



Community Schools Alliance
399 Ridout Street North
London, Ontario, N6A 2P1
www.communityschoolsalliance.ca

Tuesday, May 03, 2011

RE: Community Schools Alliance

Dear Municipal Colleagues,

I am writing to provide you with an update on the activities of the Community Schools Alliance and the progress that we have made over the past year in launching a new consultation process for student accommodation reviews.

In August of 2009, we formed the Community Schools Alliance to address a growing concern among municipalities across the province with the Accommodation Review Committee (ARC) process. The ARC process was developed by the province to determine which schools in a municipality stay open, which ones get closed and where new schools will be located. As municipal leaders, we believe our community schools are critical components of our public infrastructure; our schools are as important to our communities as the municipal infrastructure for water, transportation and recreation that we build and maintain. Clearly we would not allow any of these to be shut down without meaningful public input into the decision making process. Likewise, we believe municipalities, parents and students should have a strong voice at the table where student accommodation decisions are made.

While the challenge was complex, our goal was simple. We wanted to establish a new protocol for communication between school boards and municipalities when addressing proposed changes in student accommodations. We also have been promoting greater use of our municipal facilities by schools and increased community use of our schools.

I am pleased to inform you that, thanks to the work of the Community of Schools Alliance, the County of Middlesex, the County of Elgin and the County of Oxford have each established a new letter of agreement with the Thames Valley District School Board. For your review, I have attached a copy of this letter of agreement.

While the development of these letters of agreement is a significant step, it is not the final step. The Community Schools Alliance would like to see similar communication protocols established across the province. I would encourage you to work with your colleagues and the local school boards to establish similar agreements in your community to ensure that there is transparency and accountability in your student accommodation process.

If you have any questions in regard to the work of the Community Schools Alliance or our letter of agreement please do not hesitate to contact me at your convenience.

Yours truly,

Doug Reycraft
Chair, Community Schools Alliance