the board. No explanation is given for the low test results at Odessa in the board's Initial Staff Report.

This means that high achieving Grade 3 children from Yarker will be asked to attend a school where more than half the students failed to meet provincial standards in reading, writing and arithmetic. Odessa's scores have been steadily falling in all three categories of achievement since 2012 while Yarker's results have gone up in reading and writing while staying the same in mathematics over the same time period.

The Limestone District School Board has made no mention of any extra classes for Grade 3 students in Odessa to increase their EQAO results. Yarker students who are compelled to attend the Odessa Public School will be confronted with classmates who may not exhibit comparable skills and attitudes.

Please refer to Appendix A - EQAO Rankings for al LSB Elementary Schools compiled by Bryan Brown in December 2016. This shows the EQAO Rank by school, the number of Grade 3 students taking the standardized testing and their average scores.

If small successful schools listed on page 10 are closed the overall EQAO average for the school board could drop a full percentage point if the board proceeds with closure.

That smaller schools offer better teaching and result in higher academic performance is born out in existing literature. For example Stuart Grauer notes:

"For standardization mavens, students in small schools were reported to outperform students in large schools on standardized achievement tests, and significantly so (Bryk & Driscoll, 1988; Gladden, 2000; Howley & Bickel, 2000; Husbands and Beese, 2004; Lee & Smith, 1997; Raywid, 1980)."

Baker noted:

the largeness of many of our schools may be one factor contributing to declines in test scores and increases in violence among students (Wynne, 1978).

The government watchdog Florida Taxwatch (Jordan 2015)

"The group compiled research showing students in smaller schools do better in math and reading, have fewer behavior problems, and participate in more extracurricular activities. They're also more likely to graduate."

## **Social Equality**

As Gauer stated:

Research consistently reveals that in small schools, students of all “types” feel they can connect with one another much more readily and openly, and also with caring adults whom they know quite personally.

He also refers to Nathan & Thao’s 2001 study:

“Students at large schools are more prone to be alienated from their peers...” In small schools, respectful relationships prevail, as do high expectations for behavior and achievement.

## **Conclusion**

Literature and personal experience have all shown that students benefit from small schools especially in their younger years. Students learn well, develop good interpersonal skills by a close relationship with people of all ages and experience at school. It looks as if they also enjoy themselves while at school. This joy of learning lasts throughout their lifetimes. Teachers, parents and the community all benefit from having a small school in the neighbourhood.

Kathleen Cotton (1996) noted:

“Much school consolidation has been based on the beliefs that larger schools are less expensive to operate and have higher-quality curricula than small schools. Research has demonstrated, however, that neither of these assertions is necessarily true.”

Communities with schools like the Yarker Family School are vibrant, desirable places to live where there is the sound of children playing during recess and before and after school. Without this the quality of life in Yarker would be significant lower and living here would be very depressing. The community has a great deal to offer the school and the school contributes greatly to the well being of the community.

The Yarker Family School’s achievements are exemplary. It deserves to be encouraged, supported and respected by the Limestone District School Board.

## **Recommendations for the Limestone Board of Education**

- sustain existing small schools especially in areas like Stone Mills Township where the annual income is lower than the provincial average (census statistics)
- devote provincial grant money to maintaining small schools in good condition
- acknowledge and design for a maximum school size that retains the close family atmosphere and high scholastic achievement of a small school
- when considering the future of a school, consider socio-economic status as well as age of the building, number of students, scholastic achievement, student/teacher ratio, etc.
- support schools in small communities where there is only one school
- **prepare and implement a rural schools policy that acknowledges and accommodates the significant differences between rural and urban life and the challenges faced by rural students**

## References

Dr Allan C Lauzon and Danielle Leahy: Rural Schools and Educational Reform: Should We keep Rural Schools Open? A Review of the Literature, School of Rural Extension Studies, University of Guelph, Guelph, Ontario

Diane Weaver Dunne: Are Schools Better Schools? available at [http://www.educationworld.com/a\\_issues/issues108.shtml](http://www.educationworld.com/a_issues/issues108.shtml)

Martin Saiz, Economies of Scale and Large Classes, 2014, available at [http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/HE/t-SF\\_Saiz.pdf](http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/HE/t-SF_Saiz.pdf)

Small Versus Large Schools: The Truth About Equity, Cost, and Diversity of Programming in Small and Large Schools by Stuart R Grauer, Ed.D. Inquiries addressed to [nfo@smallschoolscoalition.com](mailto:nfo@smallschoolscoalition.com)

Recognising the good of small schools from The Guardian Newspaper by Mike Baker, 22 January 2008

Bruce O. Barker, Source: ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools Las Cruces NM. The Advantages of Small Schools. ERIC Digests available at <https://www.ericdigests.org/pre-923/small.htm>.

Gina Jordan, Why Small Schools Might Be Better For Students Than Small Classes, January 5, 2015.

Holly Epstein Ojalvo writing for the New York Times: Are Small Schools More Effective Than Large Schools? January 26, 2010, from [https://learning.blogs.nytimes.com/2010/01/26/does-school-size-matter/comment-page-3/?\\_r=0](https://learning.blogs.nytimes.com/2010/01/26/does-school-size-matter/comment-page-3/?_r=0)

Valerie Lee and Susanna Loeb, School Size in Chicago Elementary Schools: Effects on Teachers' Attitudes and Students' Achievement, Spring 2000

Kathleen Cotton, School Size, School Climate and Student Performance, May 1996

Beth Spence, Small Schools Why they provide the best education for low-income children, based on research of Dr Craig Howley and Dr Robert Bickel, 2000

Appendix A							
EQAO - Education Quality and Accountability Assessment							
Grade 3 Assessment (2014-2016 Results)							
EQAO Rank			Students	Reading	Writing	Math	My Avg
1	Yarker FS	Yarker	10	100%	95%	71%	88.7%
2	Selby PS	Selby	18	86%	88%	74%	82.7%
3	Lancaster Drive PS	Kingston	35	82%	84%	81%	82.3%
4	Winston Churchill PS	Kingston	20	80%	82%	78%	80.0%
5	Truedell PS	Kingston	17	78%	85%	75%	79.3%
6	JR Henderson PS	Kingston	61	78%	79%	72%	76.3%
7	Cataraqui Woods ES	Kingston	40	73%	88%	60%	73.7%
8	Harrowsmith PS	Harrowsmith	34	73%	87%	60%	73.3%
9	Bath PS	Bath	32	74%	78%	66%	72.7%
10	Southview PS	Napanee	68	68%	79%	70%	72.3%
11	Perth Road PS	Perth Road	26	79%	67%	68%	71.3%
12	Elginburg&Dist PS	Elginburg	32	76%	71%	64%	70.3%
13	Sydenham PS	Kingston	13	78%	78%	52%	69.3%
14	Rideau PS	Kingston	49	72%	70%	66%	69.3%
15	Bayridge PS	Kingston	34	70%	73%	63%	68.7%
16	Lord Strathcona PS	Kingston	20	65%	70%	67%	67.3%
17	Central PS	Kingston	21	77%	69%	54%	66.7%
18	Glenburnie PS	Glenburnie	18	60%	79%	58%	65.7%
19	RG Sinclair Mem PS	Kingston	27	69%	69%	58%	65.3%
20	Centreville PS	Centreville	10	74%	65%	57%	65.3%
21	Sir JA Macdonald PS	Kingston	94	66%	69%	58%	64.3%
22	Tamworth ES	Tamworth	13	64%	71%	57%	64.0%
23	Polson Park PS	Kingston	51	69%	66%	56%	63.7%
24	Amherstview PS	Amherstview	62	69%	71%	48%	62.7%
25	Storrington PS	Battersea	19	69%	67%	51%	62.3%
26	WJ Holsgrove PS	Westbrook	18	63%	67%	56%	62.0%
27	Rideau Heights PS	Kingston	22	69%	73%	44%	62.0%
28	Loughborough PS	Sydenham	44	57%	74%	52%	61.0%
29	Land O'Lakes PS	Mountain Grove	17	56%	68%	50%	58.0%
30	Welborne Ave PS	Kingston	57	55%	59%	54%	56.0%
31	Joyceville PS	Joyceville	21	66%	58%	42%	55.3%
32	JG Simcoe PS	Kingston	19	59%	62%	35%	52.0%
33	Enterprise ES	Enterprise	15	48%	65%	39%	50.7%
34	N Addington EC	Cloyne	17	51%	57%	43%	50.3%
35	Centennial PS	Kingston	39	46%	63%	42%	50.3%
36	Granite Ridge EC-E	Sharbot Lake	24	58%	62%	28%	49.3%
37	Collins Bay PS	Kingston	10	50%	42%	50%	47.3%
38	Prince Charles PS	Verona	21	44%	46%	51%	47.0%
39	Odessa PS	Odessa	37	43%	49%	47%	46.3%
40	Fairfield ES	Amherstview	27	42%	51%	37%	43.3%
41	Newburgh PS	Newburgh	16	53%	43%	33%	43.0%
42	The Prince Charles S	Napanee	33	51%	38%	36%	41.7%
43	Frontenac PS	Kingston	26	33%	39%	13%	28.3%
			Total	1287		Avg	62.4%



## Appendix B

# The Human Cost<sup>1</sup>

Some of West Virginia's smallest residents often pay an extremely high price for decisions made in urban centers far from the winding back roads where the children live and go to school.

Students who testified at public hearings sponsored by Challenge WV in the fall of 1999 described in excruciating and painful detail the long bus rides that left them so tired they weren't able to take the advanced classes that were to be their reward. They talked about loss of family time and the inability to participate in extracurricular activities, about the hours of their lives wasted on buses.

Dr. Howley says the factors cited by parents fighting to keep community schools **really are** the factors that make small schools better for low-income children. "Increased school size has negative effects upon students participation, satisfaction and attendance, and adversely affects the school climate and a student's ability to identify with the school and its activities," he said.

A teacher who spent much of her career in a small elementary school said, "In a small community, everyone is related to everyone else. Kinship goes a long way toward eliminating a lot of socioeconomic and class issues."

A principal who oversaw the closing of two small elementary schools said she felt like she was losing family members when the schools closed. "The parents worked well together and the teachers did," she said. "It was just like a family working together – a village raising children."

Another teacher commented, "Any time you consolidate, parents get left out because they quit coming to PTA and they lose interest in the school because it's so far away and they feel powerless. Poor people get hit hardest by consolidation. They lose their voice."

Former Calhoun County school board member Deirdre Purdy told the story of tiny Nebo School in Clay County, where, despite the poverty of the community, 100 percent of parents participated in PTA and raised approximately \$7,000 each year to support the school. When Nebo was closed, only two parents continued their involvement with the school where their kids were sent.

"To urban administrators, moving a school ten or fifteen miles down the road may seem a minor adjustment on the state map," said Purdy. "Poor parents with worn-out cars, welfare mothers with more kids at home, grandparents and proud neighbors can get to the community school for the talent show or the kindergarten graduation, but they cannot get ten or fifteen miles down winding two-lane roads or over mountains. Parental and community involvement in the schools drops precipitously."

A Lincoln County parent whose community school was closed put it this way, "Everything was centered around the school. After the school was taken out, you could tell a big difference. Then we were a community that got together. Now we're just people who live along the same road. We don't even see each other much."

---

<sup>1</sup> Extracted from "Small Schools, Why they provide the best education for low-income children by Beth Spence based on the research of Dr Craig Howley and Dr Robert Bickel 2000

## Appendix C

This is an article written by Gail Knowles at [gknowles@eastlink.ca](mailto:gknowles@eastlink.ca) on March 16, 2017 and published by The Scoop in it's April/May 2017 edition

### Why is the Yarker Family School under threat of possible closure?

Ever wonder why the Yarker Family School and other small schools in rural hamlets are chosen for possible closure by school boards? Part of the reason might be it's low Facility Condition Index (FCI).

Besides all of the school's other wonderful attributes, the Yarker Family School (within the Limestone District School Board family of schools) has a very low FCI of 20%, which is good. It means the school is in relatively good shape and has a considerable life expectancy ahead of it. This percentage is one of the lowest in the Limestone District School Board's inventory of elementary schools.

The FCI is based on the Ministry's Condition Assessment which is done every five years. Details about the school are available on the Ministry of Education's website at [http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/renewal\\_data.html](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/renewal_data.html)

Yarker Family School's Facility Condition Index is low, due largely to the investments made in the Yarker Library (2012) and the Full Time Kindergarten (2014). There are many larger schools with much higher FCI numbers which are not being considered for closure (Odessa 41%, Amherstview 43%, Prince Charles 48%).

The Facility Condition Index is calculated by dividing a school's 5 Year Renewal Cost by its Replacement Cost. In the case of the Yarker Family School, the Facility Condition Index is 20% (5 Year Renewal Cost of \$404,219 / Replacement Cost of \$2,014,789).

Renewal Needs are expenses for a school's critical repairs and includes a wish list of expenditures that would bring a school up to standard. The Ministry's Condition Assessment Program is linked directly to funding through various renewal grants. When a school is closed, the 5 year renewal costs disappear.

So, why would the board want to close a school with an FCI of only 20% and 5 year renewal costs of only \$404,219? It all comes down to the province's various capital funding programs.

When school boards apply for capital funding, more money is forthcoming from the province if the cost of renewing their schools is high. If a school board closes a school that has few operational needs and is inexpensive to maintain, the board's overall renewal needs are driven up. Schools that are in poor shape that need expensive repairs are kept open to bolster the board's funding application.

School boards across this province are desperate to reduce their capital renewal backlogs. The LDSB renewal backlog is estimated to be in the \$350 million range. Is this why Yarker Family School is targeted to be closed? Because the YFS does not offer enough of a financial incentive to take a bite out of the board's backlog?

Wouldn't it make better financial sense to keep newer schools open with fewer maintenance issues than the other way around? Might reduce the LDSB's large renewal backlog too.

The use of capital funding to clear up the renewal backlog was confirmed at the regular LDSB meeting of January 11, 2017. "In response to a question, Manager [of Facility Services] Fowler clarified that Renewal Funding is money received by school boards on an annual basis for regular maintenance, capital items or operational needs. SCI [School Condition Improvement] funding is additional money specifically to deal with the backlog of major renovations and replacement needs."

Not only would saving schools that are in reasonable good condition like the ones in Stone Mills Township be a better use of taxpayer dollars, our children could continue to receive a good education close to home, fully supported by their teachers, parents, volunteers and the community.

We need to work together to change the current Harris-era capital renewal funding guidelines that reward school boards that close schools with few maintenance issues to keep their renewal costs high. The Ministry may have added money to the pot but the rules haven't been changed. Until they do, schools in good condition will continue to be targeted for possible closure.

If you would like to voice your opinion, send as many letters and emails to the Premier, the Minister of Education and your member of parliament as you can, post to their Facebook pages, ask Trustees for their support and place phone calls. Our childrens' future depends on keeping our local schools open, and that depends on you.

## Appendix D

One parent's experience with a school closure:

Lyndsay Gazzard posted in Ontario Alliance Against School Closures.



### Lyndsay Gazzard

14 March 2017 at 17:30

Following closure of your local school and consolidation into another school, already at capacity, the school board in Niagara promised the following upgrades for the impacted children.

1. More extra curricular activities - that turned out to be a lie based on lack of teachers willing to supervise.
2. More access to sports programs - that was also a lie as only those kids who made the team were able to play. No "b" teams were created due to lack of teacher supervision.
3. A safe environment - that was lie..my child was bullied almost immediately and throughout her time there. She was pushed to the ground and grass shoved down her throat by a gang of boys.
4. A happy future...that's the worst lie...my child developed anxiety and needed counselling..but couldn't get access to it consistently at the school...the school counsellors left and took months to be replaced. The counsellor said she couldn't help her and recommended the school social worker ..then the social worker left.
5. My child was so anxious she started pulling her hair out. Her hair...she's 10.

Large schools damage the mental health of our kids and I know I'm not alone. Please message me if you've had similar experiences. Let's join forces and let the MoE what a good job they are doing.



## Micro-schools

### **What the future of school might look like — as long as we don't treat it like a silver bullet**

I'm not the first person to talk about micro-schools. Small, human-scale schools have served as the preferred choice for most folks throughout the [history of schooling](#). Unfortunately, industrial-age principles of scale efficiency and standardization introduced in the late 19th and early 20th century have completely overwhelmed common notions of what school should be. Most of us take it as given that schools are supposed to be big, impersonal and unable to respond nimbly to individual learner needs.

Now, listen. Before you go off and yell it from the roof tops that *this* is the silver bullet we've been waiting for, just chill. It's not. There are no silver bullets in this work. I like micro-schooling precisely because it constrains us, it forces us to do small batch testing of new ideas, gets us closer to kids and families.

### **The intensely personal scale of micro-schooling reminds us that the work of educating the future of our democracy is perfectly imperfect, beautifully messy work.**

Lurching after magical, infinitely scalable, perfectly measurable silver-bullet solutions ignores the human work that educating is.

Here's my *working* definition of micro-schooling in 2014 and why I think we should build more of them.

#### **1. Modern micro-schools serve less than 153.5 kids.**

Psychologist Robin Dunbar's research suggests that most humans can't manage more than about 150 friendships. The story behind how he came up with [Dunbar's number](#) is fascinating. Read about it if you have a chance. In my experience starting more than 100 schools, I think this number makes sense. When a school gets beyond about 150 kids, it becomes very difficult for adults to keep track of individual students.

Micro-schools embrace this constraint and stay small. The logic behind making schools bigger—to reduce fixed costs and/or diversify teacher expertise had merit 100 years ago when access to information and expertise were more costly. But as the cost of high-quality curriculum moves quickly



towards zero, the costs of large schools are starting to outweigh their benefits.

## **2. Modern micro-schools let students drive a majority of what happens during the school day.**

While there are many ways to structure a micro-school, a critical component is a daily schedule that allows students to determine how they spend their time. I think this is critically important because children when they grow into adults they will not have someone telling them what to do everyday. This is certainly the case in college.

Yet many college prep schools are actually quite bad at strengthening a student's ability to manage themselves in the absence of structure. Yes, this is complicated. Many students need structure to build foundations, but micro-schools have a bias towards loosening the reigns early to ensure that kids learn how to direct, pace and control themselves.

## **3. Modern micro-school teachers don't do all the teaching; they manage the quality of learning in many channels.**

While the traditional debate about teaching can sometimes degenerate to the virtues of "Sage on the stage" v. "Guide on the side," a great micro-school requires teachers to manage a wide variety of learning styles. Here's an example of the ways a student might be able to learn something in a good micro-school:

1. **One teacher to many.** Yes, I think you could see [Doug-Lemov-style](#) teaching techniques in a micro-school.
2. **One teacher to a few students.** Small groups. Flexibility in the schedule provides many more genuine opportunities to teach small groups when they need or want it.
3. **Parent to student.** Some micro-schools form from home-schooling parents who realize they can do more together, and great ones integrate this channel as a great to teach content.
4. **Software to student.** If you haven't seen what [Khan Academy](#) is doing to help kids learn on their own, you should. Its free. Great micro-schools do much more than [blended learning](#). With no obsolete model to break free from, there's nothing really to "blend. " Instead, learning technologies are presented as a vital tools for kids to drive their own learning, more like how we look at Microsoft Office and other



productivity tools, core to the work than clever tricks for teachers to squeeze more efficiency out of an otherwise rigid school day.

5. **Tutors.** Do you know [MATCH Education](#)? You should. Their tutors do more before 9 AM than some teachers do all day.
6. **Student to student (one on one).** Below I suggest Acton Academy as a great example of a micro-school. They've managed to pair kids up as running partners. And it works. Kids really take this buddy-system-on-steroids role seriously, and it gives the school another powerful vehicle to let learning happen.
7. **Student to student (one to many).** I want to find some high-schoolers who hack Lemov's Teach Like a Champion to work for kids. Kids teaching kids, with the same amount of rigor applied to technique as Doug requires of adult teachers. I think micro-schools can leverage this method in powerful ways that make them far more potent learning environments.

#### **4. Modern micro-schools capture data on progress regardless of how a student learns something.**

What makes a modern micro-school different from a 19th century, one-room schoolhouse is that old school schools only had a few ways to teach — certainly no software, no tutors, and probably less structure around student to student learning. In a modern micro-school, there are ways to get good data from each of these venues. And the great micro-school of the future will lean on well-designed software to help adults evaluate where each kid is learning. I haven't seen any school get this really right, but the work we hear some are doing suggests that getting this right could provide a major boost to the effectiveness of the modern micro-school.

