



SUPERIOR-GREENSTONE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

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PRESS RELEASE

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SGDSB Approves Upgrade Work to B.A. Parker PS and Geraldton Composite HS

MARATHON, Ontario –. In September 2011, parents, students and the community in Geraldton, Ontario will move into a new, B. A. Parker Public School (BAPS) situated within the existing building that is Geraldton Composite High School(GCHS). The tender for alteration to GCHS for the new BAPS Renovation was awarded to Quinan Construction Limited in June by the Superior-Greenstone District School Board in the amount \$4,645,000.

On June 22, the Ministry of Education provided its approval, to proceed with the project to integrate BAPS into the excess space at GCHS and create a facility to house JK to Grade 12. The ministry approval provides for benchmark funding of \$4,477,030, plus additional funding of \$300,000 for full day kindergarten, \$715,000 for energy efficiency and a \$160,000 as a pending, renewable energy grant.

The renovated space within GCHS will provide BAPS students with five new classrooms, one new JK classroom, an SK classroom and computer

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room. In addition, the school's main reception area with administration offices and resource rooms will be built adjacent to the front foyer. A teacher's workroom, kitchen and staffroom area will also form part of the space.

This announcement is the culmination of two years of preparatory work including community consultation through the BAPS Steering Committee. The steering committee of 16 was composed of board administration, community leaders, trustees, principals, teachers and students from both BAPS and GCHS. The group's first meeting was in November 2008, followed by five more over several months. Apart from this, some BAPS Steering Committee members also attended during various school fact-finding site meetings to explore the GCHS layout and the potential within this high school to house a BAPS replacement school.

With input into the design process coming from the BAPS Steering Committee, the services of the architectural firm of Evans Bertrand Hill and Wheeler were engaged and several scenarios for the BAPS replacement school were developed by the firm. A final preferred layout was determined and the architect took this direction in the drawing and design stage of the project.

Greenstone Trustees, Mark Mannisto and Jim Turner, both members of the steering committee are very pleased with the ministry approval.

Trustee Turner said he is proud of the accomplishment of the Greenstone area constituents. "There were some really tough issues to wade through in this process. It's natural for people to harbour a sense of ownership about B. A. Parker Public School which has been a constant in the community for almost 40 years. We could have gotten mired down just by sentiment alone, but to its credit, this group didn't lose sight of its purpose, that was to get the best replacement school it could with the ministry funding allocated. Not only will we have a sparkling, modern

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facility for our children to learn in by September 2011, it launches Superior-Greenstone DSB into the K-12 school mode. When it's done, Geraldton will have the only board facility where utilization of capacity is 100%."

Trustee Mannisto added that, "With input from parents, teachers, stakeholders and most importantly the students, I believe we are going to build a school that will fulfill the needs of our community, staff and students. This new school will honour the name sake it replaces by maintaining a positive learning atmosphere that will serve students for years to come."

As well as the construction of the BAPS Replacement at a cost of \$3.85 million, the tender award to Quinan Construction Ltd includes some upgrades for high school building itself, said Manager of Plant Services Wayne Chiupka. "Along with renovating learning spaces, this type of project also provides an opportune time to complete other upgrades."

Happening concurrent with the BAPS construction, upgrades to GCHS will be undertaken with special funding grants to cover the installation of a renewable energy Photo Voltaic Array for green energy generation. As well, there is another energy saving building component that would see upgrades to GCHS windows and its heating, ventilation and air-conditioning system components and control systems. The cost of these additional projects is \$792,000

To make the project flow with the least disruption to the schools involved, construction will be broken into two phases, said Chiupka. "Phase 1 will involve the work needed to create the new high school spaces to replace those being vacated for the new BAPS area. This will include: sewing room, welding area, art room, library, video conference room, and a couple of rooms used by Confederation College."

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“Phase 2 will involve the creation of the new B. A. Parker Public School and will continue through the winter of 2010/2011. Disruption to the operating schools should be minimal since B.A. Parker will continue to function within the old building, and Geraldton Composite High School will be separated from the construction area by temporary walls where needed. Fencing will be installed around exterior grounds and other barriers put in place in the interest of public safety,” said Chiupka.

Director of Education Patti Pella said, “We look forward to the opening of the new B. A. Parker Public School September 2011. There has been a lot of hard work by board and school staff to see this project through. Amazing progress has been made and I especially want to acknowledge the many hours that the B. A. Parker Public School Steering Committee have dedicated to this project. For many years to come, their contribution will ensure that students have an inviting, exciting and exceptional environment in which to learn for the duration of their elementary careers.”