

ACTION AFTER
SPECIAL BOARD
FEBRUARY 1, 2017

NAME OF REPORT Delegation
 Stephen Colavincenzo regarding the Proposed Closure
 Of Holy Redeemer Catholic School (Represented Anna
 Mann, Paul Mann, Lidia Cancelliere and Deb Hutton)

COMMITTEE Special Board

DATE OF MEETING February 1, 2017

STAFF RECOMMENDATION TO BOARD

BOARD ACTION/DIRECTION

Received and referred to staff to be included in the report to the Board of Trustees
at the February 23, 2017 Board meeting.

DELEGATED TO M. Silva to incorporate presentation into Director's final
Report to Board February 23, 2017

Letter acknowledging presentation from Director

RE: Pupil Accommodation Review Process – St. Matthias, Holy Redeemer, Our Lady Guadalupe Schools

Date of Presentation: February 1st, 2017

Delegate: Stephen Colavincenzo, speaking on behalf of Holy Redeemer

Submission to the Board of Trustees

My first point to discuss is an error in the Board report. It makes the statement that "There is unanimous support for the proposal from all SARC teams". This in fact is not true. There was an unfortunate miscommunication at the end of the final meeting. Also due to some other issues it was not caught until recently. To be clear we do not fault the Board team for this.

The SM and HR SARC team raised this to the Board team but we were told it could not be changed in time for the meeting. As such we are requesting that this be changed properly reflect the positions of the HR and SM SARC teams¹.

Our recommended statement is:

"The Holy Redeemer and St. Matthias SARC teams do not support the proposal to close Holy Redeemer and combine the three schools, Holy Redeemer, St. Matthias and Our Lady of Guadalupe. However, we acknowledge the financial pressures and challenges faced by the Board have resulted in this recommendation".

We cannot have public record incorrectly reflect the position of the SARC or the schools parents.

I'd also like to offer some comments on the process. Although it was conducted very professionally and respectfully, in the end it really felt like lip service. Many of the questions that linger are due to the speed of the process. Holy Redeemer commented many times the speed of the process did not allow for a proper understanding and comprehension of all the issues that needed to be considered². We had to tick the boxes of the requirements so that it could be brought here for an eventual vote. It was clear during the review process that no suggestion or recommendation would be considered by the Board committee for keeping the school open. So I will use this time now to let you know our ideas and thoughts on why and how this school could be saved.

First, the why, and that is the strategic importance of HR to the Board. It should be evident that once Holy Redeemer is closed, the area North of Finch between Leslie and Don Mills, will be lost long term. You are never going to get it back. Long term you will lose the Catholic families in the area. Not so much the current student body, but the families that would be coming in the future.

We believe that you don't have to lose it.

As I stated above we do understand that HR cannot remain open long term in its current form. And the families of HR want a vibrant school. While closing it is an easy financial choice, we feel there are other more challenging but beneficial options.

First we have to understand why is Holy Redeemer in the current state? There are three main reasons:

- 1) Lack of EQAO scores publically available. We need to push to have smaller school have their school posted but with the comment that the results is not statistically significant. We have heard many times how people did not even know there was a school there because it does not show up. This doesn't just hurt us, but any smaller school is hurt by it.
- 2) AY Jackson, the local public high school has a very good reputation for science and math. This has drawn older families to the area and a significant Asian population that is not Catholic. The desire to attend AY Jackson is something I have heard repeatedly from the real estate agents that knock on my door.
- 3) Specialty schools in the area have impacted enrollment significantly. Across the field from Holy Redeemer is Cliffwood Public School that offers, English track, French immersion and extended French. We have Catholics who live across the street from Holy Redeemer whose child is going to it. On the other side of Steeles Avenue, York Region invested in a new school for St Michaels. This Arts School has an extremely good reputation that draws students from across the York Board and the TCDSB. Holy Redeemer has been the biggest victim of this, losing in the order of 30 students to it. It is not by chance that York region built a new school with an excellent specialty program in our backyard. They knew they would take students from our board. Holy Redeemer sits in the middle of specialty schools. It's been under attack on both flanks and the TCDSB let this happen and never responded in-kind. For the last six years I have heard our principals go to the Board with ideas on how to build the school up, only to have them rejected. The Board has sat idly by and allowed the school to decline.

The key takeaway; good reputation, good programs bring people in.

For those of us who know Holy Redeemer, it is clear the board is missing a significant opportunity. Could I have a show of hands among the trustees who are familiar with the site and have been there to actually visit it?