### **3 micro-schools**

1. [KIPP, 1994](#). *While KIPP today doesn't provide the flexibility at all grade levels to qualify as a strong example of a micro-school, the first iteration of the program was pretty close.* Mike Feinberg and Dave Levin started KIPP as an experiment in a Houston classroom, one that many parents and kids were willing to try. Dear, reformers and funders committed to only "scaling what works," Someone had to have the guts to try the stuff "that works today." If you're only investing in "what works" and refuse to invest in smart, small batch tests of new ideas that will reveal the next thing worth scaling, you're doing it wrong. *Read more about how KIPP got started in Jay Mathews' [Work Hard. Be Nice. : How Two Inspired Teachers Created the Most Promising Schools in America](#).*



2. [Acton Academy](#). Jeff and Laura Sandefer have two rules for learning guides at Acton — they're not called teachers: 1. No shaming children. 2. Don't answer questions. This fidelity to the socratic approach has created one of the most unique and inspiring school cultures I've seen. Students own their own learning at such deep levels at Acton, that the school is able to do much more learning with far fewer teachers than other schools. Jeff wrote the forward to a great resource for people interested in this topic: *Clark Aldrich's [Unschooling Rules](#)*.
3. [AltSchool](#). Its still early here, and the software backbone they're building might be a more important piece of the puzzle than the school itself, but I'm excited to see what we learn from this bay area shop. I hope the massive amount of money they raised doesn't discourage others. You don't need \$33M to start a micro-school. Please don't let that number discourage you.

### **Micro-schools: a good way to make more small bets.**

I think we need to do less bet-the-farm education reform in our country. All-in is great for poker, but it rarely teaches us much new in the effort to make schools better. [Race to the Top](#) is a good example that's had some great wins, but deserves some critique — we haven't learned much about better ways to drive change from the effort; in fact, many would say it discouraged any new ideas that weren't on the list of approved ideas.

If our problem was broken schools, then big bets on effective repairs might have more merit. But the real issue with schools is that our current notion of what school should do for our society is not in line with the model we've got.

Obsolescence — not brokenness — is the problem. We need to explore entirely new methods of organizing our schools, distilling what the most important role for schools might be instead of heaping ever more requirements on an old model.

Micro-schools help us learn more about the future of school faster by reducing variables and bringing us closer to our users — parents and kids.

While many recent micro-school models have come to life as home-schooling parents join forces, there's a place for this model taking hold within any existing school — public, private, wealthy neighbourhood, poor neighbourhood.

We need more people trying new ideas in education. Micro-schools are one way.

Our kids need us taking many more [little bets](#) on better schooling. Micro-school are one way. There are many [other ways](#), too.

Micro-school or not, I dare you to try something.

*Matt Candler is founder of [4.0 Schools](#), an early-stage, non-profit education incubator training entrepreneurs to launch better schools and learning tools, including micro-schools. You can find him at [@mcandler](#). You can apply to get free help starting your own micro-school or learning tool at [4pt0.org](#).*

# Economies of Scale and Large Classes

*by Martin Saiz*

**M**aking classes larger saves money—and public universities across the country have found it a useful strategy to balance their budgets after decades of state funding cuts and increases to infrastructure costs.

Where I teach, in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences at California State University, Northridge (CSUN), student to faculty ratios have increased by 25 percent since 2008.<sup>1</sup> Across CSUN, those ratios have increased 11.5 percent since 2000, and beyond our campus, across all 23 universities of the CSU system, they increased by 9.5 percent between 2007 and 2011.<sup>2</sup>

While these larger classes have helped provide fiscal stability and flexibility to CSUN, the benefits have not been distributed equally among the stakeholders in the university. Administrators may capture the economies of increasing returns to scale, and this strategy may work for them and their budgets, but it also exposes where power lies within the university. Larger class sizes and higher student to faculty ratios provide large benefits to administrators; some benefits to faculty; but only few, if any, benefits to students.

This trend and its consequences for students are not specific to CSUN, nor the large public institutions of California, but are symptomatic of the changes occurring in higher education across the nation.

## LEARNING FROM BUDWEISER: MAKING EFFICIENT CONTAINERS FOR EDUCATION

Considered in terms of production, higher education is not much different

---

*Martin Saiz is a professor of political science at California State University, Northridge, who writes extensively on issues of urban politics, local political parties, economic development, and the effects of voting on public policy. He is the author of Local Parties in Political and Organizational Perspective, and his articles have appeared in various journals, including the Journal of Politics, Urban Affairs Review, Political Research Quarterly, and The Journal of Urban Affairs.*



from other industries. Concentrating a lot of activity in a small area generates efficiencies. In a single day, in one facility, students attend classes in a variety of disciplines, collaborate with peers, eat, study, and exercise. Administrators, staff, and faculty do much the same. This concentration of activity generates more than convenience and sharing—it permits economies of scale. To serve each student costs less when more is done for many in close proximity. In just a few years, our students can amass a number of courses across multiple disciplines to claim a liberal college education—a wide range of understanding about the world, as well as in-depth knowledge about a specific field of study.

---

*Education has much in common with brewing and bottling, industries where containers are a significant cost. In education, the container is the classroom.*

In some cases universities can take advantage of increasing returns to scale (a special case of economies of scale). Here, education has much in common with brewing and bottling, industries where containers are a significant cost. By analogy, in higher education, the container is the classroom. Assuming the classroom is square, the output is roughly proportional to the square of the length of its sides. If a room has a capacity of 40 students, the maximum yearly output will be limited by the number of times the university can use that classroom annually. The inputs (drywall, plaster, steel, etc.) depend on the length of the classroom perimeter. More specifically, a 50 by 50 foot classroom with a capacity of 40 requires 200 linear feet of wall, while a 50 by 100 foot classroom with a capacity of 80 students requires only 300 linear feet of wall to give the same amount of space per student. Similarly, a 100 by 100 foot classroom will accommodate 160 students with only 400 linear feet of built wall. The ratio of students to walls for the three examples are five feet of wall per student for the 40 student classroom, 3.75 feet of wall for the 80 student classroom, and 2.5 feet of wall per student for the 160 student classroom. Each time we double the number of students we only need to increase the size of our container by two-thirds. Because over a semester's time the number of students served depends on the combined length of walls of the classrooms, larger classrooms generate increasing economies of scale and reduce per-student costs.

Before 2000, CSUN had only two rooms with capacities of more than 100. Since then, the university has built six additional large-capacity rooms; increasing the university's large classroom capacity by 1,293 seats. This represents a capacity of 30,360 students per semester in large lecture halls!<sup>3</sup> In the meantime, in some other classrooms, separating walls have been torn down, turning small rooms into larger rooms, and increasing their capacities from 40 to 80.

Other economies of scale associated with larger class sizes are even more impressive. A double-sized “smart” classroom needs only one computer, projector, monitor, screen, and data port, instead of the two required for two single-sized classrooms. Most importantly, a double-size classroom has only one instructor. Because each room is used for multiple classes per day, an institution like CSUN can save more than \$100,000 per semester in faculty salaries across the life of each doubled classroom.<sup>4</sup> If all of our classrooms were doubled, CSUN also could eliminate half the classroom computers, projectors, monitors, screens, data ports, and faculty and still produce the same outputs. Theoretically, a university could

---

*You would think that professors would howl at the prospect of having more students in their classes. In fact, most have not complained until recently.*

increase its returns to scale until classrooms reach the size of stadiums. Only issues of congestion and demand may limit the university’s ability to lower costs this way. Consequently, administrators tend to increase class sizes during times of fiscal stress.

#### SURVIVING LARGER CLASSES: WHAT FACULTY DO

You would think that professors would howl at the prospect of having more students in their classes. In fact, most faculty in my department have not complained until recently. Our department and others in our college embraced large classes, especially when they came with reductions in course loads. Our dean, being a clever administrator, offered a valuable incentive to any faculty member willing to teach large classes. Classes with enrollments larger than 120 students would count for two classes (or six teaching units). Those with enrollments larger than 180 would count for three (nine units) and any class above 220 would cover one faculty member’s entire required teaching load of four classes (12 units) per semester. The capacities of large classrooms vary across campus, but the effective ratio of students to teaching units was about 20:1, or about 60 students per three units. For comparison, the average class of 40 students comes with a teaching credit of three units or a ratio of students to teaching units of about 13:1. For faculty teaching in the large classrooms, our dean effectively increased the student to faculty workload ratios by about 65 percent.

Faculty in the Political Science department rationalized that by delivering introductory courses for non-majors in large classes we could lavish attention on our majors in smaller classes. In the first years faculty were offered student assistants in the large sections to help with administrative tasks like proctoring exams,

taking attendance, running exam forms, and recording grades. Unfortunately, the funding for student assistants lasted only two years and this year the number of units faculty receive for the very large classrooms was dropped from 12 to nine, raising the ratio of students to teaching units to about 26:1 or about 78 students per three units. Our dean has effectively increased faculty workload by 100 percent in the largest classrooms. Still, some faculty covet the opportunity to teach the large classes. Why?

Again, the reasons have to do with increasing returns to scale. To prepare a lecture for 100 or 200 students takes no longer than to prepare one for 10.

---

*Our dean has effectively increased faculty workload by 100 percent in the largest classrooms. Still, some faculty covet the opportunity to teach large classes.*

Similarly, to write an exam or prepare a syllabus for a big class takes no longer than to do the same for a small one. Additional students may even help class dynamics if they ask good questions or offer helpful comments. Some adjustments need to be made; mostly in lecturing style. Teaching large classes requires more performance with exaggerated vocal inflections and gestures. Developing a series of media clips and learning a few jokes also helps. Of course, students can be disruptive and ask silly questions, and the more students there are in a class, the more likely it is that a few of them will be.

But not all things come with economies of scale; some tasks require individual attention. Most obviously, the time it takes to grade student performance increases proportionately with the number of students enrolled in each class. Some assessment tools like multiple choice exams take only minutes, if scored by machine, but essay questions need to be deciphered individually by hand (or eye and mind). Indeed, as the examples below show, writing assignments of almost any length are impossible in large classes.

Two classes I have taught recently illustrate the dramatic effect that assignments and grading have on workload. My class with 231 students had no writing assignments while the one with 43 students had a series of weekly essays for the students to write and for me to grade. Even with more than five times the number of students, the large class was actually less work. The large class involved developing and giving 27 lectures, and writing and grading 27 daily quizzes, two midterms, and a final exam. Other tasks included meeting individually with students and answering their emails. My smaller class, which was classified as an upper-division general education course, required that I assign writing amounting to a minimum of 2,500 words per student. Over the semester, this equals about 10 pages of writing per student (double-spaced with citations and references) or about 430 pages of grading for me, not including the required re-writes and re-grading

as per university standards. I believe that short assignments develop better writing skills so I spread the 2,500 words across 13 weekly assignments of 200 words each. Grading is tedious labor so I do not dwell on these essays. I spend about five minutes on each: reading, correcting grammar and spelling, checking documentation, assessing the substantive content, writing a few comments, and determining the grade. Even this cursory effort adds up to about four hours per week, again, not including re-writes and re-grading. Add in three hours per week of in-class teaching and about one hour for everything else (class preparation, writing and grading quizzes and exams, and answering emails), and the total reaches eight hours per

---

*If I added a modest writing requirement to my large class, the workload would increase proportionately. I would have to grade about 575,000 words.*

week for this one small class. If I added this modest writing requirement to my large class, the workload would increase proportionately. I would have to grade about 575,000 words, or more than 2,300 pages during the semester.

To be clear, I do not consider the writing requirement unreasonable for small classes and the 43 students I have in the smaller class seems to be the limit for a single class. I also believe that it is critical that we develop the writing abilities of our students. Many faculty members find it impossible to teach meaningful classes without including writing assignments, and feel that not doing so would undermine the discipline and their sense of professionalism. Still, I also have colleagues who are assigned 80 student classes with the same 2,500-words-per-student writing requirements and are only given credit for teaching one class. This increases their workload by about 50 percent. Thus, I am grateful to be assigned a large class where teaching writing is considered impossible, or at least too onerous. This gives me license to take advantage of economies of scale and some time to devote to my research and service responsibilities. In sum, large classes are not a problem per se from the perspective of many instructors. Workload depends as much on how much attention is required for each student as well as the numbers in each class.

#### THE BENEFITS OF CLASS SIZES FOR STUDENTS: WHAT THE EVIDENCE TELLS US

Students, on the other hand, get few advantages from large classes. They may gain opportunities to learn from the few truly brilliant professors, and the presence of other students listening silently to a lecture doesn't detract from their learning in the same room. Of course, distractions caused by cellphones or from students multitasking on laptops increase with the size of the class. Over the past few years, more students seem to feel free to come to class late and leave early, and students

distract themselves by texting or surfing (on the Internet) during class; all these things are easier to get away with in large classes. And, while a professor can police students' distracting behavior, controlling disturbances is itself a distraction that increases with size. Other "benefits" to students are dubious from an educational standpoint: not having to speak up or write papers; the increased likelihood of having close friends in class; and the opportunity to remain anonymous and free ride on the efforts of others.

Students benefit more from smaller classes. Large classes have less class time per student—more students means more questions and answering more questions

---

*The most important research question of all asks if lower grades or less learning is associated with larger classes — and often, the answer has been yes.*

takes time away from presentations. Students may also be reluctant to ask questions in big settings and less time is available per student for discussions. Because the professor's voice is the only one amplified in a large class, students may not be able to hear the questions asked by other students and often do not fully understand the answer given in class. Instructors also have less time per student during office hours.

These observations are reinforced by copious amounts of empirical evidence that suggests that large classes are characterized by:

- increased reliance on lectures as a method of instruction;<sup>5</sup>
- less instructor-student interaction;<sup>6</sup>
- less student involvement in classes;<sup>7</sup>
- less feedback from faculty;<sup>8</sup>
- reduced breadth and depth in course assignments,<sup>9</sup> assessments,<sup>10</sup> and writing assignments;<sup>11</sup>
- reduced student satisfaction with larger classes<sup>12</sup>
- lower attendance;<sup>13</sup>
- less civility;<sup>14</sup>
- more cheating;<sup>15</sup>
- declining student evaluations of professors;<sup>16</sup>
- significant negative correlations between class size and grades;<sup>17</sup>
- higher drop-out rates; and<sup>18</sup>
- decreased student learning.<sup>19</sup>

The most important research question asks if lower grades or less learning is associated with larger classes—and, in many studies, the answer has been yes. From 1989, when Hopkins and Hahn found that students enrolled in smaller sec-



tions had higher GPAs, to 2001, when Keil and Partell found that the probability of a freshman receiving an A in a small class at Binghamton University was 2.4 times higher than their peer enrolled in a much larger lecture class, the evidence is clear.<sup>20</sup> In 2012, my colleague at CSUN, Bettina Huber, found that GPAs decrease as class sizes increase.<sup>21</sup> In particular, sections with more than 50 students “appear to be particularly deleterious for students enrolled in lower-division classes.”

This point about lower-division classes is particularly important, as we know that more than half of all students who withdraw from college do so in their first year,<sup>22</sup> when they are most likely to be enrolled in classes of 100 or more stu-

---

*In particular, sessions with more than 50 students  
“appear to be particularly deleterious for students in  
lower-division classes.”*


dents.<sup>23</sup> At CSUN, the numbers confirm that first- and second-year students are being herded into large classes. In the College of Social and Behavioral Science, the increases in lower division classes have been dramatic—from an already high 50.4 students per class, on average, in 2008, to 69.9 students in 2012. Meanwhile, over the same period, CSUN’s College of Business and Economics increased their lower division classes from 44.9 to 56 students.<sup>24</sup> Campuswide, average student-to-faculty ratios in lower division classes are almost twice as large as those for upper division classes, and about 4.5 times bigger than graduate courses.<sup>25</sup> This is particularly unfortunate because an increasing number of students entering CSUN lack sufficient skills in reading, writing, and mathematics, and need individualized attention to diagnose and overcome these deficits.<sup>26</sup>

But perhaps the most convincing evidence around the power of small class sizes comes from a large five-year study in a leading university in the United Kingdom following several years of budget cuts and corresponding increases in class sizes.<sup>27</sup> Academic achievement was measured by observing student performance on year-end exams. The sample covered 10,873 students enrolled full-time between 1999 and 2004 in 626 different courses in 23 academic departments offering 125 degree programs. The large sample allowed researchers to compare the same student’s performance across large and small classes for a total of 40,851 observations. They were also able to control for a wide range of student and faculty effects. Class size did not vary with measures of student wealth or other demographic characteristics. They observed the same faculty member teaching different class sizes and found no evidence that departments assigned faculty of differing quality to different class sizes. In the end they found that, all else being equal, effect of class size on student performance was negative; students do worse in bigger classes.

## CONCLUSION: MORE EDUCATIONAL BOTTLING?

After decades of effort around college access, the U.S. does see more students going to college, but now the attention of policymakers is shifting to other metrics of progress, like retention and graduation rates. The research reviewed above shows that these are adversely affected by larger class sizes. More troubling is a recent study that concluded that most college graduates are learning little during their years in college. This study assessed the education, using a standard measure of learning, over a four-year period for several thousand students in more than two dozen institutions.<sup>28</sup> The researchers found that after two years in college almost 50 percent of students could not demonstrate any gain in critical thinking, complex reasoning and writing, and more than one third could not show any improvement after four years. They also found that many college courses lacked rigor: specifically, during a given semester, one third of students did not have a course requiring them to read more than 40 pages per week and half had no course that required more than 20 pages of writing. Time spent studying has dropped by 50 percent since 1960.

I find this study distressing, but I must admit its findings don't surprise me. My workload, as measured by the number of students I teach, has increased incrementally for 22 years. The fall semester of 2012, when I was assigned 267 students in three classes, was the high point (or low point, depending on one's perspective). Every increase in the number of students in my classes requires that I must cut back the number, length, and rigor of assignments—otherwise, I couldn't possibly keep up with the grading. My supervisors understand this and allow me to make such adjustments based on the size of my classes. When our department expressed concern over the rising class sizes coexisting with intensive writing requirements, our associate dean told us that we were spending too much time correcting our students' writing. No wonder students show little improvement in higher-level skills such as critical thinking, complex reasoning, and writing.

For students, larger classes seem to offer little. But if administrators are rewarded for employing economies of scale, we are likely to see more of the same. Indeed, instituting massive online courses becomes even more tempting because they do not require sizable capital expenditures and class sizes can be almost limitless. Of course, access to the institution has little meaning if the quality of education is poor. 

## ENDNOTES

1. B. Huber, "CSUN by the Numbers."
2. California Faculty Association, "Summary of Changes in CSU Student to Faculty Ratios: 2007 to 2011."
3. Large lecture hall capacity is assumed at full capacity, eight times per day for Monday through Thursday schedules, four times per day Fridays and Saturdays.
4. Calculation based on part-time faculty cost of \$5,000 per three-unit class (2012 dollars). Classroom use is assumed at eight times per day for Monday through Thursday schedules, four

times per day Fridays and Saturdays.

