

Accommodation Review Committee

PUBLIC INPUT

An accommodation review is taking place for Honey Harbour Public School. Members of the Accommodation Review Committee (ARC) would like to invite you to give your input.

There will be two (2) public input meetings during the 2016-2017 school year.

Thursday, December 8, 2016	6:30 p.m.	Baxter Ward Community Centre
Tuesday, February 21, 2017	6:30 p.m.	Baxter Ward Community Centre

Individuals or groups wishing to speak at a public input meeting need to fill out an Input Form and send it to one of the schools or to the school board. The form is found on the TLDSB website at www.tldsb.ca or at Honey Harbour Public School or Glen Orchard Public School.

1. Presentation by an individual

Individuals may present to the ARC at one of the public input meetings listed above and are given up to 5 minutes to speak. Please bring with you a written summary of your presentation for the ARC.

2. Presentation by a group

One person representing a group or organization may speak for up to 10 minutes at one of the public input meetings listed above. Please bring with you a written summary of your presentation for the ARC.

3. Written Submissions

Individuals and organizations are welcome to submit input to the ARC in writing at any time. Input forms are available on the Board website and at each of the schools.

4. Questions at Public Meetings

There will be an opportunity to submit questions in writing at each public input meeting.

For more information please contact Karen Franke in the Director's Office at 1-888-526-5552 ext 22104.

Accommodation Review Committee

PUBLIC INPUT FORM

Please indicate how you would like to provide input:

I wish to present as individual

Individuals may present to the ARC at one of the public input meetings listed above and are allotted up to 5 minutes to speak. Please provide a written summary of your presentation for the ARC.

I wish to present as an individual representing a group

One person representing a group or organization may speak for up to 10 minutes at one of the public input meetings listed above. Please provide a written summary of your presentation for the ARC.

Name of group: _____

I wish to submit my input in writing (please attach submission)

Individuals and organizations are welcome to submit input to the ARC in writing at any time throughout the process.

Topic: _____

Name: _____

Home Phone: _____ **Cell Phone:** _____

Email: _____

Please send this Input Form and your written submission to Honey Harbour Public School or Glen Orchard Public School, or to Karen Franke in the Director's Office:

Email: karen.franke@tlds.on.ca

Mail: Trillium Lakelands District School Board, P.O. Box 420, 300 County Road 36, K9V 4S4

Fax: 705-324-4323

For more information please contact Karen Franke in the Director's Office at 1-888-526-5552 ext 22104.

Thank you for hearing the delegation from the Ontario Alliance Against School Closures (OAASC) through Katherine Breeson.

The OAASC formed because we believe that no community should have to go through the pupil accommodation review process in isolation. Our group is currently lobbying the government to call for a moratorium on school closures in rural, northern and small communities until funding can be restored, and until the PARG is rewritten with democratic respect.

The circumstance in Honey Harbour whereby, a Catholic and a Public-School Board cannot agree on a shared vision to serve students is not unique. However, it does become unique when both boards determine it is acceptable to educate its elementary students away from the community in which they live, especially when there is a suitable local facility available.

The 2016-17 enrollment projections for the Honey Harbour Public School were off by over 30% which tells us there is room for improving accuracy. Declining enrollment is not a factor in closing this school but rather a decision made in the best interest of the overall school system. Therefore, it does not consider the needs of the Honey Harbour Public School students first.

The Trillium Lakes District School Board has exceptional opportunities to explore but they cannot be thoroughly examined within the time frame of a Modified Pupil Accommodation Review. A regular PAR also does not afford enough time for your community, local government or board to carefully study the impact of removing education from Honey Harbour.

We appreciate that the Trillium Lakelands District School board exceeds twice the geographic size of Prince Edward Island, but believe it does not excuse the board from acknowledging the importance of local education. We ask that your board be the example for other boards to follow by focusing on making every effort to ensure your elementary students are educated where their families live.

Your board will continue to receive the enhanced top-up and Supported School funding allocations required to sustain and operate an elementary school in Honey Harbour. There is no need to incur additional costs to transport these children out of their community.

It would also be sensible to know how many catholic elementary students leave Honey Harbour to attend French Immersion programs. Combining this data with the number of public elementary students that also must leave the community to receive this program may establish a need locally and attract students back to Honey Harbour.

Since the Ministry of Education and the government offer funding incentives to retrofit schools to build community hubs and day care spaces, we would encourage you to investigate these capital grants and the opportunities they will offer to Honey Harbour.

An option worth exploring is to offer ALL elementary students in Honey Harbour the option to receive their education locally. This can be accomplished by selling Honey Harbour Public School and using the sale proceeds to purchase Our Lady of Mercy. This may seem radical based on enrollment numbers but it is a problem that presents essential opportunities worth considering. Being a larger facility with low renewal needs and, along with site location, it offers an ideal business case to the Ministry for a retrofit.

Bringing catholic and non-catholic students together under one roof can be realized without the endorsement of the Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board. It has been done successfully in the past in other Ontario towns because, parents want their children off the school bus and educated locally. These children already play together, they can be educated together. Offering a lunch hour or after school religion program, preferably led by a Catholic volunteer, ensures Catholicity is respected within the school. We have found that curious non-catholic elementary students, with the blessing of their parents, also like to attend these programs with their friends. We think you have a willing community to see this happen. It does not rest solely on the shoulders of the Trillium Lakelands District School Board.

We encourage the Board of Trustees to NOT put an end to education in Honey Harbour. Your vote on the future of the Honey Harbour Public School comes after the decision for Our Lady of Mercy. We ask that you place the interest of ALL elementary students ahead of the needs of the board by granting residents, families and municipal planners of Honey Harbour, the time to develop solutions. Working closely with these groups will assist in attracting families to Honey Harbour by offering a unique and expanded learning experience.

Susan MacKenzie

Co-founder

Ontario Alliance Against School Closures