



October 2, 2008

Dave Levac and Eleanor Newman
Co –Chairs
Declining Enrolment Working Group

VIA – Heather Driver, Project Manager (email)

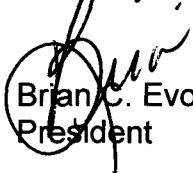
Dear Dave and Eleanor

OAPCE thanks you for allowing us to submit our Association's official response to the situation of declining enrolment in Ontario's schools. We apologize for the lateness of the response however our office closes at the end of the school year and your correspondence was not received till later in September. Also we are an organization that runs on volunteer fuel!

However we are pleased to submit OAPCE's response to the written questions posed by the Working Group. We look forward to the consultation process and hope to be an active voice in the overall discussion on behalf of parents in Catholic education.

For over seventy years OAPCE has worked to represent the parents in Catholic education at the provincial education tables.

Sincerely



Brian C. Evoy
President

Attachment



ONTARIO ASSOCIATION OF PARENTS IN CATHOLIC EDUCATION OFFICIAL RESPONSE TO THE DECLINING ENROLMENT WORKING GROUP

October 2, 2008

Section A

When resources are reduced boards need to ensure equity is evident and demonstrated clearly in their distribution. I speak with regards to funds allocated to students deemed exceptional. Their needs are required to be encompassed within the framework of our Education for All Document which incorporates U.D.L. In this way we don't have parents seeing our exceptional community as usurping a disproportionate amount of the resources.

In dealing with our declining demographics, we believe that boards need to seek to increase enrollment. Investigating visa students would open up a significant market to increase our school population. Ontario's publicly funded education system is respected worldwide so there is a receptive audience of potential students.

It is also essential that boards develop collaborative partnerships with the various local community organizations. We are thinking of the multicultural groups that serve the diverse ethnic populations. This would engage them in the perpetuation of an effective publicly funded school system in a meaningful way.

Section B and C

There are inherent costs in operating a school which include maintenance, heating, and staffing. These are a constant. We are accorded a set per pupil amount which provides a set finite amount.

Moving forward in this process necessitates consideration of consolidation where possible. Schools that have insufficient enrollment are simply not viable in today's economic climate. This is easier implemented in an urban setting but problematic when there is a single school serving a community. We would seek to share facilities with municipalities and have service groups avail of them as meeting places and as hosting sites for their programs.(seniors for example.) This provides cost recovery to create a revenue neutral position and also facilitates the school's use by the community members during school or off hours. This initiative would also create partnering relationships that could lead to working collaboratively regarding school events and projects. They could possibly assist with small school events as sponsors.



Section D: General

The Ministry needs to review any sources of additional revenue from providers which include cafeteria services, school - pictures services and others which provides refunds as additional revenue to the school.

Consolidation of transportation services needs to be expanded to include materials purchases such as textbooks, computers, and hardware in addition to others. Bulk purchasing definitely reduces the per unit-cost and could offer substantial savings.