

Honey Harbour Public School Accommodation Review Committee

Written Submission from John Elgar, long time summer resident and Grandparent of current HHPS students.

Honey Harbour and the surrounding area is a major driver of the rural Ontario economy.

This economy, seasonal in nature, requires the support of a year-round, robust, infrastructure, providing employment for the local community. An essential part of the infrastructure is the availability of a schooling system that does not impose undue stress on its students.

The proposal to close the HHPS and bus all students to Glen Orchard PS will added significant travel time for students above and beyond what is reasonable. The supposed benefits listed in the SIP do not warrant this addition to the students travel time. The suggestion that on site after school care will be provided is inconsistent with the fact that at close of the school day it will be necessary to bus the students home.

In the following sections I question the financial need to combine the schools and provide my comments on the travel time data that has been provided.

I firmly hope that the TLDSB will consider carefully the numerous inputs that have been generated by the concerned community of Honey Harbour and will reach the conclusion that this school closure is not necessary.

Financial Matters

TLDSB Responses to Questions raised previously (October 4, 2016)

- 1. What are the actual 'costs' for running Honey Harbour Public School – both income (from the Board and the Province) and expenses including all wages?**

RESPONSE: The revenue generated by the student enrolment at Honey Harbour Public School is approximately \$422,000. The direct expenses for the students at the school, including compensation, are approximately \$585,000.

- 2. Why is the tax revenue collected in our area not dedicated to Honey Harbour Public School?**

RESPONSE: September 1, 2015 to August 31, 2016 tax revenue collected for education from Georgian Bay Township – Gibson and Baxter Ward was \$4,193,000. The Ministry of Education uses a funding formula which allocates a per pupil amount using education tax revenue collected in all regions of a school board combined with the balance coming from the province. The per pupil amount currently is \$10,600.00 per

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elementary student and \$11, 100.00 per secondary student. 45% of TLDSB revenue comes from property tax revenue and 55% is from the province.

Comments

The implication of the figures in item 1) above, is that HHPS runs significantly in the red. I do not believe this is true, there are other revenue sources paid by the Province as implied by the 55% amount listed in item 2) above.

It is not clear which particular year the revenue and expenses apply to, I have used an enrollment of 40 students in the following calculations.

From (1) above, the cost of running the HHPS is \$ 585,000 which should be covered by a portion from taxes with the balance from the Province.

Tax portion is $40 \times \$ 10,600 = \$ 424,000$

Province balance is $\$ 585,000 - \$ 424,000 = \$ 161,000$

This Provincial portion, of 27%, is far below the 55% level noted in item (2) above.

Where do these funds come from? I believe they should be obtained from the “Grants for Students Needs” program. This program includes at least grants for transportation, for which TLSDDB received \$ 14M in 2014-15!

What GSN grants were received by TLSDDB for the HHPS, what grants were applied for? Who is responsible for applying for grants for HHPS?

Conclusions:

The Provincial funds needed for operation of the HHPS are well within reason. With the due attention to Provincial GSN educational funds the HHPS can be operated on a viable financial basis.

Transportation Matters

From TLDSB Responses to Questions raised previously (October 4, 2016)

- 3. Can you confirm that the bussing times you have provided in the School Information Profile are accurate?**

RESPONSE: The school board has confirmed with the school bus provider that the times listed are accurate. However the school bus provider has asked bus drivers to provide time checks. Once this information is received, it will be posted here.

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4. What will the transportation costs be to transport children to Glen Orchard Public School?

RESPONSE: The cost to transport Honey Harbour Public School students to Glen Orchard Public School will be approximately \$95,500.00 per school year.

From School Information Profile Honey Harbour Public School Revised December 1, 2016

5. HONEY HARBOUR PUBLIC SCHOOL – STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

*Shortest Bus Ride (in minutes) 3 minutes
Longest Bus Ride (in minutes) 60 minutes
Average Bus Ride (in minutes) 23 minutes*

6. GLEN ORCHARD PUBLIC SCHOOL – STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

*Shortest Bus Ride (in minutes) 40 minute
Longest Bus Ride (in minutes) 74 minutes
Average Bus Ride (in Minutes 58 minutes*

Comments

The average bus ride data is misleading. It appears to be the arithmetic mean of the shortest and longest time. This would be valid if only two students are travelling (one short and one long journey).

A more meaningful statistic would be the weighted average based on the number of students experiencing the different travel times. In the case of travel from the HH area to Glen Orchard most of the students will experience the longest time.

A realistic analysis would be:

5 students at 40 minutes and 30 students at 74 minutes.

The weighted average would then be $((5 * 40) + (30 * 74))/35 = 69$ minutes

Re item 3 above, no information has been provided from the bus operator.

Conclusion

Transportation times will be significantly increased, to the detriment of students, beyond what is generally considered acceptable.

John Elgar submitted Feb 21, 2017

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