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Rowe seeks MPP's help to get Holy Cross replacement school

By **CYNTHIA GAMBLE**
Staff Writer

The chance for construction of a replacement for Holy Cross School is getting closer with the latest consultant's findings.

At the Board of Trustees meeting of the Halton Catholic District School Board on Tuesday (May 21), consultant Cynthia Clark, director of Quadrant Advisory Group Limited presented the financial impact and recommendations for the latest Long Term Capital Plan Update 2013-2028.

Quadrant reviewed future enrolment and building repair needs to come up with a 15-year plan for the board.

The recommendations include construction of a replacement 700-pupil elementary school on the Halton Catholic District School Board (HCDSB)

site at the corner of Berton Blvd. and Atwood Dr. in Georgetown West and to begin a boundary review of the Catholic elementary schools (except St. Joseph in Acton). Action on the new school is recommended by 2016-17 as the Province will announce funding for new schools in 2015.

Should new residential development happen in Georgetown's new southwest urban area, then a new elementary school for that area (Eighth Line to Trafalgar Rd. between 10 and 15 Sideroads) is recommended with a planned opening of 2025-26.

The consultants also recommend that HCDSB address school renewal and repair when warranted.

The current Catholic elementary enrolment in Halton Hills stands at 2,754 and that is expected to grow to 3,248 in 15 years' time.

Christ the King Secondary School's enrolment of 1,558 is expected to remain relatively steady with the enrolment in 2027-28 projected at 1,518. The building is considered to be in good condition, and able to handle additional enrolment from future planned developments. The consultants recommend that enrolment be monitored and to repair the school when necessary.

"The recommendations of the consultant happily matches my own aspirations for the Georgetown West School site," said HCDSB's Halton Hills Trustee John Mark Rowe. "I have

been working quite a bit with our (Wellington-Halton Hills) MPP Ted Arnott on this project to ensure Georgetown gets the very best chance possible to receive funding. I had Mr. Arnott meet the Chair of the Board and the facilities department last month for a tour of Holy Cross Catholic School. The Board provided him with a summary of our concerns which he personally took to Minister (of Education) Liz Sandals. With a promise to look into the matter, I have also provided Mr. Arnott with a copy of our previous business case submission to the Ministry for the replacement of Holy Cross Catholic elementary with a new facility in Georgetown West."

Rowe says he has also been keeping the Board Chair Diane Rabenda "in the loop regarding all my efforts to have Georgetown West funded. I am very hopeful that my other colleagues on the Board of Trustees will also support the very obvious needs in Georgetown."

Rowe said he has requested staff consider bringing the boundary review forward to Autumn 2013. That would involve parent representatives from the four Georgetown Catholic elementary schools to realign the boundaries. "I am hopeful that this will be implemented with application in the Autumn of 2014," he said.

"I am recommending this because the Ministry looks favourably on submissions for new funding when the review process has been undertaken."

All the Georgetown Catholic elementary schools: Holy Cross, St. Brigid, St. Catherine and St. Francis are at more than 100 per cent functional capacity and that is expected to continue over the next 15 years.

Other consultants' findings include:

- Elementary enrolment across the region is expected to increase by 5,100 students by 2027-28 school year, while high school enrolment may increase by 1,200.

- Consultants recommend over the 15-year period three replacement schools, three additions to existing schools and 13 new schools to address growth-related development be built, while in other areas (mainly old Burlington and Oakville) schools be closed.

The Board of Trustees will vote on the consultants' recommendations at the June 18 meeting.



**HCDSB TRUSTEE
 JOHN MARK ROWE**