



Renfrew County District School Board

MEDIA RELEASE

June 16, 2008

RCDSB to Review School Facilities in Deep River

At its meeting of June 16, 2008, the Renfrew County District School Board initiated a review of pupil accommodation within the Deep River Family of Schools that includes Morison Public School, Keys Public School (located within the high school), and Mackenzie High School. Given that Deep River schools qualify for special grants due to the distance from other schools, the Board asked that further analysis of funding and expenditures be done in advance of the formation of a local Accommodation Review Committee (ARC) in the fall. Once established, the ARC will engage in the process of analyzing data, seeking input, and developing scenarios for consideration of the Board.

The Board last analyzed enrolment and facility data for the Deep River Family of Schools in 2003-2004 and proceeded with an accommodation review that resulted in the closure of the Keys school facility in 2005. Since 2005, enrolment in the Deep River Family of Schools has continued to decline and capacity now exceeds enrolment such that just under half of the space is currently considered surplus. At the same time, annual operating costs for the two sites are approximately \$675,000 and projected capital costs for the next decade are in excess of 12 million dollars. The Board has received expressions of interest from community partners regarding the potential to lease space within its schools.

The Renfrew County District School Board has identified three key outcomes that guide decision-making: excellence in teaching and learning; safe, caring and respectful learning environments; and wise use of resources. Board Chairperson Dave Shields comments, "The Board works hard to preserve and enhance programs and services for students and to ensure that the resources made available by the province are used to improve the quality of education. Given enrolment and financial pressures, the Board must periodically review the status of its facilities." The Board's review committee will include a representative from each school council and representation from the larger community.

The Ministry of Education provides direction regarding reviews of pupil accommodation, including the formation of an Accommodation Review Committee (ARC) that considers each school in light of a School Valuation Framework, and seeks input on potential scenarios for school consolidation and/or closure. The rigorous review process, which includes public consultation, will begin later in the fall. The Board would be in a position to receive the report from the local committee in the spring of 2009.

"We are looking forward to working together with the North Renfrew community to achieve the best possible learning environment for our students," added Chairperson Shields.

Dave Shields
Chairperson

Eleanor Newman
Director of Education