5. W. McKeachie, "Class Size, Large Classes, and Multiple Sections," pp. 24-27.
6. J. L. Ratcliff, "What They Took and What They Learned: Learning From Assessment and Transcript Analysis"; and G. Kuh, J. Schuh and Whitt & Associates, *Involving*.
7. E. Stones, "Students' Attitudes Toward the Size of Teaching Groups"; D. Karp and W. Yoels, "The College Classroom: Some Observations on the Meanings of Student Participation"; D. H. Wulff, J. D. Nyquist, and R. D. Abbott, "Students' Perceptions of Large Classes"; and P. A. Fassinger, "Professors' and Students' Perception of Why Students Participate in Class."
8. E. Carbone and J. Greenberg, "Teaching Large Classes: Unpacking the Problem and Responding Creatively," pp. 311-96.
9. D. P. Hoyt and S. Perera "Teaching Approach, Instructional Objectives, and Learning."
10. J. L. Ratcliff, "What They Took and What They Learned."
11. K. Scouller, "The Influence of Assessment Method on Students' Learning Approaches: Multiple Choice Question Examination Versus Assignment Essay," pp. 453-72.
12. W. McKeachie, "Class Size, Large Classes, and Multiple Sections"; and E. Carbone and J. Greenberg, "Teaching Large Classes."
13. J. L. Cooper and P. Robinson, "The Argument for Making Large Classes Seem Small," pp. 5-16.
14. E. Carbone, "Students Behaving Badly in Large Classes," pp. 35-43.
15. M. D. Sorcinelli, "Dealing With Troublesome Behaviors in the Classroom," in *Handbook of College Teaching: Theory and Application*; M. D. Sorcinelli, "Promoting Civility in Large Classes"; and M. J. Weimer, *Teaching Large Classes Well: New Directions for Teaching and Learning*, no. 32.
16. Schnell in B. O. Barefoot, *Exploring the Evidence: Reporting Outcomes of Freshman Seminars*, Monograph no. 11.
17. J. L. Franklin and M. Theall, "Grade Inflation and Student Ratings: A Closer Look."
18. H. Ashar and R. Skenes, "Can Tinto's Student Departure Model Be Applied to Nontraditional Students?" pp. 90-100.
19. W. E. Becker and J. R. Powers, "Student Performance, Attrition, and Class Size Given Missing Student Data"; and O. Bandiera, V. Larcinese, and I. Rasul, "Heterogeneous Class Size Effects: New Evidence from a Panel of University Students."
20. Hopkins and Hahn, cited in P. P. Fidler and M. S. Hunter, "How Seminars Enhance Student Success," in *The Freshman Year Experience*; J. Keil, and P. J. Partell, "The Effect of Class Size on Student Performance and Retention at Binghamton University." See also R. J. Light, *Making The Most of College: Students Speak Their Minds*.
21. B. Huber, "Do the Average Grades Awarded in the Undergraduate Class Sections Offered at Cal State Northridge Vary by Section Size?" p. 2.
22. Consortium for Student Retention Data Exchange "Executive Summary" in *1998-1999 CSRDE Report: The Retention and Graduation Rates in 269 Colleges and Universities*; and C. A. Twigg, "Improving Quality and Reducing Cost: Designs for Effective Learning," pp. 23-29.
23. M. J. Dooris, "Working with your IR officer," cited in J. Cuseo, pp. 5-21.
24. B. Huber, "CSUN by the Numbers."
25. Ibid.
26. B. Huber, "FTF-Proficiency-CSUN-1998-to-2009."
27. O. Bandiera, V. Larcinese, and I. Rasul, "Heterogeneous Class Size Effects: New Evidence from a Panel of University Students," pp. 1365-98.
28. R. Arum and J. Roksa, *Academically Adrift: Limited Learning on College Campuses*.

## WORKS CITED

- Arum, R. and J. Roksa. 2011. *Academically Adrift: Limited Learning on College Campuses*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Ashar, H. and R. Skenes, 1993. "Can Tinto's Student Departure Model Be Applied To Nontraditional Students?" *Adult Education Quarterly* 43, no 2.
- Bandiera, O., V. Larcinese, and I. Rasul. 2010. "Heterogeneous Class Size Effects: New Evidence from a Panel of University Students." *The Economic Journal* 120, (December).
- Barefoot, B. O. 1993. *Exploring the Evidence: Reporting Outcomes of Freshman Seminars*. (Monograph no. 11) Columbia, SC: National Resource Center for the Freshman Year Experience, University of South Carolina.
- Becker, W. E. and J. R. Powers. 2001. "Student Performance, Attrition, and Class Size Given Missing Student Data." *Economics of Education Review* 20.
- Bellante, D. M. 1972. "A Summary Report on Student Performance in Mass Lecture Classes of Economics." *Journal of Economic Education* 4, no. 1.
- California Faculty Association. 2012. "Summary of Changes in CSU Student to Faculty Ratios: 2007 to 2011." CFA Report. Accessed at: [www.calfac.org/faculty](http://www.calfac.org/faculty).
- Carbone, E. 1999. "Students Behaving Badly in Large Classes." In *Promoting Civility: A Teaching Challenge: New Directions for Teaching and Learning*, no. 77. S. Richardson (ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Carbone, E. and J. Greenberg. 1998. "Teaching Large Classes: Unpacking the Problem and Responding Creatively." In *To Improve the Academy* Vol. 17. M. Kaplan (ed.). Stillwater, OK: New Forums Press and The Professional and Organizational Development Network in Higher Education.
- Consortium for Student Retention Data Exchange. 1999. "Executive Summary." In *1998-1999 CSRDE Report: The Retention and Graduation Rates in 269 Colleges and Universities*. Norman, OK: Center for Institutional Data Exchange and Analysis, University of Oklahoma.
- Cooper, J. L. and P. Robinson. 2000. "The Argument for Making Large Classes Seem Small." In *New Directions for Teaching and Learning*, no. 81. J. MacGregor, J. L. Cooper, K. A. Smith, and P. Robinson (eds.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Cuseo, J. 2007. "The Empirical Case against Large Class Size: Adverse Effects on the Teaching, Learning, and Retention of First-Year Students." *Journal of Faculty Development* 21, no. 1.
- Fassinger, P. A. 1996. "Professors' and Students' Perception of Why Students Participate in Class." *Teaching Sociology* 24, no.1.
- Fidler, P. and M. S. Hunter. 1989. "How Seminars Enhance Student Success." In *The Freshman Year Experience*, M. L. Upcraft, J. N. Gardner and Associates (eds.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Franklin, J. L. and M. Theall. 1991. "Grade Inflation and Student Ratings: A Closer Look." Paper presented at the 72nd Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago.
- Huber, B. 2012. "Do the Average Grades Awarded in the Undergraduate Class Sections Offered at Cal State Northridge Vary by Section Size?" CSUN, Office of Institutional Research. Accessed at: [www.csun.edu/senate/reports/gpasectionsize.pdf](http://www.csun.edu/senate/reports/gpasectionsize.pdf).
- Huber, B. 2012. "FTF-Proficiency-CSUN-1998-to-2009." CSUN, Office of Institutional Research. Accessed at: [www.csun.edu/afye/documents/FTF-Proficiency-CSUN-1998-to-2009.xls](http://www.csun.edu/afye/documents/FTF-Proficiency-CSUN-1998-to-2009.xls).
- Huber, B. 2013. "CSUN by the Numbers." CSUN, Office of Institutional Research. Accessed at: [www.csun.edu/~instrsch/csunnumbersindex.html](http://www.csun.edu/~instrsch/csunnumbersindex.html).
- Hoyt, D. P. and S. Perera. 2000. "Teaching Approach, Instructional Objectives and Learning." IDEA Research Report #1, IDEA Center, Manhattan, KS. Accessed at: <http://ideaedu.org/sites/default/files/research1.pdf>.

- Karp, D. A. and W. C. Yoels. 1976. "The College Classroom: Some Observations on the Meanings of Student Participation." *Sociology and Social Research* 60.
- Keil, J. and P. J. Partell. 2002. "The Effect of Class Size on Student Performance and Retention at Binghamton University." Office of Budget and Institutional Research, Binghamton University. Accessed at: [www.classsizematters.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Class\\_size\\_jkpp1997.pdf](http://www.classsizematters.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Class_size_jkpp1997.pdf).
- Kuh, G., J. Schuh, E. Whitt, and Associates. 1991. *Involving Colleges: Successful Approaches to Fostering Student Learning and Development Outside the Classroom*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Light, R. J. 2001. *Making The Most of College: Students Speak Their Minds*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Lowry, R. C. and A. H. Fryar. 2013. "The Politics of Higher Education" In *Politics in the American States: A Comparative Analysis*. V. Gray, R. L. Hanson, and T. Kousser (eds.). Washington, DC: CQ Press.
- MacGregor, J. L., Cooper, K. A. Smith, and P. Robinson. 2000. *Strategies for Energizing Large Classes: From Small Groups To Learning Communities: New Directions for Teaching and Learning*, no. 81. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- McKeachie, W. 1980. "Class Size, Large Classes, and Multiple Sections." *Academe* 66.
- Ratcliff, J. L. 1992. "What They Took and What They Learned: Learning From Assessment and Transcript Analysis." In *Proceedings from the Asheville Institute on General Education*. M. Moseley (ed.). Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges.
- Scouller, K. 1998. "The Influence of Assessment Method on Students' Learning Approaches: Multiple Choice Question Examination Versus Assignment Essay." *Higher Education* 35.
- Sorcinelli, M. D. 1994. "Dealing with Troublesome Behaviors in the Classroom." In *Handbook of College Teaching: Theory and Application*. K. W. Prichard and R. Sawyer (eds.). Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.
- Sorcinelli, M. D. 2002. "Promoting Civility in Large Classes." In *Engaging Large Classes: Strategies and Techniques for College Faculty*. C. A. Stanley, and M. E. Porter (eds.). Bolton, MA: Anker Publishing.
- Stanley, C. A. and M. E. Porter. 2002. *Engaging Large Classes: Strategies and Techniques for College Faculty*. Bolton, MA: Anker Publishing.
- Stones, E. 1970. "Students' Attitudes Toward the Size of Teaching Groups." *Educational Review* 21, no. 2.
- Twigg, C. A. 2003. "Improving Quality and Reducing Cost: Designs for Effective Learning." *Change* 35, no. 4.
- Weimer, M. J. 1987. *Teaching Large Classes Well: New Directions for Teaching and Learning*, no. 32. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Wulff, D. H., Nyquist, J. D., and Abbott, R. D. 1987. "Students' Perceptions of Large Classes." In *Teaching Large Classes Well: New Directions for Teaching and Learning*, no. 32, M. J. Weimer (ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.





quoted from <https://www.ericdigests.org/pre-923/small.htm>

Author: Barker, Bruce O.

Source: ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools Las Cruces NM.

### **The Advantages of Small Schools.** ERIC Digests.

Americans are rediscovering the small school. Education has proclaimed that "bigger is better" for so long that many have become believers in a doctrine which they have not truly examined. Indeed, the largeness of many of our schools may be one factor contributing to declines in test scores and increases in violence among students (Wynne, 1978). The restructuring of schools to smaller entities may ameliorate some of the problems facing today's educators.

#### WHAT IS A SMALL SCHOOL?

School enrollment size has been the major criterion used to identify small schools. Although disagreement exists over what enrollment figure should be used to determine "small," the figure most commonly accepted is 300 or less. In the 26,000 of these schools, over one half million students are enrolled and 50,000 teachers employed (Swift, 1984).

Where are America's small schools? Although small public schools do exist in large cities, the vast majority are located in rural areas (Sher, 1977).

#### WHAT CONTRIBUTIONS HAVE SMALL SCHOOLS MADE IN THE PAST?

Well into this century, America's public education system was dominated by small schools. In an age before calculators, microcomputers, television, and rapid transit, hundreds of thousands of children learned their arithmetic, civics, geography, and other lessons in the small--often one-room--school of the past. In most cases, students learned independently and progressed at their own rate. While older pupils helped the younger ones, the teacher was able to take time to individualize lessons and provide personal contact with each student on a daily basis. Younger pupils became fully aware of what was expected of them in the next grade because they could see and hear older children working on advanced lessons.

It would be interesting, perhaps astounding, to be able to identify the number of successful professionals in business, education, science, and other disciplines who received their public education in a small school. The small country school of yesteryear was the impetus from which many of today's better known educational "innovations" originated. Notions such as non-graded classrooms, individualized instruction, low student/teacher ratios, cross-age grouping, peer tutoring, using the community as a resource, "mainstreaming" mildly handicapped pupils, and emphasizing the basics--to name just a few--all have their roots in the small school of the past.

#### WHAT STRENGTHS ARE INHERENT IN SMALL SCHOOLS?

There exists in the small school a sense of pride, and an attitude and sense of personal possession and involvement on the part of students, parents, teachers, administrators, and community residents. To a great degree, the school is the community center in many small towns and rural areas.

Over 20 years ago, Barker and Gump (1964) proposed the "inside-outside perceptual paradox" which stated that even though larger schools were more impressive on the outside, upon closer scrutiny the small school provided a better quality of education. The small school can offer benefits in several areas: (1) personal relationships, (2) students, (3) teachers, (4) administration, and (5) curriculum and instruction (Beckner, 1983; Dunne, 1977).

#### PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

The size of the school does not inhibit personal interaction; it encourages it. Small schools typically serve a community nucleus. This invites strong support from parents and community members as well as closer working relationships among the school staff. In a small school it is not unusual for teachers, administrators, and school board members to know each other well. This can lead to easy acceptance of new ideas among friends as well as a strong sense of identification and belonging.

#### STUDENTS

Morale among students tends to be higher in small schools. There are fewer students to be leaders in clubs and organizations and to participate in athletics and plays. Hence, students are generally exposed to more opportunity to develop leadership skills in a greater diversity of situations. Often, literally everyone must participate in order to make a project a success. This promotes among students a sense of belonging, of pride in their community, their school, and themselves. As a result, students are likely to have better attitudes toward school and less likely to create discipline problems.

#### TEACHERS

Teachers are more apt to know their students as individuals and to be familiar with the family backgrounds from which they come. This enables teachers to more knowledgeably make special provisions for individual needs and talents and to receive better cooperation from parents in resolving problems that may arise. Students in small schools also interact more frequently and informally with the teacher and with each other.

Because relationships between teachers and administrators tend to be more personal and informal, there is a greater tendency for cooperation among the staff. Also, teachers who live and work in small communities are more likely to be viewed as respected and valued citizens by other community members.

#### ADMINISTRATION

Small schools are manageable. There is usually less red tape and fewer regulations. Scheduling is much more flexible than in a large school, and schedules can be easily altered to accommodate instructional activities. Record keeping and reporting activities are less complicated and time consuming. Bureaucratic layering is at a minimum, allowing relatively easy access among students, teachers and administrators. Individual problems of both students and faculty can be addressed more readily by administrators. School administrators are more likely to spend time out of their office to be with students and teachers on a regular basis and routinely visit classrooms and observe instruction.

Due to low pupil/teacher ratios, the school is more likely to be learner-centered with strong emphasis placed on individualized and small group instruction. By contrast, large schools with large class sizes have traditionally led to reliance on lecture and objective tests that stress recall. The potential for student self identity, participation, and expression is thereby enhanced in small schools.

Multi-grade teaching is common practice in many small schools. Cross-age mixing of students allows younger students exposure to lessons and expectations of older students as well as opportunities to receive personalized tutoring from them.

Smallness also permits changes in curricula and organization of instructional materials with relative ease. It is easier to arrange schedules in order to participate in field trips, assembly programs, parent-teacher conferences, etc.

The advantages of smallness can be summarized as follows:

--Students are at the center of the school. --Discipline is usually not a serious problem, thereby resulting in an increase in time spent learning. --Teachers still have a sense of control over what and how they teach. --A minimum of bureaucracy allows for more flexibility in decision making. --Low pupil-teacher ratios allow for more individualized instruction and more attention given to students. --Relationships between students, teachers, administrators, and school board members tend to be closer. --Parental and community involvement tends to be stronger than in larger schools.

#### WHAT DOES RESEARCH SAY ABOUT OPTIMUM SCHOOL SIZE?

Research has not yet revealed an "optimum" school or district size. The studies which have been conducted show a broad range enrollment for the "best size" school. The Education Research Service (Research Action Brief, 1982) summarized 119 publications printed between 1924 and 1974 regarding school size. The differences for optimum size varied by as much as 370 students for elementary schools, 50 students for middle schools, 679 students for junior high schools, and over 1700 students for senior high schools. Due to differences in the design and methodology of the many studies summarized, it is difficult to compare them and thus impossible to draw hard and fast conclusions.

Although research on optimum school size has provided mixed results, most teachers and parents clearly feel that class size radically affects the quality of instruction and achievement of students. A summary of research on class size suggests that (Glass, 1982):

--Class size is strongly related to pupil achievement. --Smaller classes are more conducive to improved pupil performance than larger classes. --Smaller classes provide more opportunities to adapt learning programs to individual needs. --Pupils in small classes have more interest in learning. --Teacher morale is higher in smaller classes.

#### HOW DO CHARACTERISTICS AND PRACTICES OF "EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS" RESEARCH RELATE TO SMALL SCHOOLS?

Recent research has identified numerous practices and characteristics associated with effective schools. Among characteristics commonly noted are (Fried, 1982):

--A school climate that is orderly, serious, safe, and attractive. --A clear school mission where there is consensus on goals for the school, consensus on teacher objectives and priorities assigned to those objectives. --Strong leadership by the principal which focuses on instruction. --High expectations for student achievement which are clearly communicated to students. --Instructional activities absorb most of the day. --There is an evaluation system which includes student progress, the staff, and the school itself. --Supportive home/school relations.

Small schools need not apologize for their size. The strengths inherent in small schools clearly support characteristics and practices associated with findings emanating from "effective schools" research. The challenge facing administrators, teachers, parents, and students attending small schools is to capitalize on many advantages of smallness in order to provide the most meaningful education possible.

#### FOR MORE INFORMATION

Barker, Roger, and Paul Gump. *BIG SCHOOL, SMALL SCHOOL: HIGH SCHOOL SIZE AND STUDENT BEHAVIOR*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1964.

Beckner, Weldon. *THE CASE FOR THE SMALLER SCHOOL*. Bloomington, Indiana: Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation, 1983. ED 228 002.

Dunn, Faith. "Choosing Smallness." In Jonathan Sher, ed., *EDUCATION IN RURAL AMERICA: A REASSESSMENT OF CONVENTIONAL WISDOM*. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1977.

Fried, Robby, ed. *EFFECTIVE SCHOOLING IN A RURAL CONTEXT: A NEW HAMPSHIRE VIEW*. Northeast Regional Exchange, Chelmsford, MA., 1982. ED 243 628.

Glass, Gene, ed. *SCHOOL CLASS SIZE: RESEARCH AND POLICY*. Beverly Hills, California: Sage Publications, 1982. ED 217 111.

National Center for Education Statistics. *DIGEST OF EDUCATIONAL STATISTICS, 1983-84*. Washington, D.C: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1983.

Research Action Brief. *SCHOOL SIZE: A REASSESSMENT OF THE SMALL SCHOOL*. Eugene, OR: ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management, February, 1982.

Sher, Jonathan, ed. *EDUCATION IN RURAL AMERICA: A REASSESSMENT OF CONVENTIONAL WISDOM*. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1977.

Swift, Doug. *FINDING AND KEEPING TEACHERS: STRATEGIES FOR SMALL SCHOOLS*. Las Cruces, NM: ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools, 1984.

Wynne, Edward. "Behind the Discipline Problem: Youth Suicide as a Measure of Alienation." *PHI DELTA KAPPAN* 59 (1978): 307-315.

Library Reference Search



## LEARNING TO LOVE EDUCATION AGAIN

Small Versus Large Schools: The Truth About Equity, Cost, and Diversity of Programming in Small and Large Schools

By STUART R. GRAUER, Ed.D.

Stuart Grauer Dr. Stuart Grauer is a teacher, the founding Head of School at The Grauer School, and Founder of The Small Schools Coalition. He consults with schools worldwide and been awarded the University of San Diego Career Achievement Award, plus various international educational exchange fellowships including a Fulbright. Stuart is one of the nation's top authorities on small schools education. His work has been covered in The New York Times, Discovery Channel, and frequently in the local press in his home town of Encinitas, California, where he has been named "Peacemaker of the Year." A regular essayist for Community Works Journal, new book is Fearless Teaching, "a rare book about education that is both beautiful and critically imperative," is available at [www.fearlessteaching.com/](http://www.fearlessteaching.com/). email Stuart

Powerful and often compelling myths about "real" schooling tend to govern our collective assumptions about normalcy, and these myths have silently, steadfastly advanced the move to larger, more consolidated schools and hampered any real proliferation of the small schools model in our country. Concerned about this difference between myth and reality, now a century in the making, we formed the Small Schools Coalition in 2011 and commenced with an extensive comparison of large and small school attributes. Twelve months of research and school visitations turned up some surprises that we share, herein.

We had been aware of various myths distorting our collective viewpoints about what a school should be, and our research turned up still more. We were equally aware of an historic gap of knowledge on the benefits of small schools—real community schools--and this gap was born out; but the big surprise that turned up in our research was the dearth of information on the comparative benefits of the nation's large, comprehensive school model, which predominates in our nation.