For those of you who do not know it, it is a beautiful site. It is in a quiet neighbourhood. A ravine and runs along the backside of the grounds with a soccer field down a hill nestled among the trees.

If you look at the board priorities for learning of; quality of the learning environment, adequacy of the physical space to support student learning and

adequacy of the school's grounds for healthy physical activity and extracurricular activities. The site of Holy Redeemer far exceeds on all fronts. Here are some examples of how we have used this to benefit our students:

- a. During science / botany / environmental studies the ravine is used as a mini field trip to explore and show examples of what is taught in class. These can happen spontaneously.
- b. Taping sugar maples to learn about the maple syrup process has been done.
- c. In winter, due to the used equipment that has been collected by staff, all students from grade 5 to grade 8 get to experience cross-country skiing for free many times during winter.
- d. The site is ideal for cross country training with its hills and elevation changes and the soccer field is used for track and field training.

Is there another site in our Board that has this to offer just from its site alone? I doubt there are many properties in the board that compare to it.

So we have an incredible site that is surrounded by specialty school programs.

It is clear that Holy Redeemer needs a specialty program as well. In the area, both public and Catholic we have, French immersion, extended French, arts schools. There are no STEM school programs – in fact from what I can see there are no STEM programs in our board.

Concerns were raised about the cost of a STEM program, but think this is a flawed paradigm. You don't need fancy high tech interactive chalk boards to bring a focus to the basics of math and the wonder of science or to allow the students to see how what they are doing can lead to the design of an airplane, a video game or developing a cure for a disease. If you doubt this, I merely point out that 25 years ago when I was in engineering it was all taught on chalk board or simple overhead projectors. When done properly it can be very engaging.

We propose starting a specialty program in HR. If it is properly promoted across the board and in York region it will:

- Draw local student back to the board who have left
- Draw students from across Steeles
- Draw student from across the board and may help relieve some of the overcapacity schools
- Long term it will make the area desirable for Catholics to move to.

St. Rene Goupil in York Region was a shrinking school. When they brought in a STEM program it's enrollment increased 42% over a few years from 175 to 250 students.

We challenge the Board to have the vision to grow this area, not eliminate. We should aim for two schools of 400 kids instead of one school with 500. Don't get me wrong, I know it is not an easy task, but worthwhile things seldom are.

I'd like to leave you with these final thoughts:

As a board, we will not shrink ourselves to greatness. I said at the start, we understand challenges facing the board, and sometimes there are no other options than closing a school. But if this board and you trustees cannot see the potential of the Holy Redeemer site, the importance of it to the board and the need to create something compelling there, If you cannot have a greater vision for our board, then we are starting down the road of shrinking ourselves to irrelevance. The HR CSPC and our parents are asking you to choose not to do this. We ask you to vote to keep this school open and turn it into what it could be, what it should be; one of the crown jewels of the Board.

Thank you for time and consideration.

ⁱOn December 14, 2016, after receiving the November 22, 2016 meeting notes, Yvonne Fiamengo contacted Peter Aguiar and requested the wording be changed. Stephen Colavincenzo, delegate for Holy Redeemer, made the same request on January 18, 2017.

ⁱⁱIn response to Trustee Del Grande's queries regarding whether these issues were discussed in the PARC process, it is submitted the PARC process was rushed and left the parent committee members feeling unsatisfied and, at times, unheard. While there were many long discussions, there were no written draft reports exchanged to review and/or comment upon and no formal votes taken.



TORONTO CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

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Delegation No. _____

☐ Public Session
☐ Private
Session
☐ Five (5)
Minutes

Name	Stephen Colavincenzo
Committee	Regular / Special Board
Date of Presentation	2/1/2017
Topic of Presentation	Proposed Closing of Holy Redeemer
Topic or Issue	Pupil Accommodation Review: Holy Redeemer, Our Lady of Guadalupe and St. Matthias (Wards 7, 11)
Details	I will be representing the delegation from Holy Redeemer
Action Requested	Present on behalf of the School delegation. Others will register and
I am here as a delegation to speak only on my own behalf	
I am an official representative of the Catholic School Advisory Committee (CSAC)	{2} I am an official representative of the Catholic School Advisory Committee (CSAC)} Holy Redeemer {CSAC Position}
I am an official representative of student government	
I am here as a spokesperson for another group or organization	
Submittal Date	1/30/2017



