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Credit View School to close end of June

By Bill Rea

Credit View Public School will be closing its doors June 30.

Peel District School Board trustees accepted the staff recommendations to close the facility, at the corner of King Street and Mississauga Road, last Wednesday night.

Talk of closing the school has been on the table for months, although staff was orignally suggesting a June 2018 closure. But the Final Staff Report, that went before trustees in February, indicated a preference to get things over with, rather than putting up with another year of declining enrolment.

The recommendation concluded a Pupil Accommodation Review (PAR) that looked at enrolment numbers at Credit View, as well as other area schools, including Alloa, Belfountain and Caledon Central and Alton Public Schools.

The staff report that went to trustees last week repeated enrolment at Credit View has been declining. Things have reached the point that this year's enrolment of 81 students is spread over 10 grades. Every grade is split, six grades have less than 10 students and one has only two kids. The report stated this results in limited social interaction for students.

The report also stated that of the schools in the PAR, Credit View has the greatest need for maintenance.

The plan now is to send students in kindergarten to Grade 6 to Belfountain Public School. The Grade 7 and 8 kids will go to Alloa Public School.

The original plan had called for a split between students living north and south of King Street, with kindergarten to Grade 6 kids living to the south being sent to Alloa in September, and older students to the north going to Caledon Central. The staff report stated, however, that concerns had been raised at a public meeting early in February. There was a desire expressed at that session not to split the kids up, as it would divide the Terra Cotta community. There were also concerns about the long bus ride from the Terra Cotta area to Caledon Central.

There are also plans to adjust the boundaries for the catchment areas for Alton and Belfountain Schools.

?This is the final step is a five-step process,? Randy Wright, controller of planning and accommodation support services for the Board, told trustees. He also said the recommendation reflected what is thought to be the best for the students and their learning.

Trustee Stan Cameron, Caledon's representative on the Board, established there are no programs currently available to students at Credit View that they won't be able to access at their new schools. He had also established that no staff member at Credit View will lose their jobs.

As well, he established there are no plans at this stage to sell the property or get rid of the building.

?It's such a beautiful property,? he remarked.

Cameron was appreciative that the Board administration listened to parents when it came to putting students on long bus rides to Caledon Central.

He also pointed out a parent from Credit View had encouraged the Board and Director of Education Tony Pontes to visit the school and talk to parents and student. There were some trustees who made the trip, and Cameron said they met with 16 Grade 1 and 2 students.

?Are you going to close this school?? one of the youngsters asked.

?He has the right to be heard,? Cameron remarked. ?We have the responsibility to hear him.?

He added it's not a nice thing to have to close a school, but in this case, it is the responsible thing to do.

?I echo Trustee Cameron's feelings,? Board Chair Janet McDougald commented.

She added there's regret in closing any school, pointing out it's part of the heart of a community.

?When you lose a school, you kind of lose a piece of the community,? she observed.

McDougald also pointed out demographics are cyclical, adding there's hope the school might be re-opened, or a new one built to replace it.

She expressed thanks to staff for listening to the community on this.

?Sometimes, we can't always do what they want,? she remarked.



Credit View Public School will be closing at the end of June.