The sense of connectedness in small schools is not only felt and shared among students, it is shared by virtually all stakeholders and, in particular, with teachers.

Like many of our cities, the large school model had evolved very gradually and was not the result of a set plan, and so no one could state a single place or point in time where a threshold had been crossed and the old ways were not working. It had been more like watching a beautiful tree grow; we could discern nothing but the seasons until it came to pass that our tree was not at all what it had been, buckling the sidewalk and over-shadowing the once-sunny garden, spreading limbs that could hardly support themselves, or couldn't. But, of course, we never see a tree growing. Tried and true presumptions about the American schoolhouse were running on hyperbole, myths mistaken for reality. No one was to blame, but our schools, designed on the outside, had grown too big for most of the people on the inside.

In the literature, we found little disagreement that small schools do better than large in the areas of safety, teaching conditions, and academic performance. The cases for these are overwhelming, not difficult to make. Indeed, the historical rationale for consolidated, comprehensive schools were based on other factors: (1) economies of scale, (2) social equality,

and (3) increased program offerings—these presumed benefits had outweighed the other educational attributes. The alarming part of our research was that these large school benefits had virtually never been verified and, as we weighed large schools in the balance against small schools we found them—all three of them—to be either questionable or outright false.

#### Three Givens: Safety, Teaching Conditions, and Academic Performance

Before moving on to the myth busters, we considered extensive research on our givens. Thirty or more years of research bore out the finding that small schools are safer, offer better teaching, and result in higher academic performance.

Compared to larger schools, students in smaller schools fight less, feel safer, come to school more frequently, and report being more attached to their school. It is impossible to dismiss school size as a powerful and fundamental indicator of safety for our America's children, and unconscionable to disregard the "costs" of this loss of safety, however difficult they are to grasp and affix.

For teachers, small schools have consistently been shown to have the conditions necessary for improvements in professional climates. Small school teachers feel more committed and connected in their work, and they report higher job satisfaction and a greater sense of responsibility for ongoing student learning.

We understood there was some prejudice against or skepticism about small schools by large school proponents who claimed that large schools, by virtue of having more homogeneously tracked and Advanced Placement courses, would be more rigorous academically. We found an absence of any research showing this prejudice to be justified. Researchers overwhelmingly were reporting that students learned more in smaller schools. For standardization mavens, students in small schools were reported to outperform students in large schools on standardized achievement tests, and significantly so (Bryk & Driscoll, 1988; Gladden, 2000; Howley & Bickel, 2000; Husbands and Beese, 2004; Lee & Smith, 1997; Raywid, 1980). Students in small schools also were getting more units before graduating high school.

It was not, however, any of the above factors that was driving the century-long trend towards larger, more consolidated, comprehensive schools. Reasons given for those had much more to do with age-old myths about the power of large schools to provide optimal conditions for equal opportunity, cost, and diverse and varied program offerings.

#### Myth # 1: Large Schools Are America's "Great Equalizers"

Myth Buster: Learning is more equitably distributed in smaller schools.

Large school proponents cite greater social choice and diversity as plusses for the large school model. Are these presumptions borne out in research?

This is a complex issue containing political, social, and emotional components, among others. Among complex organizations, developing a unique, shared culture is where the small organization most excels. Research consistently reveals that in small schools, students of all "types" feel they can connect with one another much more readily and openly, and also with caring adults whom they know quite personally. The true small school offers a greater sense of relationship connectedness and opportunity among virtually all stakeholders, such as are both implicit and proven in small organizations and communities.

Small schools demonstrate great achievement equity. Smaller, more “communal” learning environments reduce both student and teacher alienation commonly identified in larger school systems, and enhance student engagement in learning. For instance, Nathan & Thao’s 2001 study showed that “Students at large schools are more prone to be alienated from their peers...” In small schools, respectful relationships prevail, as do high expectations for behavior and achievement.

We have long looked to our schools to be places of equal opportunity across groups. Progressives of the early 1900s started the push for school consolidation so that underserved populations could partake of the benefits available in more affluent schools and districts. They did this without considering whether enlarging the school might cause it to lose the very benefits it sought to have shared across ethnic and socio-economic borders. Movements for still more comprehensive schools recurred in the late 1900s, from the 1970s through the 90s, and schools again surged ahead in size—while drop out rates increased and complaints of inequality in school did not subside. Indeed, as comprehensive school students all study for the same degree they are on completely different “tracks,” a phenomenon that has been called “the faux equality of diversity” (Mirel, 2006). While some gains in social justice have been made nationwide, few researchers would credit those gains to our schools.

With runaway school consolidations, might equal opportunity proponents have unwittingly thrown the baby out with the bathwater? A literature review of the sense of connectivity and safety at school lead us to probably the most profound findings in all our research: Learning is more equitably distributed in smaller schools (Clotfelter, 2002). Small schools create more opportunities for participation per capita; a larger percentage of students participate and they participate in more kinds of activities. Small schools need a large percentage of students to fill each activity, and they engage a broader cross-section of students, helping reduce social and racial isolation (Fouts, Abbor, & Baker, 2002). These are striking findings, given longstanding and almost universal large school claims to offer more diverse learning and socialization opportunities.

We wondered if “striking” was an alarmist word? For over a century, few local communities across the land were untouched if not radically reshaped in their composition and functioning as a consequence of school consolidation. And yet, a primary rationale for the move to consolidated and comprehensive campuses was to provide equitable access to schooling. Based upon the above and much other research, it is reasonable to surmise that we may have done well to organize our schools differently; for instance, keeping smaller, unconsolidated schools (or schools within schools) but mixing their demographics may have created the equitable access that policy makers and interest groups have sought all along. Students who participate in activities and feel connected at school have higher achievement, are less likely to drop out. They have higher self-esteem, attend school more regularly, and have fewer behavior problems. If these are gains our comprehensive school movement has sought, we simply must consider whether a century of consolidations creating larger and larger campuses has been a grave miscalculation. The creation of large schools appears to have created or perpetuated the problems it was meant to solve.

The sense of connectedness in small schools is not only felt and shared among students, it is shared by virtually all stakeholders and, in particular, with teachers. Research shows that in small schools, relationships between students and adults are strong, trusting, and ongoing. This leads to a clearer, safer, more enriched path to graduation and postgraduate plans, and the

bonds continue on longer after graduation. Secondly, small school parents are closer and have higher levels of involvement, and parental involvement is a critical factor in student success. Thirdly, small schools have a leaner administrative structure, and the consequence of this is that the whole faculty shares in decision-making; decision-making is less institutionalized and more flexible. This fact explains why teachers and students in small schools report feeling a greater sense of efficacy—they really have a say. Fourth, smaller schools more readily engage community-members in educating students. Internships are much more common, as are classroom and assembly visitors (per student). Small schools with their more open campuses tend to more frequently engage community members in evaluating curricular exhibits such as portfolios or attending student visual or performing arts showings.

Research on group size and sense of belongingness comes not only from the field of education; we reviewed parallel studies from anthropology and sociology, plus breaking research on social networking, leadership, and organizational behavior. In small groups we sense our allies and rivals readily. Though all compassionate people strive to sense the connectedness of all humanity and all creation, we have practical and cognitive limits on how many people we can support, trust, and feel supported by in our daily lives so that we can live with a sense of high trust and low threat. The advantages for leaders developing trusting, influence relationships in small groups are manifest. In sum, it would be difficult to definitively dispute the verity of this comparison: Small schools offer students, teachers, and school leaders a substantially greater sense of connectedness, opportunity, efficacy, and safety than large schools.

Myth # 2: Large Schools Offer More Learning Choices and Curriculum.

Myth Buster: "Increasing school size, especially beyond 400 students, does not typically result in a large increase in curricular offerings." --Slate & Jones

It is often claimed that a big school offers more program choices and opportunities. After our review of the literature, we came to view this as a flawed and reductionist way to view what "choice" really means to today's student. A powerful but little known outcome of small schools is that, in vital respects, they provide students with more choices in their learning.

How can small schools students have a full range of curricular and extra-curricular choices? Large school proponents have routinely argued that large schools have more clubs, specialized classes, and sports. Indeed, big team sports are an American icon, which has been difficult to attack. So, before we considered the verity of these arguments, we first noted an irony, that the expanded slate of programs are only marginally a part any high school's own quality metrics—they are virtually never held in greater esteem than safety or academic achievement, for instance. Deborah Meier, often credited as being a founder of the small schools movement, put it candidly: "When we talk with school officials and local politicians about restructuring large high schools, the first thing they worry about is what will happen to the basketball or baseball teams, the after-school program, and other sideshows; that the heart of the school, its capacity to educate, is missing, seems almost beside the point." (Mitchell, 2000)

The percentage of high school students engaged in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities is higher in small schools, possibly far higher. For illustration, at small schools there may not be as many teams or honors courses to pick from, but a greater percentage of students are on a team or in an honors course; also, a greater percentage of students are in multiples of such activities. Small size also makes it easier for teachers to organize hands-on learning opportunities that engage students in rigorous academic work that has meaningful consequences in the local community.

We took a look at course offerings. After an extensive review of the literature, we noted that increasing school size, especially beyond 400 students, was not typically resulting in a large increase in curricular choices. By offering a smaller, more focused curriculum, small schools maintain quality control that cannot be replaced by more levels of management in large organization. The largest schools have five or ten times as many students as did the smaller schools but typically offered about twice as many courses. In addition, much of the material covered in specialized courses at large schools is taught within regular courses at small schools.

A student who plays year-round varsity sports, enrolls in numerous advanced courses, and manages to stay segregated from the safety issues would appear to be well suited in the large school. This, of course, does not account for the majority of America's students.

We wondered: Will the small high school be able to offer a full curriculum in the future? One answer is that the small school, past or future, is best at responding to individual student interests and needs. The classroom of tomorrow is offering new kinds of access to learning and methodology: interactive distance learning is equalizing course selections for all school sizes. Also, new configurations of "choice" are emerging; for instance, consider several schools (or schools within a school [SWASs]) collaborating to establish an interactive television network that allows a teacher in any of those schools to teach students on the network. SWASs are experimenting with exciting, "best of both worlds" ways in creating smaller learning communities while retaining big school resources like big-team sports and high end technology which might be too expensive for an individual small school.

If we wish to abandon America's traditional emphasis on liberal arts schooling, "schooling for a democratic society," and to re-orient our schools more into technical and vocational training grounds, sheer numbers of courses may help and big schools offering metal shop, computer programming and Urdu language might give our kids an edge. A liberal arts education, however, is more student-centered (as opposed to content-centered) than that: it focuses on intellectual development. It is the training grounds for entrepreneurship and ethics, and it has never been dependent upon a particularly large course catalog. In this fundamental sense, liberal arts education is an effort to create a better world, while "tech-voc" education is an effort to fill the slots in the world as it has been. Schools attempting to be all things to all people may never sort this dichotomy out.

In conclusion, an exhaustive course and club catalog is not fundamental as a determinant of excellent schooling, nor it is a proven way to accommodate diverse student tastes and interests: There are too many things that can occur in small arenas that can't in big ones.

Myth # 3: Large Schools Provide an Economy of Scale

Myth Buster: "The 'cost savings' of larger schools are only apparent if the results are ignored." -- The New Rules Project

If large schools were cheaper to operate in the long run, perhaps we might have some rationale for their overwhelming prevalence—we could simply say we cannot afford smaller schools; but there is great uncertainty in knowing if they really cost less. Research is still scattered and unreliable, but our own studies indicate that larger schools with enrollments in excess of 1,200 have not produced expected economies of scale that result in better lower per-pupil costs when



compared to true small schools. (They do appear to compare favorably with some medium sized schools of between 400 or 500 and at least 900 students.)

The above comparison sounds counterintuitive at a gut level, but a real analysis has to go a whole lot further than the gut. Formulas that our research found for determining funding tend to disguise tremendous non-cash costs associated closely with large schools; some of those costs are difficult to affix a price tag to, and some of them are terrible.

Large school increased costs include:

Increased drop out rates

Increased violence

Decreased sense of social safety and connectedness

Lower teacher satisfaction and higher teacher turnover

Lower achievement in college

Less happiness

At present, the above costs are seldom considered to be actuarial realities. Nor are things like community development or higher future incomes. I mention the last in the list, happiness, not as a luxury item and only because so much research ties it closely to our nation's overall productivity.

Add to these costs a greater percentage of administrative overhead and externals such as the astronomical cost of the federal education bureaucracy (currently costing about \$1000 per student nationwide), and even the current, known costs of large schools starts to look close to that of smaller, more personalized schools, if not higher in some analyses. Given the stakes, the dearth of thorough, medium- and long-range research and analysis on the comparative large-small school costs/benefits is stunning.

Educational Mythbusting and the Small School Movement

Why do we keep the focus on building gigantic schools when we now have over 30 years of promising small schools data. Has our nation not reached a time when some new directions are desperately sought? Here is one big reason the data are ignored: cultural expectations about high school are deeply embedded.

Today's iconic high schools have activities that everyone speaks of with pride, things that the general public now believes to be "the real world"—sacred cows like the marching band, the lacrosse team, the boosters. These untouchable activities represent the school's image and focus of pride, and they arduously resist change, even though they serve a relatively small percentage of students and rarely have any connection to the most fundamental aspects of excellent schooling: a focus on student learning and happiness, and a focus on the development of shared values. In the shadows of these myths are some unforgiving social scenes, metal detectors and chain link fencing, and more kids with drug, obesity, or anorexia problems than the football or cheer teams can accommodate; these are the troubling realities that characterize a substantial amount of life in today's comprehensive, consolidated, large school arena.

Institutionalization and Mega Schools

Small schools compete in the marketplace, on their community playing fields, with their prime stakeholders: parents and community members. Their small size promotes an openness, which

makes gatekeeping difficult and minimizes separation of administrators and leaders from constituents.

Perhaps it is any large government's inclination to institutionalize. And yet it is the citizen's role to remain free. Charters, private schools, parochial schools, SWASs: these are all fundamental acts of freedom and entrepreneurship. People naturally seek relationships first, and large institutions have a way of adding limits, lines and hard edges to those relationships. Here is the heart of the matter: teaching and learning depend upon, first, deepening personal relationships. When you read or try to teach the overstuffed, state-mandated curricula, impossible to cover in any depth, to row after row of students, you get the feeling that few of the developers of these curricula have had a great conversation with a teen in a long while. There is no time to!

#### Conclusions

Many of our nation's students are fully engaged in team or large campus activities they love and in challenging course offerings and extra-curriculars that draw out their passions; students like these may never need or consider small schools—it's just that these particular youths are a minority of all our nearly 20 million high school students.

The aspirations of many school consolidation advocates to integrate the schools and fill them with diverse opportunities is obviously commendable. But aspirations have not lined up with results. What if we found out that 100 years of consolidations has produced no clear results? What if we found out that mixing students of diverse neighborhoods into large schools only creates additional grouping and alienation? What if we even considered the notion that we may have been practicing consolidation for a full century and it has largely failed in its main goal: because small schools need a large percentage of students to fill each activity, they engage a broader cross-section of students, helping reduce social and racial isolation. Could it be that what we should have been doing is creating integrated small schools rather than lumping everyone into the comprehensive, edge of town model? If the answer to this question even might be "yes" and we have not researched this issue properly, it implies a full century of incalculable loss.

A smaller-scale, personal approach can make a positive difference in our children's education. Students deserve to be free from worry about physical and emotional safety and to be confident that their teachers and administrators know them well and can guide their development of skills and knowledge. The United States, in its communities, has a long and rich history in trying various educational methods; only fairly recently have we begun to see that some myths have been institutionalized and mistaken for reality.

Inquiries about this essay are welcome at: [info@smallschoolscoalition.com](mailto:info@smallschoolscoalition.com) For permission to republish please email [info@communityworksinstitute.org](mailto:info@communityworksinstitute.org)

#### REFERENCES

Bryk, A. S., & Driscoll, M. E. (1988). *The high school as community: Contextual influences and consequences for students and teachers*. Madison, WI: National Center on Effective Secondary Schools, University of Wisconsin-Madison. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED302 539)

Clotfelter, C. T. (2002). Interracial contact in high school extracurricular activities. *The Urban Review*, 34, 25-46.

Fouts, J, Abbor, M, Baker, D. (2002). *The Influence of District Size, School Size and Socioeconomic Status on Student Achievement in Washington: A Replication Study Using Hierarchical Linear Modeling*. Washington School Research Center. Seattle Pacific University, Lynnwood, WA.

Gladwell, M. (2000). *The tipping point*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company.

Grauer, S. (2012). *The costs of schooling: small schools, entrepreneurship and America*. Retrieved from <http://smallschoolscoalition.com/>

Grauer, S. (2012). *The politics of school size*. Retrieved from <http://smallschoolscoalition.com/>

Howley, C. & Bickel, R. (2000). *When It Comes to Schooling...Small Works: School Size, Poverty, and Student Achievement*. ERIC. [http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/search/detailmini.jsp?\\_nfpb=true&\\_ERICExtSearch\\_SearchValue\\_0=ED447973&ERICExtSearch\\_SearchType\\_0=no&accno=ED447973](http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/search/detailmini.jsp?_nfpb=true&_ERICExtSearch_SearchValue_0=ED447973&ERICExtSearch_SearchType_0=no&accno=ED447973)

Husbands, J., & Beese, S. (2001). *Review of selected high school reform strategies*. Paper presented at The Aspen Program on Education's Workshop on High School Transformation, Aspen, CO.

Khan, S. (2012, January 20). *Speech delivered to California Association of Independent Schools*. San Francisco, CA.

Lee, V. E., & Loeb, S. (2000). School size in Chicago elementary schools: Effects on teachers' attitudes and students' achievement. *American Educational Research Journal*, 37(1), 3-31.

Logan, D., King, J. P., & Fischer-Wright, H. (2008). *Tribal leadership: Leveraging natural groups to build a thriving organization*. New York: Collins.

Mirel, J. (Winter, 2006). *The traditional high school: Historical debates over its nature and function*. *Education next*.

Mitchell, S., (2000). *Jack and the giant school*. *The New Rules*, 2, 1–10.

Meier, D. (2011, May 11). *Interview by M Klonsky [Personal Interview]. An interview with Deborah Meier on the small-schools movement.*, Retrieved from [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/michael-klonsky-phd/deborah-meier-small-schools\\_b\\_859362.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/michael-klonsky-phd/deborah-meier-small-schools_b_859362.html)

Nathan, J. & Thao, K. (2007). *Smaller, safer, saner successful schools*. Minneapolis: Center for School Change, Hubert H. Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs.

Nguyen, T.S.T. (March 2004). *Study of High School Restructuring*. *High schools: Size does matter.* Volume 1, Issue 1.

Oxley, D. (2007). *Small Learning Communities: Implementing and Deepening Practice*. Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory. Portland Oregon.

Oxley, D., & Kassissieh, J. (2008). From comprehensive high schools to small learning communities: Accomplishments and challenges. *FORUM: For Promoting 3–19 Comprehensive Education*, 50(2), 199–206.

Raywid, M.A. (1980, November) Restoring School Efficiency by Giving Parents a Choice” *Educational Leadership*. 134 – 137.

Raywid, M. & Oshiyama, L. (2000, February). Musing in the Wake of Columbine: What Can Schools Do? *Phi Delta Kappan*, V81, N6, 444-449.

S

late, J. R., & Jones, C. H. (2005). Effects of school size: A review of the literature with recommendations. *Essays in Education* <http://www.usca.edu/essays/vol132005/slate.pdf>

The New Rules Project. Small schools versus big schools. <http://www.newrules.org/equity/rules/small-schools-vs-big-schools>

Zane, N. (1994). When "discipline problems" recede: Democracy and intimacy in urban charters. In M. Fine (Ed.), *Chartering urban school reform* (pp.122–135). New York: Teachers College Press.

article quoted from: [file://localhost/Users/GKiMac21/gail's%20projects/Possible%20school%20closure/small%20schools%20better/Small%20Versus%20Large%20Schools\\_%20The%20Truth%20About%20Equity,%20Cost,%20and%20Diversity%20of%20Programming.html](file://localhost/Users/GKiMac21/gail's%20projects/Possible%20school%20closure/small%20schools%20better/Small%20Versus%20Large%20Schools_%20The%20Truth%20About%20Equity,%20Cost,%20and%20Diversity%20of%20Programming.html)

Presentation to LDSCB 2017

My name is Marilyn Fenwick. I am a parent, grandparent, community volunteer and a retired Registered Nurse. I live in the village of Enterprise, the Township of Stone Mills.