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Minutes

Name	Anna Mann
Committee	Regular / Special Board
Date of Presentation	02/1/2017
Topic of Presentation	Greatness of Holy Redeemer School
Topic or Issue	Accommodation Review of Holy Redeemer School
Details	Holy Redeemer School is a great school with the highest EQAO scores in the board. Should remain open if possible. Consideration should be made to allow a 2 year transition to St. Matthias
Action Requested	I delegate Stephen Colavincenzo to speak on my behalf as the Holy Redeemer Delegation
I am here as a delegation to speak only on my own behalf	Yes
I am an official representative of the Catholic School Advisory Committee (CSAC)	{2} I am an official representative of the Catholic School Advisory Committee (CSAC)} {CSAC Position}
I am an official representative of student government	
I am here as a spokesperson for another group or organization	
Submittal Date	1/31/2017



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☐ Five (5)

Minutes

Name	Paul Mann
Committee	Regular / Special Board
Date of Presentation	2/1/2017
Topic of Presentation	Greatness of Holy Redeemer School
Topic or Issue	Holy Redeemer CES Accommodation Review
Details	Holy Redeemer is a great school with the highest EQAO stats in the board. Consideration should be made to keeping it open and at least a 2 year transition to St. Matthias
Action Requested	I delegate Stephen Colavincenzo to speak on my behalf as the Holy Redeemer Delegation
I am here as a delegation to speak only on my own behalf	
I am an official representative of the Catholic School Advisory Committee (CSAC)	{2} I am an official representative of the Catholic School Advisory Committee (CSAC) Holy Redeemer {CSAC Position}
I am an official representative of student government	
I am here as a spokesperson for another group or organization	
Submittal Date	1/31/2017



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Name	Lidia Cancelliere
Committee	Regular / Special Board
Date of Presentation	2/1/2017
Topic of Presentation	proposed closure of Holy Redeemer CS
Topic or Issue	Parental opposition to the proposed closure of Holy Redeemer Catholic Elementary School
Details	Committee will be informed of the many benefits of keeping the site open.
Action Requested	I delegate Stephen Colavincenzo to speak on my behalf as the Holy Redeemer delegation.
I am here as a delegation to speak only on my own behalf	
I am an official representative of the Catholic School Advisory Committee (CSAC)	{2} I am an official representative of the Catholic School Advisory Committee (CSAC)} Holy Redeemer {CSAC Position}
I am an official representative of student government	
I am here as a spokesperson for another group or organization	
Submittal Date	1/31/2017



TORONTO CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

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Name	Deb Hutton
Committee	Regular / Special Board
Date of Presentation	2/1/2017
Topic of Presentation	School Closure
Topic or Issue	School Closure
Details	School Closure
Action Requested	I delegate Stephen Colavincenzo to speak on my behalf as the Holy Redeemer delegation
I am here as a delegation to speak only on my own behalf	Yes
I am an official representative of the Catholic School Advisory Committee (CSAC)	{2} I am an official representative of the Catholic School Advisory Committee (CSAC} {CSAC Position}
I am an official representative of student government	
I am here as a spokesperson for another group or organization	
Submittal Date	1/31/2017

ACTION AFTER
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING
FEBRUARY 1, 2017

NAME OF REPORT Delegation
 Yvonne Fiamengo regarding PAR – St. Matthias
 Holy Redeemer and Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic
 Schools (Represented Rachana Dhavale, Marcin Michalik,
 Cecilia Frank, Nour Beidas and Ioulia Bacinello)

COMMITTEE Special Board

DATE OF MEETING February 1, 2017

STAFF RECOMMENDATION TO BOARD

BOARD ACTION/DIRECTION

Received and referred to staff to be included in the report to the Board of Trustees
at the February 23, 2017 Board meeting.

DELEGATED TO M. Silva to incorporate presentation into Director's Final
 Report to Board February 23, 2017.

Letter acknowledging presentation from Director.

**TORONTO CATHOLIC DISTRICT
SCHOOL BOARD**



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Name	Yvonne Fiamengo
Committee	Regular / Special Board
Date of Presentation	2/1/2017
Topic of Presentation	Pupil Accommodation Review process
Topic or Issue	St. Matthias, Holy Redeemer, Our Lady of Guadalupe schools
Details	Pupil Accommodation Review process involving St. Matthias, Holy Redeemer, Our Lady of Guadalupe schools
Action Requested	Seeking to make submissions on the Interim Report for the Board to consider prior to voting
I am here as a delegation to speak only on my own behalf	
I am an official representative of the Catholic School Advisory Committee (CSAC)	{2} I am an official representative of the Catholic School Advisory Committee (CSAC) St Matthias {CSAC Position}
I am an official representative of student government	
I am here as a spokesperson for another group or organization	
Submittal Date	1/27/2017

GET WORKING IF
COMMITTEE #19



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Name	Rachana Dhavale
Committee	Regular / Special Board
Date of Presentation	2/1/2017
Topic of Presentation	Closure of Holy Redeemer Catholic School (North York)
Topic or Issue	Concerns regarding the closure and amalgamation of Holy Redeemer and Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic School in to St Mathias. Concerns with a new bigger school.
Details	Concerns regarding the closure and amalgamation of Holy Redeemer and Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic School in to St Mathias. Concerns with a new bigger school.
Action Requested	Yvonne Fiamengo from St. Matthias will speak on my behalf.
I am here as a delegation to speak only on my own behalf	Yes
I am an official representative of the Catholic School Advisory Committee (CSAC)	{2} I am an official representative of the Catholic School Advisory Committee (CSAC) St Matthias {CSAC Position}
I am an official representative of student government	
I am here as a spokesperson for another group or organization	
Submittal Date	1/31/2017



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Name	Marcin Michalik
Committee	Regular / Special Board
Date of Presentation	2/1/2017
Topic of Presentation	Closure of Holy Redeemer
Topic or Issue	Yvonne Fiamengo from St. Matthias will speak on my behalf
Details	Closure of Holy Redeemer will have significant impact on St Matthias, including overcrowding, staff loss and increase in catchment area.
Action Requested	Yvonne Fiamengo from St. Matthias will speak on my behalf
I am here as a delegation to speak only on my own behalf	Yes
I am an official representative of the Catholic School Advisory Committee (CSAC)	{2} I am an official representat ve of the Catholic School Advisory Committee (CSAC) {CSAC Position}
I am an official representative of student government	
I am here as a spokesperson for another group or organization	
Submittal Date	1/31/2017



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Session

☐ Five (5)

Minutes

Name	Cecilia Frank
Committee	Regular / Special Board
Date of Presentation	2/1/2017
Topic of Presentation	Holy Redeemer, St. Matthias and Our Lady Guadeloupe amalgamation
Topic or Issue	Holy Redeemer, St. Matthias and Our Lady Guadeloupe amalgamation Delegation
Details	Delegation Yvonne Fiamengo will speak on my behalf
Action Requested	Delegation Yvonne Fiamengo will speak on my behalf
I am here as a delegation to speak only on my own behalf	Yes
I am an official representative of the Catholic School Advisory Committee (CSAC)	{2} I am an official representative of the Catholic School Advisory Committee (CSAC} St Matthias {CSAC Position}
I am an official representative of student government	
I am here as a spokesperson for another group or organization	
Submittal Date	1/31/2017



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Name	Nour Beidas
Committee	Regular / Special Board
Date of Presentation	2/1/2017
Topic of Presentation	Pupil Accommodation Review - St. Matthias
Topic or Issue	The amalgamation of 3 schools, St. Matthias, Holy Redeemer and Our Lady of Guadeloupe
Details	Yvonne Fiamengo from St. Matthias will speak on my behalf
Action Requested	Yvonne Fiamengo from St. Matthias will speak on my behalf
I am here as a delegation to speak only on my own behalf	
I am an official representative of the Catholic School Advisory Committee (CSAC)	{2} I am an official representative of the Catholic School Advisory Comm ttee (CSAC)} {CSAC Position}
I am an official representative of student government	
I am here as a spokesperson for another group or organization	
Submittal Date	1/30/2017



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Name	Ioulia Bacinello
Committee	Regular / Special Board
Date of Presentation	2/1/2017
Topic of Presentation	Pupil Accommodation Review
Topic or Issue	School Closure and amalgamation.
Details	PAR Report Delegation
Action Requested	Yvonne Fiamengo from St. Matthias will speak on my behalf
I am here as a delegation to speak only on my own behalf	Yes
I am an official representative of the Catholic School Advisory Committee (CSAC)	{2} I am an official representative of the Catholic School Advisory Committee (CSAC) St Matthias {CSAC Position}
I am an official representative of student government	
I am here as a spokesperson for another group or organization	
Submittal Date	1/30/2017