Firstly, I would like to extend my appreciation to the members of the PAR,

Limestone District School Board Trustees and staff members, our Township Councilors as well to members of the public for having dedicated hours to this process.

Though we are here to address most specifically the effects on the Yarker community most of what I am saying tonight applies to many rural areas.

Selfishly, I am concerned about my ability to age in place in a ghost town. Studies have proven that school closures have caused the population to move closer to areas where there are schools. That means fewer young people to purchase real estate, let alone live close by parents and grandparents, or, for that matter, simply to have supportive neighbours.

I know personally, that often the first question asked, when someone is considering a home purchase is,....Where is the school?"

Business does not start up nor stay when no one lives there to use services or buy their products. This then leads to fewer places of local employment, private and public day care, butcher shop, grocery store, agriculture etc. sending everyone to towns and cities. Urban areas become crowded with less affordable housing where more likelihood of ghetto-like neighbourhoods become the norm. Rural areas, on the other hand, are more likely to support an array of people from all economic backgrounds where children and adults freely mingle and support one another.

This last is seen in local volunteers providing playground equipment, ball/soccer fields, hockey arenas and coaching for these activities, volunteer led church i.e. music and camps, sports and outdoor activities including community cleanup days. It is much easier for every child, not just a privileged few, to have the opportunity to be included since volunteers keep costs lower and activities are not kilometers from home.

I would especially like to mention the volunteer firefighters in Yarker (also Enterprise, Tamworth and Newburgh and Roblin) who are the first responders in almost any emergency situation. Some of their training is actually done by volunteer persons whose professions qualify them to do so. These volunteers come from every walk of life and every socioeconomic group. In rural areas, children see the importance first hand of this volunteerism and often experience it as their parent may well be one. This is a life lesson in the idea that not everyone needs to be well paid monetarily for their efforts. This type of volunteer can be of tremendous benefit also to the urban dwellers as they pass through to their recreational activities.

Yarker, also, uniquely has the Cataraqi Trail passing through it (as does Newburgh).

This trail is partially cared for by volunteers from the Yarker based snowmobile club, the Lennox and Addington Ridge Runners. This is enjoyed by, not just locals, but many city dwellers as well.

I can speak personally to all of this as my husband was a volunteer firefighter for years and, I, a volunteer dispatcher. He remains an associate member assisting with fund raising. As well, we remain members of the L&A Ridge Runners Snowmobile Club, and our local community group which supports the playing field, an outdoor skating rink, to which the school children can and do walk to for outdoor activities etc. I



also volunteer at the school and for my church. Most of this has been done while working at our regular jobs and raising a family.

The same is true for all the Yarker area neighbourhood volunteer groups.

I wonder how much in actual dollar cost it would take to replace say, for instance, just the emergency responders if these volunteers disappear since those particular people tend to be young with families who need schools. and jobs.

Could this climb to the hundreds of thousands of dollars in the next several years? These people are essential services, so must be replaced in some manner whether volunteer or fully paid professionals. The comfort here is that these dollars will not come from school board budgets but from fire services , health care, municipalities etc.

As a community dies there is no longer this life blood of younger persons to support these volunteer positions.

I strongly urge you to consider the future cost to all of us, socially and economically as you deliberate the closure of Yarker Family School.

Thank you.

Marilyn Fenwick  
72 Blue Heron St.  
Enterprise, Ont.  
K0K 1Z0  
613-358-2002

References:

- 1)Rural Schools and Educational Reform: Should We Keep Rural Schools Open? A Review of the Literature. Prepared by Dr. Allan C. Lauzon and Ms. Dannielle Leahy, School of Rural Extension Studies, University of Guelph, Geulph, Ont. N1G 2W1 ( this research funded by OMAFRA under the SRC Research Program. Project 023450
- 2)Ontarios Small Schools, People for Education, 2005, P.O.Box 64, Station P, Toronto, Ontario, M5S 2S6 phone: 416-534-0100, [www.peopleforeducation.com](http://www.peopleforeducation.com)
- 3)Edutopia, Teacher Leadership, 5 Steps to Better School/Community Collaboration, October 19, 2011, by Brendan O'keefe, Facilitating the education revolution and alternative learning environments, <https://www.edutopia.org/blog/school-community-collaboration-brendan-okeefe>
- 4)Education World: Are Small Schools Better Schools? April 7, 2017, [http://www.educationworld.com/a\\_issues/issues108.shtml](http://www.educationworld.com/a_issues/issues108.shtml)
- 5) Face to face encounters by Bev Trachey and Marilyn Fenwick during the Fall of 2016 around the Enterprise Ontario and Centreville , Ontario areas while obtaining 200 person's signatures on a petition which went to Queens Park asking for a moratorium on school closures

I speak to you tonight, as a parent. I believe my application indicated that I represent a group called Rural Schools Matter, but that group exists because I am a parent.

As a parent, I have been to the annual conference for parents held by People for Education, to the annual symposium for Parent Involvement Committees hosted by the Ministry of Education and I have sat in countless Parent Involvement Committee meetings at the board and school council meetings at my local school and others. The message I hear, time and again, is that parent involvement is the number one indicator of student success and well-being.

As a parent who also prizes these things, I must ask:

If EQAO scores can't be compared between schools, how can everything or anything else be compared? If the tests are standardized, why can't they be compared, isn't that the point of standardization?

If Yarker is closed, does that not put Yarker parents in the position of subsidizing education in the rest of the board since there will no longer be a school in their community?

Have you considered the number of children who will leave the public system for the Catholic one because their parents have lost faith?

As a parent, what is my child worth to you?

Yes, Yarker Family School is small. Yes, there are multi-grade classrooms. And as you've heard there is a culture there, and that deserves to be sustained. The Final Staff Report refers to Yarker as unique. Yes, it is. Instead of a gymnasium, they have the outdoors. I'm sure they know everyone's name and who their parents are. The parents probably know every child in the school. Not just the ones in their child's class, but all of them. And, they get along because they know where they came from. This, is a culture and it gets taken away when children are sent, at a young age, to be educated away from their homes, away from their communities and everything they know "for their own good".

In the experience of parents of the LDSB, parent involvement and engagement decrease, at times significantly, when schools are consolidated. Not only does it decrease, but what's left is degraded in quality and meaning. Parents no longer have a close-knit group with which to plan events to enhance our children's educational experience or to discuss issues that arise in the form of shared experiences. Instead, as schools increase in size, so do parent councils, creating large, unwieldy groups that can become mired in power politics and stagnation.

I have heard stories from the consolidated schools in the LDSB. I have heard of little girls cutting off all their hair so they won't get pulled to the ground and beat by other kids. I have heard of children bringing knives and drugs to elementary school. I have heard of promises of special resources for students when they get to their innovative new space. I have heard of children turning to physical violence to defend themselves because there are no adults available to supervise their recess. I have seen a school yard that is a mud pit when an athletic field was promised. And another that has one small slide for over 50 Kindergarteners in a tiny fenced in area – it was like watching cattle. These are the parents' stories.

There are parents who continue to contact a parent council chair who stepped down from the position over 3 years ago. One parent council chair held a town hall meeting for parents because their voices were not being heard. True, consolidating Yarker students into Odessa is not a new school, but, as was said at your last SE/SCC meeting, it sets a precedent for future closings and consolidations, particularly in rural areas. Are all the stories bad? I don't believe they are. Would all consolidations be turned down? Maybe not. But who's keeping track? Who's watching the EQAO scores for these children who have experienced the shift from a small rural school to a large, more urban one to see if their curricular experience was improved? Who's tracking their involvement in extra-curricular activities? To date, I have yet to hear any positive stories from PARs and their resulting consolidations, so what efforts have been taken by the LDSB to use a different approach, not mandated by the government but not contrary to their guidelines either? It's ok to reinvent the wheel if the one that's carrying the load has warped.

The Final Staff Report makes reference to a number of things that would be asked of parents if some of the alternative options were considered, and Ruth Bailey mentioned the difficulty of asking parents to sacrifice for the sake of a few. Parents sacrifice every day when we send our children to school and we trust in the system to provide a safe, nurturing environment that enhances our children's growth. Never mind the countless hours of volunteering that parents are asked to contribute in order to help the education system create a safe and caring atmosphere in its schools. The LDSB had no problem asking 6 parents to volunteer even more of their time to produce options that might keep a school open, placing an enormous amount of pressure and responsibility on volunteer parents, rather than paid staff.

The education system includes a wonderful avenue for input from parents. Right there, in every school in the board there's a parent council that can reach out to parents locally. Every school that is, except Yarker. Yarker "shares" with Odessa. Odessa seems to have a relatively active council – they spend too much time on fundraising for my personal taste, but that's another discussion. They have however, with respect, systematically excluded Yarker parents.

How many events are held in Yarker?

How much of their fundraising is used for enhancing student achievement and well-being at Yarker?

This is not the fault of the parents who sit on that council. Again, they are volunteers putting as much time as they can into something they believe is important and trusting that the information provided to them is the best there is.

But, why doesn't Yarker have its own parent council?

I made reference earlier to the sustainability of culture. This is just one aspect of the whole picture of sustainability. The key to sustainability is achieving balance in 4 aspects: environmental, cultural, social and economic. If you are missing even one of these aspects you cannot achieve real sustainability. Social and economic sustainability are beyond the scope of what I'm addressing at this time, but I will mention the environment.

In the situation we face here, the environmental elephant in the room is transportation. There has been some discussion about the effects of bus rides on the mental health of children, and even some about the health effects of the diesel fumes of buses. But, at no time has the LDSB made any efforts to track the carbon footprint of their busing and in fact, has no idea what this footprint might be.

In the case of Yarker, there seems to be some contradictory information. Tri-board claims bus ride times based on data while community members claim different times based on following the buses in their cars.

Have any measures been taken to confirm this data?

What measures has the board taken to mitigate the negative impact created by the transportation associated with busing?

What consideration has been taken to ensure the responsible management of taxpayer dollars when the carbon tax is imposed?

The LDSB claims that buildings account for the bulk of their energy costs, but what efforts have been made to compare that to the consumption caused by the transportation of all the students in the board?

In the event that a school like Yarker is not able to sell and sits vacant and must eventually be demolished, or left to rot, what environmental impact assessment has been done to inform these decisions?

At the last ESAC meeting a model was introduced that could track energy consumption and emissions for schools, including the impact of consolidating students. While this was interesting and informative, this type of modelling is not new. The technology and the software have existed for over a decade, at least.

What steps has the board taken, if any, to use this type of model to ensure that decisions are made in the most sustainable way possible?

As I said, sustainability is not just about the environment. If the board is to be sustainable, as in, continue to exist, decisions must be made taking all aspects of sustainability into mind. This includes parent involvement to sustain culture, it includes consideration of the environmental footprint to ensure we do not take more than we give, and it includes the impacts on the surrounding society and economy.

When parents send their children to your schools they must believe that their well-being is of paramount importance to the decision makers. If parents lose that trust, you will lose those parents who are the number one determining factor in student success. Even if you don't lose those students to another board or to home schooling, you lose their parents.

I have asked a lot of questions in the past 5 minutes and the truth is, I do not have the answers. The problem is, that with respect, neither do you.

# Corporation Of The Township Of Stone Mills

Reeve Eric Smith & Deputy Reeve John Wise

4504 County Road 4, Centreville, Ontario K0K 1N0  
Tel. (613) 378-2475 Fax. (613) 378-0033  
Website: [www.stonemills.com](http://www.stonemills.com).



May 9, 2017

Limestone District School Board  
220 Portsmouth Avenue  
Kingston, Ontario  
Canada  
K7M 0G2

Dear Limestone District School Board Trustees and Staff,

On behalf of the Township of Stone Mills, we would like to thank the Limestone District School Board (L.D.S.B) for the opportunity to speak this evening. The Township of Stone Mills Council is very familiar with the difficulty in making a decision that can impact many people. In the Municipal field, our councillors are consistently face the challenge of balancing financial constraints, staff responsibilities and desired service levels of the community.

As Reeve and Deputy Reeve of the Municipality of Stone Mills, we would like to recap the Pupil Accommodation Review (P.A.R) process from the perspective of the municipality. This process has been difficult as we are not only dealing with the proposed closure, but aware of the proposed recommendations of the Ameresco Report that may have future impact on other schools in our Township. To date, our council's sole focus has been on the Yarker Family School review as we anticipate future opportunity to discuss the accommodation plan for other schools within the Township.

Throughout this process, the municipality has been invited to three separate meetings which have included L.D.S.B staff, school board trustees and the board appointed meeting facilitator.

## **1) September 28, 2016 – School Enrolment/ Capacity committee**

This meeting consisted of the presentation of statistics, an education session on the legislated mandate of the P.A.R and highlight the detailed recommendations in the Ameresco report. At this meeting, there was representation from other municipalities along with the Township C.A.O and Councillor Davison - who is a lifelong resident and of the village of Yarker. Following that meeting, our council directed Township staff to develop relevant reports that could assist the board in their decision. The reports submitted, included a historical Growth analysis for



the catchment area of Yarker Family School and a report highlighting the capital investment and repairs by the L.D.S.B in the Township Schools according to Municipal building records. Included in this report was the issuance of a permit with a construction value of \$486,000 that was completed in 2013 for the Yarker Family School which was to a new classroom to the northeast corner of the existing school.

**2) January 23, 2017 – Pupil Accommodation Review Consultation “Initial Staff Report Regarding Yarker Family School and Odessa Public School”.**

This meeting was attended by three municipal Councillors’ and the township C.A.O. At this meeting our councillors provided various concerns surrounding the social and economic impact to our community.

Following this meeting, Council contracted Doyletech Corporation to complete an independent review of Economic and Social impacts of the proposed closure of the Yarker Family School. Council contracted this report as we identified the need for an independent analysis of the Economic and Social changes that we could incur, if the process proceeds. The Doyletech Report forecasted that our Township could see an annual loss of Economic activity in excess \$3 million dollars as a result of the proposed closure.

Following this meeting, Township Council passed a municipal resolution that was forwarded to Premier, Kathleen Wynne and Minister of Education, Mitzie Hunter seeking a moratorium of the school closure process until which time an extensive review could be completed. A copy of this resolution and the Doyletech Corporation- Social and Economic Impact report was submitted to you’re the LDSB offices March 2, 2017.

**3) March 29, 2017 -to be a meeting to share any new information.**

Our council requested clarification on the intent of this proposed meeting and details of the meeting agenda. With no new information from the L.D.S.B and having provided reports and copies of correspondence just prior, our Council determined that their attendance at this meeting was not a necessity. Instead, council requested the C.A.O attend the meeting and report back to Council any pertinent information. Unfortunately, that meeting was cancelled due to lack of attendees without a formal agenda ever being released.

In addition to participation in the noted meetings, our council has attempted to support the process through other means. Council has offered to facilitate meetings with the L.D.S.B and the community members by offering complimentary use of facilities that could increase the ability for families to participate. At the January 23, 2017 meeting,

council proposed an opportunity to meet with board officials to discuss matters specific to Stone Mills and the township-based schools. This offer was respectfully declined as the meeting is not part of the requirements under the P.A.R.

Since then, council has attempted to find other ways which we could provide meaningful contribution to process to demonstrate commitment in the efforts to sustain our current schools. Recently, Council provided a commitment in writing indicating that our township would commit to a shared facility by agreeing to contribute up to \$9,964 in annual rent to help reduce the operating costs of Yarker Family School and share in overhead on the underutilised areas.

In closing, our Council's intent is to ensure that this board is carefully considering the impact that the proposed decision will have on our rural students. Our council is concerned that "once a school is closed then the school would never be reopened". This decision would leave the Township with a large vacant building attached to the public library which the Township provided partnership funding in 2007 to ensure that the Library system is in close proximity to the Yarker Family School. As we have realized from the statistics provided at the L.D.S.B meetings, small school population numbers can drastically fluctuate in a very short period. It's difficult to digest that only 4 years ago the growth of the Yarker Family School was thriving enough for the L.D.S.B to commit \$486,000 and here we are today standing before the same board requesting that they not close that same school.

Instead, we request the board and trustees to consider undertaking substantial action to assist with the operation of the Yarker Family Public School. Could aligning the operating hours of Yarker to other schools in the jurisdiction assist with enrolment? Could increasing the enforcement of the jurisdictional boundaries to limit students from attending other schools mitigate the need for school closure?

Township Council believes that provided the number of Municipalities that have passed resolutions seeking moratoriums on the P.A.R process across the province, this issue requires Provincial wide review prior to implementation. Until that occurs, I encourage the board not to proceed with the closure of the Yarker Family School and focus on mechanisms to support the sustainability of the school.

**Deputation on**  
**Missed Opportunities For Significant Budgetary Savings**  
**from Yarker/Odessa PAR**  
**By Bryan Brown May 9, 2017**

**Background Quotes:**

**Director Rantz** SE/SCC Meeting (April 24/2017) (Paraphrased)

1. "Yarker students are being subsidized to the tune of \$247,000/ year or \$1 million over five years by keeping the school open."
2. "If you (the trustees) don't vote to close the Yarker School, you are denying other students access to special programs" .
3. "If you (the trustees) are sitting there trying to think of ways to keep the Yarker Family School open you are working contrary to the Goals of the Board of Education".
3. "Funding is based on 100% utilization".
4. "I urge you to recognize the urgency of closing the (Yarker) school".
5. "There are no circumstances in which the Yarker school should stay open".

This tells me that Trustees have clearly been given their **marching orders** and the financial impact of closing the school is of **paramount importance**.

**Director Rantz** – From Minutes of Community Partnership Meeting (January 23, 2017) (Paraphrased)

1. "The realities of declining enrolment and lack of funding, yet still supplying the best education experience for all our students is difficult. The Board's goal is to reach 100 percent school capacity as much as possible".

This tells me that **finances are critical** to supplying the best education possible and that without money **students and programs suffer**.

**Analysis:**

If closing the Yarker School is of paramount importance and finances are critical to preventing students and programs from suffering...

**Why did the board go after the smallest fish in the pond and why did the trustees not question this strategy?**

Superintendent Babin has publicly stated that **“this is not a business, this is education”** (SE/SCC Meeting April 24/2017)... But let me tell you anyway the approach that business would take.

If business needed money due to **budgetary cutbacks or reduced sales**, they would go after the “biggest fish in the pond”. They would save the big money up front and they would accrue those savings every year over the life of the project.

Closing Yarker Family School will save, according to senior staff, **\$247,585** per year or **\$1,237,925 over five years**.

Yarker is a small fish. If you really need money... **why didn't you go after a bigger fish?**

I don't think Yarker/Odessa is the best place for you to have started to realize financial gains... but you did...so let's look at the current PAR.

The current PAR was given only one option, close Yarker. My business background immediately said to me... wait a minute... if you have only two schools within the scope of this sub-project, what aren't all the alternatives being considered?

With two schools, you have **four mathematical options:**

1. Keep Both Schools Open
2. Close School **A**
3. Close School **B**
4. Close Both School **A** and School **B**

I have never seen a business report with **only one option**.... That's not a report, it's a **directive**. It left the people on PAR committee with no wiggle room, their only real options were to rob Peter to pay Paul... not to save any money.

The second goal of this PAR, as stated in the Initial Staff Report, was to **Maximize Use of Resources**, yet you only looked at the smallest gain in the smallest sub project proposed by Ameresco.

If I said to you that closing Odessa could save you **\$1 million** a year or **\$2 million** a year or maybe even **\$3 million** per year, **would you be interested?** Think of the programs that could be expanded for all the students in the system if you had a gain of **\$5 million to \$15 million over 5 years**. That makes the Yarker closure look like small potatoes. **Who is denying students access to programs now???** (See Odessa Cost Savings Extrapolation on page 9).

The problem is that **you will never know** because...

1. the school board didn't offer it as an option for your consideration,
2. you didn't ask for it when you approved the ISR,
3. the PARC members didn't want to introduce conflict within their group, so they ignored it,
4. both the staff and the one trustee on PARC (Mr. Garrod) shot it down as not within the scope of the PAR.

A good business report looks at all the alternatives, costs them all out, gives pros and cons of each and then makes a recommendation. Only then can the decision makers make an **informed decision**.

**Repeat... your job is to make informed decisions.** If you don't have all the facts, how can you make a good decision?

**Good decisions** require good data, **bad decisions** come from bad data. .... In the computer game this is referred to as **Garbage In, Garbage Out**.

Speaking of garbage, the Initial Staff Report is one of the worst documents I have come across in my 70 years. I don't have time to go into its many faults, but as you read all the public documents submitted to PARC, you will see the extend of the problem. The ISR is full of errors and omissions, it is totally unbalanced, it is



single-minded and it ignores the major goal of the project itself which is to **Maximize the Use of Board Resources** when you ignore the “elephant in the room”. The Initial Staff report did not even answer the most important question ... **What is the Bottom Line Savings of Closing the Yarker school?** This is the only real working document that PARC was given ... is it any wonder that they spent months trying to understand the problem and scramble for solutions?

In fairness to the PAR Committee, they did request Bottom Line Financial Data for both schools but the School Board only provided data for Yarker. Another **great example of bullying by staff**. Maybe, just maybe, they would have been enlightened to know the true cost of running the Odessa school.

But **we'll never know** because...

- \* the staff didn't provide it,
- \* you didn't ask for it,
- \* my proposal was turned down by PARC to prevent conflict
- \*... And you know nothing about it because the

**Policy Keeps Trustees Out Of The Loop.**

Let's take a look at my report that I submitted to PARC (entitled “Alternative Solutions For Consideration By the Yarker/Odessa PARC”) and which is included in your PARC FSR Documentation (Appendix C:5, pages 121-222).

I identified that the board has a real problem with its **4,276** empty spaces. Given reduced budgets, I can see no way around it, **you have to close schools**. Staff wants to close Yarker and reduce **72 OTGs**, Odessa would reduce **490 OTGs** (talk about little fish and big fish). If you closed both of them you could reduce by **560 OTGs**... And maybe save **\$5-15 million**. Has this got your interest????

Remember that you have **4,276** spaces to address according to Ameresco.

But Mr. Brown, how can we possibly **close Odessa**? Where would we send the students? Read my report and see Table 2 and Chart 1 on page 8 of this document. If you look at all the empty spaces in the **Stone Mills Rural schools** and you look at the empty spaces at **Fairfield and Bath**, you can accommodate all the JK-G6 students within the proximity of Odessa. The G7-G8 students can move to

**Ernestown SS (next door).** This would raise the utilization in these other schools almost to full capacity.... And isn't this one of Director Rantz's goals to improve funding... **full utilization = full funding?**

Closing Odessa, will eliminate the need for a **principal and two custodians** (sorry Mr. Seymour), those savings alone will match the proposed savings of closing Yarker school ... let alone any teacher savings, any requisite renewal costs and all operational savings (that we don't know, because they were never presented and you didn't ask).

**Recommendation:**

1. If the trustee's job is to **rubber stamp** staff decisions, then your job is done, we have wasted a years worth of work on all fronts and there is a **huge missed opportunity** to save real money which could be used, as Director Rantz says... **"to provide better access to special programs equitably for all students"**. If Yarker provides a million dollars of better access over five years, **what would \$5-15 million provide?**

If the trustees job is to make **informed decisions** regarding our children's education and expenditures of taxpayer money, then the Yarker/Odessa PAR **needs to be redone**. You need to **reject the Final Staff Report** as incomplete, expand the scope of the PAR, and undertake the process all over, this time looking at **all the options**.

If you don't do this, by ministry policy, Odessa is exempt from the PAR process for the **next five years**. You can afford to take another year, in order to increase the benefit **5 to 15 fold**. Remember that you have **4,267** open spaces to address.

2. Trustees should also rethink the Ameresco project strategy:

- \* do the **big gainers first**;
- \* realize the **biggest savings earlier**;
- \* let the **savings accrue longer**.

This will result in a larger overall savings over time... it is simple mathematics.

3. Rethink new schools. Closing schools is an **ugly and painful process**, especially when the schools are in good to moderate condition. Your goal is to reduce **4,276** empty spaces. **For every new space you create with a new school you have yet another old space to address**. Ameresco is recommending that you add another **3,262** spaces, that means you have to address **7,538** empty spaces with the PARC process (See Table 3 on page 9 of this document). **Don't do it... don't spend new money that you don't need to spend... don't add to the board's indebtedness (currently \$178M), don't add to the provinces indebtedness (currently over \$300B), let's be rational with our taxpayer money or this country will end up like Greece where they can no longer borrow money and they can't afford to pay their civil servants and teachers.**

**Final thoughts:**

I also submitted a paper regarding the outstanding indebtedness of the Full Day Kindergarten addition that was made to the Yarker School in 2014 (see “Amortization of Full Day Kindergarten Addition to Yarker Family School” in your PARC FSR Documentation (Appendix C:5, pages 176-182, also on page 10 of this document). According to Board staff, **\$676,247** of capital expenditure money was spent on that building, even though the Board has had the closure of Yarker school in its sights going back to the 1970’s. This school is clearly a thorn in the side of this Board.

Capital expenditures are normally funded with a mortgage over 25 years. My paper contends that there is still over **\$600,000** of principal outstanding on the mortgage, as we all know that interest payments consume the majority of the payments in the early years. **The true cost of that addition is over \$1million** dollars when you factor in the interest payments. The Board has indicated that it is “**not their problem**” or their concern as it was given as a grant. Well it’s our problem as it was our **taxpayer money** and we are still paying for it and will continue to do so for **another 20+ years**.

I have tried to locate this mortgage thru the Ministry of Education Financial Policy and Business Division and the Ontario Financing Authority..... but have been stonewalled and unsuccessful.

It’s a complex problem as the **\$1.5 billion** was spread over **five years**, over 76 odd school boards and over multiple schools within each Board. It is going to take a **forensic accountant** with access to the books to determine this indebtedness and the **Auditor General of Ontario** is the only one with the authority to do this. If one little three room school house is wasting **\$600,000+**, how much is being wasted on **600 school closures** across the province? **The Auditor General needs to find out** as they, at least, are accountable to the taxpayers of Ontario. You as trustees could also **demand to see** the accounting of this capital expenditure.

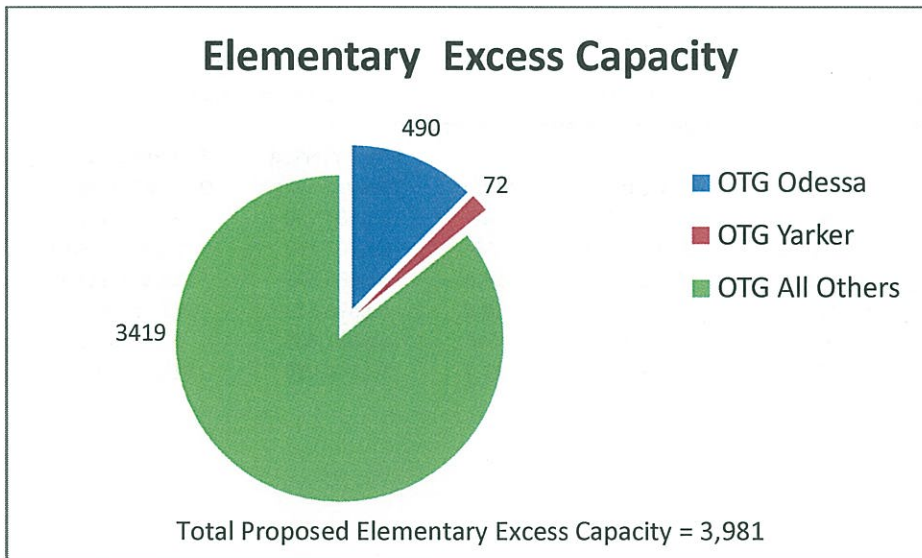
\*\*\*\*\*Table 2\*\*\*\*\*

**Current OTGs and Utilization (Ameresco Numbers)**

	OTG	2016 Enrollment	2016 Utilization	2016 Vacancies
Odessa PS	490	332	68%	<b>158</b>
<b>Stone Mills Schools</b>				
Selby	285	239	84%	46
Tamworth	190	141	74%	49
Newburgh	164	121	74%	43
Enterprise	141	93	66%	48
Centreville	141	117	83%	24
Yarker FS	72	35	49%	37
	<u>993</u>	<u>746</u>		<u><b>247</b></u>
<b>Other Ernestown Family of Schools</b>				
Fairfield	443	300	68%	143
Bath	372	256	69%	116
Amherstview	543	539	99%	4
	<u>1,358</u>	<u>1,095</u>		<u><b>263</b></u>
			<b>Total Vacancies</b>	<b>510</b>

\*\*\*\*\*Table 2\*\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*\*CHART 1\*\*\*\*\*



\*\*\*\*\*CHART 1\*\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*\*Table 3\*\*\*\*\*

### New Proposed Capital Expenditures

New Construction:	Cost	Added	Elementary	Secondary	
	Million	Capacity			
new Molly Brant School	\$10.8	459	459		(LTAP Page 7)
new Kingston Central SS	\$36.0	1,349		1,349	(LTAP Page 33)
new Prince Charles PS replacement	\$8.5	420	420		(LTAP Page 11)
news North of 401 ES	\$8.0	374	374		(LTAP Page 11)
new North of Princess SS	\$10.3	450		450	(LTAP Page 23)
new Bayridge SS addition	\$5.6	210		210	(LTAP Page 25)
	<b>\$79.2</b>	<b>3,262</b>	<b>1,253</b>	<b>2,009</b>	

### New Excess Capacity:

	OTGs				LTAP Pages 7 & 8
Today		4,276	2,726	1,550	
New - Proposed		3,262	1,253	2,009	see above
<b>New Total</b>	<b>OTGs</b>	<b>7,538</b>	<b>3,979</b>	<b>3,559</b>	

\*\*\*\*\*Table 3\*\*\*\*\*

### Odessa Extrapolation

With the absence of potential cost savings for the Odessa school closure, it is necessary to extrapolate a comparison factor by looking at the proposed Yarker school savings and comparing it to the larger Odessa school.

		\$		\$	
Yarker Closing Annual Savings		247,586		5 Year = 1,237,930	
Odessa Closing Annual Savings		Unknown. therefore extrapolated			
Comparisons	Yarker	Odessa	Factor	1 Yr Projected Odessa Savings	5 Yr Projected Odessa Savings
OTG	72	490	6.8	\$1,684,960	\$8,424,801.39
Replacement Cost	\$2,014,789	\$14,666,335	7.3	\$1,802,263	\$9,011,313.88
5 Yr Renewal Cost	\$404,219	\$5,986,183	14.8	\$3,666,565	\$18,332,823.35
10 Yr Renewal Cost	\$856,638	\$8,990,270	10.5	\$2,598,373	\$12,991,864.64
Teachers	2.65	17.53	6.6	\$1,637,805	\$8,189,023.74
Current Enrolment	26	330	12.7	\$3,142,438	\$15,712,188.46



**Amortization of Yarker FDK Addition**

Interest Rate

4.03%

Semi Annual Payment

\$21,590

6 mths Period	Year	Starting Principal	Interest Rate	Interest Payment	Semi Ann Payment	Against Principal	Ending Principal	Accumul Paymenttd
1	2014	\$676,247	4.03%	\$13,626	\$21,590	\$7,964	\$668,283	\$21,590
2	2014	\$668,283	4.03%	\$13,466	\$21,590	\$8,124	\$660,159	\$43,180
3	2015	\$660,159	4.03%	\$13,302	\$21,590	\$8,288	\$651,871	\$64,770
4	2015	\$651,871	4.03%	\$13,135	\$21,590	\$8,455	\$643,417	\$86,360
5	2016	\$643,417	4.03%	\$12,965	\$21,590	\$8,625	\$634,792	\$107,950
6	2016	\$634,792	4.03%	\$12,791	\$21,590	\$8,799	\$625,993	\$129,540
7	2017	\$625,993	4.03%	\$12,614	\$21,590	\$8,976	\$617,016	\$151,130
8	2017	\$617,016	4.03%	\$12,433	\$21,590	\$9,157	\$607,859	\$172,720
9	2018	\$607,859	4.03%	\$12,248	\$21,590	\$9,342	\$598,518	\$194,310
10	2018	\$598,518	4.03%	\$12,060	\$21,590	\$9,530	\$588,988	\$215,900
11	2019	\$588,988	4.03%	\$11,868	\$21,590	\$9,722	\$579,266	\$237,490
12	2019	\$579,266	4.03%	\$11,672	\$21,590	\$9,918	\$569,348	\$259,080
13	2020	\$569,348	4.03%	\$11,472	\$21,590	\$10,118	\$559,230	\$280,670
14	2020	\$559,230	4.03%	\$11,268	\$21,590	\$10,322	\$548,909	\$302,260
15	2021	\$548,909	4.03%	\$11,061	\$21,590	\$10,529	\$538,379	\$323,850
16	2021	\$538,379	4.03%	\$10,848	\$21,590	\$10,742	\$527,638	\$345,440
17	2022	\$527,638	4.03%	\$10,632	\$21,590	\$10,958	\$516,680	\$367,030
18	2022	\$516,680	4.03%	\$10,411	\$21,590	\$11,179	\$505,501	\$388,620
19	2023	\$505,501	4.03%	\$10,186	\$21,590	\$11,404	\$494,097	\$410,210
20	2023	\$494,097	4.03%	\$9,956	\$21,590	\$11,634	\$482,463	\$431,800
21	2024	\$482,463	4.03%	\$9,722	\$21,590	\$11,868	\$470,594	\$453,390
22	2024	\$470,594	4.03%	\$9,482	\$21,590	\$12,108	\$458,487	\$474,980
23	2025	\$458,487	4.03%	\$9,239	\$21,590	\$12,351	\$446,135	\$496,570
24	2025	\$446,135	4.03%	\$8,990	\$21,590	\$12,600	\$433,535	\$518,160
25	2026	\$433,535	4.03%	\$8,736	\$21,590	\$12,854	\$420,681	\$539,750
26	2026	\$420,681	4.03%	\$8,477	\$21,590	\$13,113	\$407,567	\$561,340
27	2027	\$407,567	4.03%	\$8,212	\$21,590	\$13,378	\$394,190	\$582,930
28	2027	\$394,190	4.03%	\$7,943	\$21,590	\$13,647	\$380,543	\$604,520
29	2028	\$380,543	4.03%	\$7,668	\$21,590	\$13,922	\$366,621	\$626,110
30	2028	\$366,621	4.03%	\$7,387	\$21,590	\$14,203	\$352,418	\$647,700
31	2029	\$352,418	4.03%	\$7,101	\$21,590	\$14,489	\$337,929	\$669,290
32	2029	\$337,929	4.03%	\$6,809	\$21,590	\$14,781	\$323,149	\$690,880
33	2030	\$323,149	4.03%	\$6,511	\$21,590	\$15,079	\$308,070	\$712,470
34	2030	\$308,070	4.03%	\$6,208	\$21,590	\$15,382	\$292,688	\$734,060
35	2031	\$292,688	4.03%	\$5,898	\$21,590	\$15,692	\$276,995	\$755,650
36	2031	\$276,995	4.03%	\$5,581	\$21,590	\$16,009	\$260,987	\$777,240
37	2032	\$260,987	4.03%	\$5,259	\$21,590	\$16,331	\$244,656	\$798,830
38	2032	\$244,656	4.03%	\$4,930	\$21,590	\$16,660	\$227,995	\$820,420
39	2033	\$227,995	4.03%	\$4,594	\$21,590	\$16,996	\$211,000	\$842,010
40	2033	\$211,000	4.03%	\$4,252	\$21,590	\$17,338	\$193,661	\$863,600
41	2034	\$193,661	4.03%	\$3,902	\$21,590	\$17,688	\$175,973	\$885,190
42	2034	\$175,973	4.03%	\$3,546	\$21,590	\$18,044	\$157,929	\$906,780
43	2035	\$157,929	4.03%	\$3,182	\$21,590	\$18,408	\$139,522	\$928,370
44	2035	\$139,522	4.03%	\$2,811	\$21,590	\$18,779	\$120,743	\$949,960
45	2036	\$120,743	4.03%	\$2,433	\$21,590	\$19,157	\$101,586	\$971,550
46	2036	\$101,586	4.03%	\$2,047	\$21,590	\$19,543	\$82,043	\$993,140
47	2037	\$82,043	4.03%	\$1,653	\$21,590	\$19,937	\$62,106	\$1,014,730
48	2037	\$62,106	4.03%	\$1,251	\$21,590	\$20,339	\$41,767	\$1,036,320
49	2038	\$41,767	4.03%	\$842	\$21,590	\$20,748	\$21,019	\$1,057,910
50	2038	\$21,019	4.03%	\$424	\$21,443	\$21,019	\$0	\$1,079,353
Totals				\$403,106	\$1,079,353	\$676,247		





May 3, 2017

## Submission Regarding the Final Staff Report Recommendation to Close Yarker Family School

By Eric DePoe

### Introduction

The proposal to close Yarker Family School is now reaching the final decision-making stage. The Final Staff Report, which continues to put forward school closure as the only option, was provided to the Trustees on April 24, 2017.

If adopted by the Trustees, this flawed and unidimensional report will impose a permanent solution to a temporary problem, a dip in enrollment at the Yarker Family School. The community as a whole is opposed to this option, and has voiced its opposition in many ways. Despite this, the Board staff has continued in their ill-advised drive to close the school.

### Legal Requirements

The decisions of the Ontario courts regarding school closures provide guidance as to the legal requirements of the school closure process. These court decisions accord great importance to the following questions

- Whether the school closing is authorized by law
- Whether there was adequate public consultation as required by law
- Whether the decision is taken through a process that is procedurally fair

According to one ruling “The predominant view in the Ontario case law requires substantial compliance with the guidelines and policies by school boards seeking to close schools.” This decision went on to note:

“The decision to close a school has been recognized as a very important one, given the significance of school to the students, their families, and the local communities affected by a school closure. Accordingly, the case law on school closure has emphasized that the right to procedural fairness must be jealously guarded – that is, the affected parties must be given an opportunity for meaningful consultation before a decision is made”

With respect to legitimate expectations, affected individuals have the right to expect substantial compliance with the consultation process prescribed by the Policy of the Board.”

### Lack of Consultation with Community Partners

The potential decision to close Yarker Family School is a very important one, not least because it also jeopardizes the public library as well as the school. The Limestone District School Board has not complied with their policy that requires them to consult with community partner responsible for the library.

May 3, 2017

The County of Lennox and Addington is responsible for the operation of Yarker Library. There has been no consultation with them, even though the Board is required to “continue discussions with affected municipalities”. Board Policy#20 requires these consultations, they are not optional.

It is simply not good enough for the Board to complain passively that the County of Lennox and Addington did not come to a meeting or whether or not they received an email about it. This is not consultation, it is abdication of responsibility.

The Final Staff Report devotes a mere three paragraphs to this subject, without any reference to contact of any kind with Lennox and Addington County. It makes reference to a 2016 report indicating that the County is of the opinion that the library will continue to operate until two future libraries may be built, but does not address how this will happen if the school is closed. Reading a report is not consultation.

Certainly whether the LDSB will continue to provide the services to the library that they provide now, such as snow removal, grass cutting, electricity, building alarm system, custodial services, water and septic are vital considerations that affect the viability of the library. Yarker citizens deserve better.

The Township of Stone Mills is also a community partner. Consultation does not consist of holding a meeting where Township representatives arrive to learn for the first time that the LDSB is considering closing their schools. This was exactly what happened at the first CPP meeting on September 8, 2016. The second consultation meeting was held January 23, 2017, where there was no agenda sent out before the meeting, so Township representatives were unable to prepare. They did express their concerns, with no response from the LDSB, and no ability to prepare information to provide for the meeting. School Board representatives wanted to talk about the other closings for which they hadn't honoured the Ministry guidelines.

For the March 20, 2017 meeting council members didn't attend because again there was no specific agenda. Council decided it was wrong to go without an agenda, so they shared the Doletec report but did not attend. LDSB subsequently received a letter from Stone Mills expressing their dissatisfaction with the process.

### **Doyletec Report**

Despite the fact that the LDSB is now deferring any closure of all other Stone Mills schools, Yarker will still take an economic hit from a school closure that it can ill afford.

### **EQAO Scores**

That Yarker Family School achieved the best test scores of any school in the LDSB. Contrary to the unconvincing and perhaps disingenuous attempts to explain away these results, they were achieved by children who are well taught in an excellent educational environment. To claim otherwise is to negate the effect of the school on learning. It is not believable that the high scores of Yarker children are mere coincidence, as some school board staff have asserted. To close the



May 3, 2017

best learning environment that the LDSB has been able to produce is both illogical and flies in the face of the purpose of the school board to provide the best possible education for our children.

We ask that you reject this Final Staff Report for many reasons. Other presenters have spoken eloquently about many of them, and I have contributed some legal reasons as well.





The purpose of the FSR is to demonstrate that Yarker Family School should be closed for financial reasons..

The FSR includes detailed data that should have been available, as part of the ISR, to the PARC for its use.

- The presentation analysing the ISR to PARC by Robin Hutcheon on Jan 26 constitutes a segment of this presentation. I have yet to find it within all of the documents but it was submitted to the secretary, as well as being sent individually to all of the Trustees.

The majority of the report focuses on how closing Yarker will save money, while 7 pages are devoted to saying why the PARC proposals will not work.

- The implications to the alternative options presented by the PARC identified by senior staff include several areas where opinion rather than fact is used

Director Rantz said (on April 24), this closure is to improve the quality of programming for students in the Yarker catchment area, yet there is no discussion of specific program improvements in the FSR, specifically how closing Yarker will "Maintain or improve the curricular, extracurricular and social opportunities for the [K-3] students."

The FSR references are only to LDSB documents, Ontario Ministry documents, Stone Mills Township, and Lennox & Addington County documents. There are no references to any peer-reviewed research on K - 3 education.

- There is also no reference in the FSR to the new caps put on classrooms by the Ministry and how this will affect staffing.

The PARC should have had senior staff support for what they were asked to do, but instead senior staff who were and Trustee at PARC committee meetings to chair, facilitate, or support its work took up the greatest amount of time in each meeting. In more than one meeting the PARC had only 30 minutes out of 2 hours to discuss possibilities.

A concern raised in the beginning of this process by the PARC was senior staff's use of opinion rather than fact. Section 3.4 indicates that the listed benefits are from the "experience of Senior Staff". A lot of things are "likely" or "could serve" or "may" or "may not" or "generally". Very little is based on actual research or fact and several assumptions are made. If research has been done it is preliminary, seemingly quite shallow and not conclusive.

Staff continues to insist that extra-curricular activities are available at OPS because it is a larger school without acknowledging that these activities depend on teacher participation, which is entirely voluntary, and therefore cannot be guaranteed.

Specific criticism of FSR Section 3.2 – Table 2 in section 3.1 indicates that the utilization percentage dropped by more than half when the addition was put on (147.8% in 2013 to 70.8% in 2014).

- Does this not lend credence to the comments from the community that the addition was a significant factor in YFS having such a low utilization rate?
- Could Ministry requirements for the FDK learning environment have been met by renovating an existing classroom and adding a portable
- Has the addition been used since it was put on?
- Why is the addition not currently in use?
- If the significant decline mentioned in the third paragraph could not have been predicted, how can you predict that a significant increase will not happen next year?

Specific criticism Section 3.3 – Graph 1 indicates that 25 students are currently attending YFS. Other areas of the FSR indicate that enrolment is actually at 26 students. There is no mention of the fact that in June 2016 YFS had 37 students enrolled and by September, after the release of the LTAP, only 26.

- Do staff know the actual enrolment of YFS?
- Why do staff refuse to admit that the LTAP had something to do with the decline from June to September?
- Has anyone done any research to determine what percentage of YFS students will actually attend OPS as a significant number of parents have indicated that they will not be sending their children there if YFS closes?

Specific criticism Section 3.4 – The term “subsidize” is prejudicial and contrary to the message of inclusion the Board claims to support. Students are expected to champion the idea of “we, not me” yet staff are using an opposing paradigm to justify this closure. By the same token one could argue that YFS residents are being asked to subsidize education in another community since their tax dollars will no longer be used for a school in their community.

- What scientific evidence, rather than opinion, does the staff have that one or more classes per grade will provide the benefits outlined in paragraph 3?
- Does staff think one classroom with multiple grades would negatively impact the achievement and well-being of students?

Both Marysville PS and Amherst Island PS are recommended for consolidation or review this year and within the next 8 years.

- Does the reference to these as being “supported” mean that they will not be considered for closure or consolidation?
- Why was “supported” not defined clearly?

Specific criticism Section 4.1 – Despite the staff’s insistence that the FCI is not a factor in the recommendation for closure, community members still have not been provided with the data to fulfill their FOI requests concerning monies spent on YFS. Additionally, staff have indicated that they are unable to match the money they spend with the projects that are completed.

- If FCI is not a factor to be considered, why are staff stonewalling on the information requested by the community?

Specific criticism Section 4.2 – There is still no answer to the question of what will happen to the library if YFS closes.

- If YFS closes is the Township expected to purchase the building?
- If YFS closes is the Township expected to assume the costs of snow plowing, grass cutting, electricity, building alarm services and custodial services?
- Have these things been discussed with the Township or the County (since it's a branch of the County Library Service)?

Specific criticism Section 5

- If YFS students can be accommodated on the 3 buses currently running through the community, why aren't they already?
- If bus ride times could be shorter with just these 3 buses, why aren't they already?
- How can putting more children on fewer buses result in shorter ride times?
- What research has staff done into the effects, negative or positive, that occur as a result of 4 year olds riding with 18 year olds?
- If it's not appropriate to put multiple grades together in a classroom, why is it appropriate on a school bus?

Specific criticism Section 6 – The reference to funding constraints in special education is again, prejudicial, and therefore inappropriate.

- Is the reduction in GSN a result of closing YFS or is this a reduction that will take place anyway?
- Is the \$136 337 savings mentioned in the paragraph beginning with "Teachers", including the circumstance where "some of the 1.35 FTE teacher positions would be returned to elementary schools in our system"?
- \$136 337 is the average salary of whom?
- Can actual savings on teacher salaries not be calculated using current or projected data?
- If it can, why was this not used? If not, why not?

NOTE 1: I reserve the right to re-arrange the order of this presentation.

NOTE 2: I have references on rural schools, small schools and current "best pedagogy" research that I will provide but I do not have time before 4:30 to put this list into a good format.



5 minute presentation by Beverley Trachy

Trustees and Staff members-

Certain aspects within the section entitled "Transportation" in the Final Staff Report for the Yarker Family School and Odessa Public School are quite frankly puzzling to me.

In the Final Report, Appendix R: 3 the routes to and from Odessa Public Schools list only 19 students from Yarker Family School. This chart doesn't make any reference to the 7 out of catchment boundary students that presently are enrolled in Yarker. The calculations for average ride times and the longest and shortest ride times are all based on the 19 in boundary students only. The 7 students from out of boundary represent 27% of the student population for the Yarker school. They are being transported on the bus with the in boundary students. Why weren't these children included in the calculations for projected bus ride times for Yarker?

Many schools have a significant portion of their enrolment out of the catchment boundary. Odessa Public School is one such school. In 2015-16, 40.2% of their students were from outside the catchment boundary, according to the School Information Profile provided for Odessa. In Appendix B of this profile, for the year 2016, the total student enrolment was 332. This number includes children in the Odessa catchment boundary area and outside of the catchment boundary area. The Ameresco report used 332 in its calculations to attain a utilization rate of 68% for Odessa Public School.

A policy should be developed with regard to out of catchment boundary students and applied consistently. All calculations involving bus ride times and enrolment numbers for their recipient school should include these students.

Appendix R: 3 records nine of the nineteen students from the Yarker school with a ride time of 14 minutes and 3 of the students with a ride time of 15 minutes in the PM from Odessa Public School. Presumably, ride times commence when the children are seated, the door of the bus is closed and the bus moves forward. In the School Information Profile for Odessa Public School Appendix B Page 11, it states "In 2015-16 there were 22 bus routes to transport the students to Odessa Public School."

Given the large number of routes, multiple buses would be required to accommodate the students. Delays leaving the parking lot of the school at Odessa are inevitable. This may seem to represent a very small amount of time but with a total ride time of 14 or 15 minutes, small delays can have a large impact.

Yarker Family School students will be transported with Odessa's secondary school students in the name of savings and efficiency. Ernestown Secondary School is dismissed 5 minutes later than the elementary school. This fact requires the Yarker elementary students to make a slight detour to board secondary students before leaving the school property. A further addition to the ride time for the Yarker students. Google Maps records the travel time as 10 minutes from Odessa Public School to the juncture of County Road 1 and 6. This time allocation doesn't make any allowances for pick ups or drop offs along County Road 6. Would a route without stops over this distance be classed as efficient? Perhaps 2 to 3 minutes would remain to deliver the children to their stops at this point if traffic was light and the weather was clear. Presently, most of the Yarker Family School students have been granted access to bus rides for safety reasons which include their age, the absence of side walks and the speed of traffic on some roads. Dropping multiple students at designated areas and requiring them to travel a distance on foot has been deemed unwise for children this age for the reasons stated above. When all aspects are considered, one must seriously question if these short ride times can be consistently attained.

I questioned Mr. Gord Taylor the CEO for Tri-Board Student Transportation Services in a phone conversation on April 25<sup>th</sup>, about what the Appendix R:3 actually represented. How did they ascertain the ride times recorded in this document? Did they actually add the location of each of the children in the Yarker Family School into the software program on the 3 selected routes? He would neither confirm nor deny this action.

The School Information Profile for Odessa Public School Appendix B: Page 12 Table 4 for the year 2016/17 is entitled "Bus Transportation Information for Grade 4-8 Students residing in the Yarker



Family School Catchment Area”. These are the routes that have been identified for transporting the Yarker children. In this chart the longest ride time for in boundary students in the AM is recorded as 50 minutes. Page 8 of the Final Report under the heading “Joining 2016 Bus Routes to Odessa P.S.” records the longest ride time for the in boundary Yarker Family School children as 37 minutes in the AM. Lets recap this. You are adding children to established routes within the same catchment area and the result is a 13 minute decrease in the maximum ride time.

There is also a marked variation in average ride times between the chart for Grade 4 -8 Yarker children and the predictions for the Joining 2016 Bus Routes chart. There is a variation of up to 8 minutes in average ride times for the PM routes between these 2 charts. Again, the shorter route is the Joining 2016 Bus Route that will see an addition of 19 in boundary students described more conservatively on page 21 of the Final Report as 14 households. When a number of stops are added to a route there is of necessity a time increase to cover boarding and disembarking the bus as well as acceleration and deceleration of the bus to make the stops. To the equation, one must consider the time necessary to pick up and drop off the out of boundary students for both the Grade 4-8's and the Yarker Family School.

There appears to be enough discrepancies in this section of the Final Report to warrant further investigation.

Thank you.

Further information regarding the impact of bus ride times.

Submitted by Beverley Trachy

One might question the wisdom of closing local schools and steadily increasing the school bus ride times for the rural children in the Limestone School Board's jurisdiction.

Just a few short years ago in 2008 an Effectiveness and Efficiency Review for Tri-Board Student Transportation Services was conducted by a review team selected by the Ministry of Education. Funding adjustments were allocated from the Ministry of Education based on the overall E& E ratings achieved by Tri-Board. One could conclude that the report was initiated by the Ministry of Education and its content was acknowledged as correct by the Ministry of Education.

In Section 5.4.3 of the report, Tri-Board established average ride times as a measure in determining if increased routes were acceptable. It states, "As a rule, striving for higher levels of capacity utilization, for example, requires that each bus route be longer. Measuring ride times serves to illuminate these tradeoffs ....." According to the Effectiveness and Efficiency Follow-Up report dated August 2009, page 29 states that "average ride time per Board by grade level" are generated monthly. Given the current reality of school closures, calculations for each school's average ride time rather than the Board's average ride time would be more appropriate. It would reveal the true tradeoff of closing schools and extending routes.

On page 33 of the 2008 report under the bullet "Student Ride Times" a series of statements address the importance of ride times, "Student ride times are an important indicator of the overall service level being provided by a transportation operation. Considering the impact on student achievement, extra-curricular activities, and safety, and given the constraints of safety, time, and distance the overarching goal of transportation is to *minimize* the amount of time that students spend on a bus." These statements demand a second look. This report clearly states there is an impact on student achievement, on extracurricular activities and safety linked directly to bus ride times. How well is the overarching

goal of transportation to minimize the amount of time students spend on a bus being implemented within the Board's jurisdiction?

The report then records Tri-Board's maximum ride time in 2008 as 60 minutes unless the student is attending a school outside their attendance area or lives in a remote area. This ride time is mirrored in the 2016/17 School Transportation policy for the Limestone District School Board (LDSB). In 2008, there were 2,435 student trips or 3.3% of the total that exceeded the 60 minute guideline.

The report also notes that the average maximum ride time is 46 minutes for all routes within the system. "Average maximum ride times are calculated by taking the sum of the route length in minutes for all routes, from first stop to last stop, and dividing by the number of routes." according to the report. Forty-six minutes was found to be quite acceptable by the review team given the "**rural nature of the delivery area**".

This was 2008 before the introduction of full day kindergarten and the closure of a number of our local schools. The statistics quoted above need to be updated. Are acceptable ride times being maintained? What would the average maximum ride time be today? Would the number of students who exceed the 60 minute ride time guideline still be acceptable to a review team today? It is acknowledged in this report that rural areas within the Board's jurisdiction have played a role in skewing these maximum ride times. Why hasn't the Board acknowledged the differences in ride times that exist between the experience of the rural student and the urban student?

According to the 2016 census, within the County of Lennox and Addington there is a range in population density from 1.7 per square kilometer in Addington Highlands to 49.8 in Loyalist Township. This can be further illustrated by considering two aspects within our county. Addington Highlands and Stone Mills Township have a combined population of 10,025. The population for the entire county of Lennox and Addington is 42,888. A simple calculation reveals that only 23% of the population live in this northerly portion of the county. Now consider that Addington Highlands and Stone Mills

Township combined have an area of 2035.49 square kilometers. The total number of square kilometers in the county of Lennox and Addington (L&A) is 2,839.68. In other words, 71.6% of the total area of L&A County is in these two townships. So almost three quarters of the land area of the township is occupied by 23% of the total population. Put another way, over 75% of the population resides in one quarter of the total land area for the county in the two southern townships. These vast differences in area and population create a gap in ride times between the rural student and the urban student.

It stands to reason that closing rural schools has a much greater impact on the rural child. This difference must be acknowledged and an attempt must be made to equalize the experience between the rural and urban student? A verified projected ride time before the closure of a rural school can be an important tool in addressing this disparity. The development of a rural policy is a necessity.

According to the Minister of Education Mitzie Hunter, there are wonderful advantages for the child attending a new mega school. In the transcript from the legislature on March 7, 2017 she stated, "At the end of the day, that is what it is all about: It is about student achievement and student well-being".

Yarker Family School children ranging from JK to Grade 3 can expect a school day of 6 hours and 20 minutes starting at 8:05 am in Odessa Public School if their school is closed. In the name of savings and efficiency, they will be transported on up to 3 different buses that currently pass through Yarker. The bus ride time for some of these very young children will easily meet or exceed 2 hours per day. This brings the potential length of the schooling portion for some Yarker children's day to a minimum of 8 ½ hours 5 days per week. The Sick Kids Hospital in Toronto website recommends 11 to 13 hours of sleep for a 3 to 5 year old. When the recommended averaged sleeping requirement of 12 hours is added to their 8 and ½ hour day, precious little time, merely 3 ½ hours is left in their day for meals, bathes, exercise and at this age some necessary interaction with their parents and siblings. Sleep needs remain high throughout the preteen years. Children up to the age of 12 still require 10 to 11 hours of

sleep per night. Dr. Shelley Weiss, Director at the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto identifies possible outcomes for sleep deprived youngsters, "If children are not sleeping well the consequences may be problems with behaviour, attention, learning and memory." This same article from the Sick Kids website points to studies that expand the consequences of not meeting sleep needs beyond just the cognitive, "However, there is growing evidence that short sleep duration results in metabolic changes that may contribute to the development of obesity, insulin resistance, diabetes and cardiovascular disease."

A second concern for the child who must endure excessive bus ride times are the consequences of inactivity. There is much praise by the advocates of mega schools with regard to extracurricular activities. However in truth, there is little opportunity for the rural child to participate in these activities- first due to time constraints and secondly due to the availability of late buses. According to section 13.0.0 of the LDSB Policy Handbook, the provision for late buses required for extracurricular activities are at "...the discretion of the secondary school principals, subject to funding available from the school". There is no mention of late buses for elementary children. Interestingly, the Government of Canada's Active Transportation website warns of health concerns attributed to inactivity that are strikingly similar to those of sleep deprivation, "Children who aren't active enough are at a higher risk of developing chronic diseases like type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and other cardiovascular illnesses". At least one hour of moderate physical activity is recommended for children each day. Ironically, the site carries this recommendation, "Encourage them to walk or ride their bikes to school instead of taking the bus". This is increasingly not an option for the children of rural Ontario.

Ms. Hunter boasts of "access to better programming with regard to math and science" and later on "better learning opportunities, for students by offering more courses, specialty programs and extracurricular opportunities and improved facilities". As Dr. Weiss warned, young children must meet their sleep needs in order to focus on improved programs. Where is the proof that Ms.

Hunter's statements are valid for the rural child? Certainly, the Education Quality and Accountability Office score for Grade 3 students in the new rural facility of Granite Ridge Education Centre do not reflect her optimism. Students who functioned at or above provincial levels in math for 2015/16 was a dismal 21%, Writing 38% and Reading 42%. These numbers pale when compared to the scores for Grade 3 students in the Yarker Family School. For 2015/16 their numbers were 71% for Math, 95% for Writing and 100% for Reading. These subjects are the foundation for learning.

Everyone from the Ministry of Education down seems to espouse their concern for the well-being of the student. Money is said to be a secondary concern. Studies are needed to verify that the added time the rural student must spend on a bus starting from the age of 3 years 8 months and stretching forward for the next 14 years is not harming them or placing them at a disadvantage when compared to their urban counterparts. Limits must be set.

My hope is that the Board will take these facts into consideration when making their decision about the future of Yarker Family School and all rural schools.

Thank you for your time.



May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2017

Dear: Limestone School Board

Yarker has rich history with in it. We just need it to be told, so everyone can enjoy it. What better way than to have our Prime Minister of Canada, Provincial Premier of Ontario, Minister of Education, Limestone District School Board, Senior staff and Trustees recognize the history of this village and how it pioneered schooling before confederation. Yarker has one of the 1<sup>st</sup> historical schools established pre-confederation that is still educating children to this day. There has been a school here for over 175 years, longer than 150 years of confederation being celebrated this year of 2017. There needs to be more time to investigate and inform people of the important and significant historical school background Yarker offers. Yarker Family School should be recognized for its longstanding historical contributions to Canadians since before confederation. I am currently working on getting this school and the forerunner schools designated as local historical landmarks.

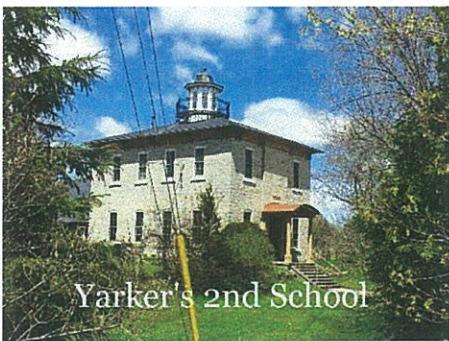
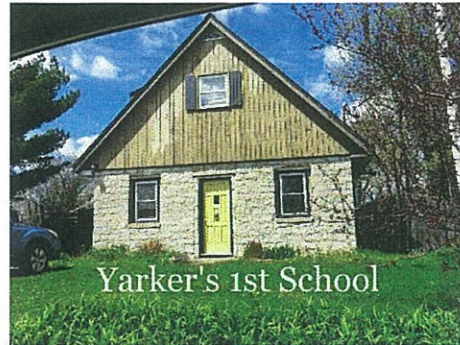
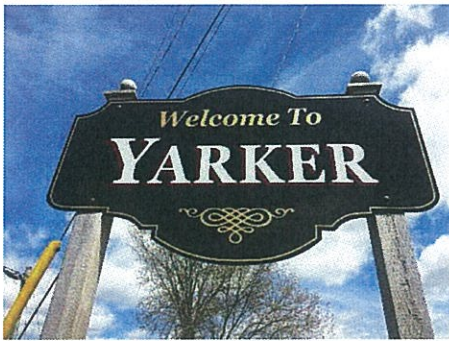
We are connected more than you know. We have been on the maps, now as Yarker, formerly called Simcoe Falls now in Stone Mills Township (formerly Camden East Township, which includes the Village of Newburgh and Shiefeld Township). The three amalgamated in 1998, in the County of Lennox and Addington. Lieutenant Governor General John Graves Simcoe, who was our 1<sup>st</sup> Governor General of Upper Canada (there is currently a statue of him at Queens Park in Toronto) was given 1,000 acres of land where Yarker and area now stands, from the King of England for the building of what is known today as Highway 11, which extends to Young St., Toronto, north to Barrie, and Lake Simcoe area. When the Postal service came though, we the Villagers were asked to change the name, due to there being too many locations with Simcoe in the name. Yarker was proposed after the two Yarker brothers, prosperous businessmen from the Sydenham and Kingston area offered to give a bell for the school. The bell has 1859 on it and I have rang it, the Free Methodist Church have host to it today in the Village. Yarker and surrounding area prospered as it grew to host farms, families, and a school for our children's educational needs, commercial, spiritual and everyday needs. We are centred along this beautiful, water fall along the Napanee River. It was the main source for the Yarker areas electricity back then. As we moved away from manufacturing carriage/wagon wheels for McLaughlin & Buick in Yarker to building rubber tires in Oshawa (mid 1920's), we managed to carry this village into the future. We arranged in 1948 for our fire departments first building and first 2 trucks and numerous hours of volunteer work all along the way to keep bettering ourselves. We built a sports field in 1951 to play baseball and hold other sports and community events on. In 1964 a group formed a Constitution to raise money to care for our community, they called themselves The Yarker and District Community Association YDCA. Which has supplied Yarker Family School with playground equipment twice, once with the help from Yarker areas newest community group the Yarker Colebrook District Community Association, YCDCA. . I was chairperson for Governor Simcoe Day for 10 years – a day dedicated to the community to celebrate our history.

Not long ago the Township worked out with the school board that they build an attached building to host the County library. What an asset that has been for the community and the Yarker Family School children. The children are prospering as shown by their results in the Provinces grade 3 testing. They are #1 at the top 45 schools in the Limestone school board district that covers two geographically large Counties, Lennox and Addington and Frontenac. We should advertise our successes and be rewarding the Community, the Limestone School Board, our Township and our County for their help with aligning these young members of our future society with such a unique and beneficial community setting. I think the Limestone Board thought so as well when they invested \$676,000.00 dollars just three years ago (2014) to Yarker Family School for the all day kindergarten. This is the first time in history that this Village has had more than a one or two room school. If we need extra space the school board brought in a portable. The makeover of this school replaced a portable class room which is by your definition, saying we are under capacity for our space now. You also had info released around the end of May, early June of 2015/2016 school year that you were going to close Yarkers only school... and... " 11 " children that were already pre-registered, that Spring for the 2016/17 school year, pulled out ahead, no wonder the #'s look off and misrepresented. Instead of everyone dwelling on only 26 children attending at Yarker Family School (2016/2017), when in actual fact there would have been 37 attending. Our village has a #1 rated newly renovated, state of the art, three class room school/library, safe outdoor playground bordered by the Cataraqui Trail.

Yarker has an approved plan of subdivision on just the other side of the Cataraqui trail from the family school about to take off. It is just not very clear how this {removing the Communities only school} will affect everything, from our children's health, our family households, library, family farms, churches and local Business's. Municipalities trying to supply services for things like decent roads and policing and with no school will likely see a decrease in young families wanting to settle here as property owners who pay taxes. It is probable that we will see the population and economic statistics in the area change for the worse. Our Community of Yarker and Stone Mills Township see the children and the taxpaying, voting families of future generations being affected for years to come if you proceed with this assault. The schools are supported financially by the public, for the sake of being recognized for our heritage, history and our future here we feel you need to recognize these facts and re evaluate this flawed process that totally disregards this community and its smallest and deserving, future members of society. Birth statistics show this area is growing. Community participation is large here and Volunteers share their time and knowledge as a result. I'm not so sure they will continue if they have to drive miles to do it. We need a rural schools policy. The school board can only benefit from having this school designated a Canadian Historical Site.

The decision from last week to close 5 schools has been postponed until 2019. Why make a rush decision to close Yarker Family School and devastate a whole community. Our heritage needs to be protected for future generations. I want the trustees of this great land to we live in to respect history and preserve our heritage.

Sincerely, Deborah Richmond



May 9, 2017

After the board meeting on April 24, 2017, I found myself more frustrated with the TALK to the Hand attitude about Yarker Family School.

The board has already made up their minds before the vote. The board has put all the other schools on the "back burner" and I feel that Yarker Family School should also be put on the "back burner".

The meeting came across that our children are livestock Quote: Debra Rantz "feeder school" For a 175 years Yarker has had a school, money was not an issue in keeping the school open before now. It's all about the money not the children.

There has not been any responds from the provincial level. I request that you reconsider your already closed mortality and be honorable to include Yarker Family School with the rest of the schools in question.

The board will pick on the smallest school to convey their power.

At the meeting it was said "That the board gives parents the direction for where the child\ren are sent to what school", and Yarker Family School -has been told no use coming to this school because it will be closing thus causing a decrease of children.

I feel that there needs to be a closer look at boundaries, other school, type of education and parents input before a decision is done.

FOR THE MENTAL HEALTH OF OUR CHILDREN.

Concerned Taxpayer and parent

Joyce Bierma

## The Needs of Our Children.

**DEPUTATION to Trustees of the Limestone District School Board:  
May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017.**

**Sandra Goodyer, Yarker, Ontario.**

As a resident of Yarker for 44 years and a retired teacher, I oppose the closure of YFS. **Equality of education for rural children requires that rural community schools stay open.** I base my position on “Hierarchy of Needs” by the American psychologist Abraham Maslow. His time-honored concept proposes that all human beings have a sequence of human needs that must be fulfilled in order to live as healthy functioning human beings. FYS meets the basic needs of our primary children (according to Maslow’s concept). Primary school is the foundation of all future education. Closing FYS and bussing primary children out of their community before they can even experience its support and its encouragement opposes Maslow’s “Hierarchy of Needs”.

### **THE PHILOSOPHY BEHIND THE NAME, “YARKER FAMILY SCHOOL”:**

The “family school” philosophy is very similar to Maslow’s “Hierarchy of Needs”. Yarker Family School was a creation of Superintendent Dick Dodds in 1979. The “family school” philosophy proposed that the K to 3 grade at Yarker was a family. Older children could and would help younger children learn just as older siblings help in a family. When a child teaches another child a skill (reading, spelling, math) then the teaching child has mastered the skill. Older pupils could model behavior and actions for the youngest pupils. The philosophy of YFS met the very early and basic needs of the children so that they could go onto other schools and succeed. The youngest children felt safe and secure in this family. The “family school” philosophy meant the school was very successful.

The Junior Kindergarten program was introduced by the province in 2010. In 2014, the new JK classroom was built at FYS. The provincial JK program in effect created a separate program from the SK program. The provincial pupil to teacher ratio meant that the “family school” concept ended.

## MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS:

What is Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs? These basic needs apply to children obviously but adults can need to fulfill these basic needs in their lives too. Maslow's "Hierarchy of Needs" is often shown as a pyramid. It has 5 levels of needs. The bottom and 1<sup>st</sup> level is **physiological needs or physical needs** (food, water, sleep, warmth and shelter). The 2<sup>nd</sup> level is **psychological or safety needs (freedom from fear and pain – stability and security)**. The 3<sup>rd</sup> level is **love and belonging needs** (the need to be loved, to give and receive love and affection, the need to belong). The 4<sup>th</sup> level is the **esteem needs** (achievement, confidence, respect for self and others). The 5<sup>th</sup> level is **the self-actualization needs** (realizing personal potential, self-fulfillment, being your best).



## MASLOW IN THE CLASSROOM:

As a teacher I followed Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs in my classroom. If a child was sleepy and fell asleep I would let them sleep. If a child was hungry I had food snacks available. I would send a high school student down to the cafeteria to get a pint of milk to help them concentrate. I did this with grade 4 pupils through to grade 12 students. A child cannot learn if



their basic physical needs are not met. A child cannot learn if they do not feel safe and secure. The child comes first. Well-trained and caring teachers provide safe and friendly classrooms so children can go about the business of learning. I have included another chart showing Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, which includes the behaviours that result if the 5 basic needs are not met, and an article "Applying Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs in Our Classrooms" by Tony Kline, Ph.D.

## **WHAT HAS MASLOW GOT TO DO WITH THE CLOSING OF YFS?**

It has everything to do with closing YFS. The purpose of education is to support the child in learning the necessary skills for life, to build self-confidence and to develop an educated and a moral human being (or Maslow's self-actualization need). Maslow's "Hierarchy of Needs" states that the basic needs must be met in order for higher needs to be fulfilled. Small children are most vulnerable at the Maslow's first three levels because children need adults to help meet their basic needs, and to be the intermediating adults in their world. The parents, relatives and caregivers are the first to meet the child's basic needs. The next experience is the community. Community is peopled with their family, friends and neighbors. **By closing FYS, our primary children will be bussed out of our village, out of our community before they can experience their community.** The basic needs of our children at YFS are being ignored with this decision to close the school.

## **THE BUS RIDE AND MASLOW'S "HIERARCHY OF NEEDS":**

Closing YFS will put primary children on buses with older students and high school students. This is time without adult supervision and support. The bus ride can be an uncertain, disturbing and unpredictable experience. **The bus ride is not a neutral experience nor is it an educational opportunity for primary children.** Maslow's second basic need is the psychological need or "freedom from fear" need. Maslow informs us that the child can become fearful; the child can develop anxiety and dread or the child can experience fight and flight behavior if their need for security and safety is not met. Who can meet this psychological need for the primary child riding the bus? Reuven Feuerstein, a cognitive psychologist, states that children need an intermediating adult to explain the world to them. Who will help the primary child understand why? Why did they throw the boy's books out the window? Why is Cindy crying? Why doesn't the bus

driver help Cindy? Why is that boy angry? With the introduction of 4 year olds on the busses, there should be intermediating adults to supervise the busses.

Bussing is an integral part of education for rural children and it should be used wisely. Bussing time for rural children is the price they pay for their educational experience. Bussing decisions should be taken with an understanding of the effects it has on rural primary children. The centralizing policy of close and consolidate, and the building of large new schools for rural communities disregards the Maslow's basic needs of the children. It denies that the bus ride is lost time and unsupervised time for these children. This policy denies the care and security of our rural children and their basic needs.

### **MASLOW'S "HIERARCHY OF NEEDS", BOARD'S CENTRALIZING POLICY AND THE CHANGING WORLD:**

Maslow's "Hierarchy of Needs" describes the basic needs of all human beings. When we apply these needs to primary pupils, we realize that the community is the best place to provide for these needs. Rural communities are not like urban neighborhoods. Urban children travel through other neighborhoods daily and weekly to the store, to their doctor, to a park, to a restaurant, to family. Rural primary children may not go to another village except for a special occasion. It is not a familiar trip for them. Centralizing children into larger schools is not the same for the rural primary child as for the urban primary child.

The centralizing policy of the Boards and the Ministry of Education is outdated and in opposition to the new learning theories of play for primary children. Time spent on the bus is time away from unstructured play, the critical component for child development. Distance traveled by the bus reduces the participation of parents; a key element of learning for our youngest children. It ignores the role and the advances in technology. Centralizing students in large schools was a policy to provide technical skills for factory life. Factories will employ robots. It is out of date for, students in elementary schools, high schools, college and universities or business learning. Technology brings the world to the students in their own classroom or their own home. The internet and teleconferencing can give children of all ages access to all kinds of experiences and people as they sit in their classrooms. Children use face time, skype and smart phones to communicate with family members all over the world. Children have access

to virtual reality headsets to experience virtual worlds. The world of business employs the internet to connect business and customers at any time of the day and at anywhere in the world. The United Nations has declared access to the internet as a basic human right and the federal government has declared Internet access is a basic service for all Canadians wherever they are.

Education is lagging behind when it transports the young children to a centralized building where the children cannot be accommodated in all the activities that are considered to be the extra benefits of the larger school. In the Community is the best place to educate primary children to meet their basic human needs. Bussing is part of the educational experience but is it being used to support the policy of centralization. It is being used to cut costs rather than augmenting the education of the rural elementary pupils? Bussing primary children out of community is unnecessary in the changing technological world our children live in today. **Small rural community schools are already built to accommodate their children.** The basic needs of primary children according to Maslow's chart of basic needs are met in community. Why transport children for hours a day? Why not recycle the schools in our rural communities? Why are we junking these buildings?

This article looks at using Maslow in the classroom.

## Applying Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs In Our Classrooms

By Tony Kline, Ph.D.

### simple truth:

Before expecting students to reach their potential, teachers need to meet students at their current levels.

### research tells us:

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is a popular motivation theory that is widely referred to in educational circles. In this theory, Abraham Maslow suggested that before individuals meet their full potential, they need to satisfy a series of needs. It's important to note that Maslow based his theory more on philosophy than on scientific evidence. If interested, you can find limitations of this theory here. However, Maslow's Hierarchy of

Needs can provide teachers a reminder and framework that our students are less likely to perform at their full potential if their basic needs are unmet. At times it can be confusing to apply theory into the practical realities of a classroom. So let's talk specifics. We may have a limited influence on the home lives of our students. Though once they enter our school, we have the opportunity to assess student needs and then work to adapt our instruction to meet their needs. Below are the general stages in order and descriptions of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs:

Are any students entering our classroom without their Physiological needs met? Is this student getting all of their basic physical needs met? These basic needs include food, water, sleep, oxygen, and warmth. If all students have these needs met, the next stage is Safety. How safe and secure does this student feel in their home? What about in our school, and specifically in our classroom?

Do all students have a feeling of Love & Belonging in our classroom? Does each student feel that they belong to a group? Do they have strong relationships with their peers? The next stage is Esteem. Do all students feel good about themselves? Are we giving powerful verbal feedback to support their self-esteem? Do they believe that their peers think positively about them?

Maslow's final stage is Self-Actualization. In theory, if students have all of the previous stages met, they can achieve and create at their full potential. Do we automatically assume that all students should be achieving at their full potential once they enter the classroom? We know that this is not a reality, we just need to look at ourselves when we're impacted by any of the characteristics noted above.

## try this:

- To support our students' physiological needs, we can ensure that all students have access to water in their rooms. Water bottles are a simple solution and research shows the many benefits of hydrated students.
- To support our students physiological needs, we can ensure that we have nutritious snacks available. Foods with slow-burning complex carbohydrates (such as granola bars) can help students sustain energy levels throughout the morning or afternoon.
- To support our students physiological needs, we can ensure that if a student is in desperate need of sleep, they are allowed to take a short nap at school. If not, research indicates that sleep-deprived students learn less and may even disrupt the learning of others.
- To support our students' safety needs, we can continuously equip

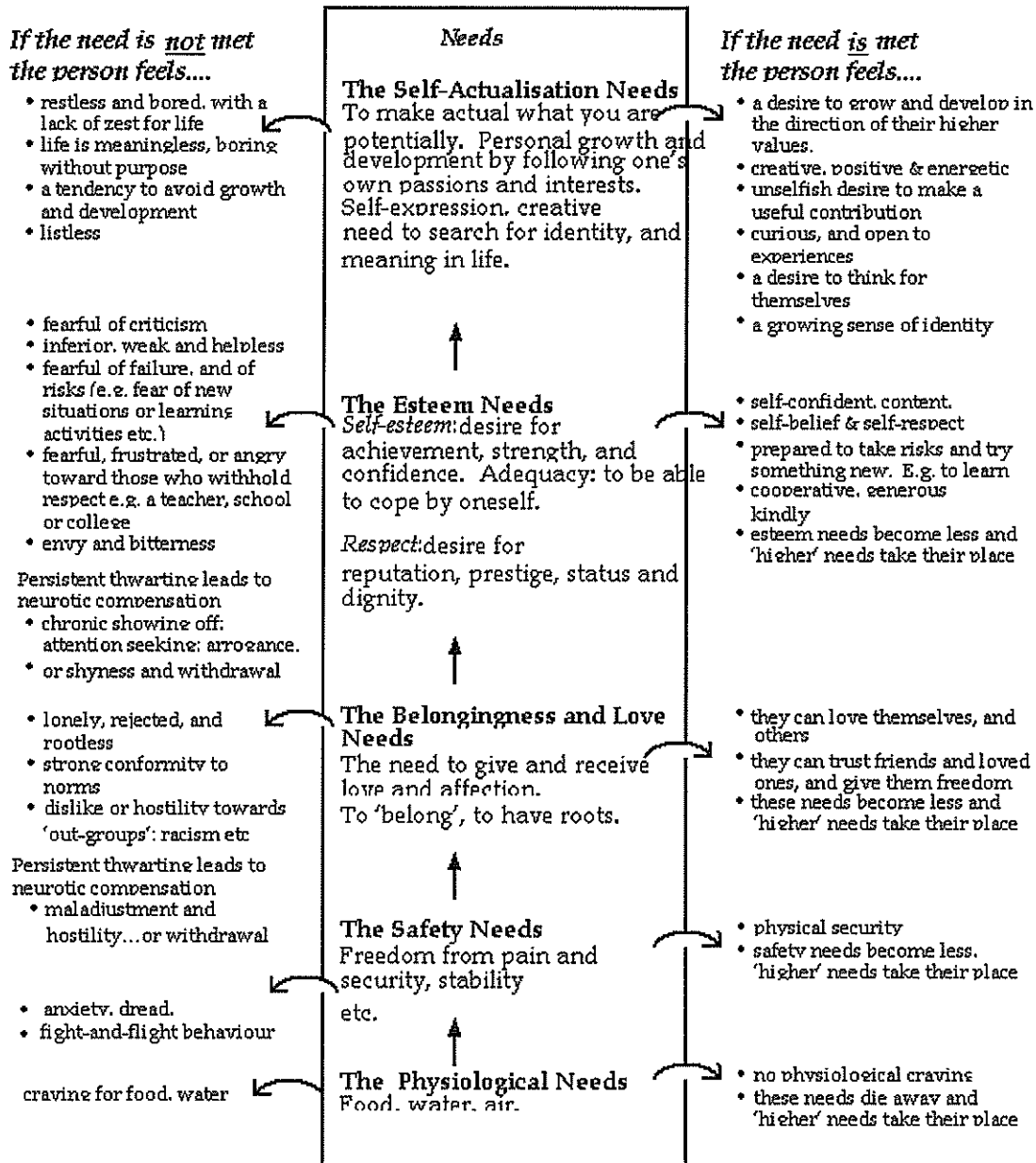
students and monitor the climate of our classroom to decrease bullying.

- To support our students' love and belonging needs, would all students feel like our classroom has a family or close-knit feel? Are we actively making sitting arrangements and putting students in groups where they feel supported?
- To support our students' esteem needs, we need to provide affirmative, concrete, and transparent feedback so that students know their specific strengths and can articulate when they've used them to succeed in our classrooms. Do we create opportunity for peers to share specific positive feedback with each other?
- In theory, when we support students in all of those stages noted, students can perform at their fullest potential, which is the self-actualization stage. Do we always expect students to perform at their best, even if they are in need of support in lower stages?

On the next page is the chart of Maslow's "Hierarchy of Needs" which shows the behaviors that result when basic human needs are not met as well as the behaviors that result when the basic human needs are met. I find that this chart was helpful when working and living with children – and adults.

Sandra Goodyer

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



Maslow said these needs are rather like vitamins in that

- we can never be healthy without them
- a long term deficiency causes 'disease'
- there are no substitutes for them. That is, a child who is aggressive or attention seeking can only be 'cured' of this behaviour by getting their esteem and belonging needs met, punishment can never produce a long term 'cure'.