



**MUNICIPAL OFFICE**

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# *Municipality of South Bruce*

Presentation to  
BWDSB Annual Community Planning and Partnership  
Meeting  
June 13th, 2017

THANK YOU - On behalf of the Council of the Municipality of South Bruce, we would like to take this opportunity to discuss the community's willingness to work with the Bluewater School Board and local agencies and organizations to ensure the schools in both Mildmay and Teeswater remain open for many more years.

Schools are vital to the growth and prosperity of our communities. Our communities will not survive the closure of our schools. Families looking for a place to settle will gravitate to communities with schools, health care, grocery stores, recreational and cultural opportunities.

Although historical enrolment trends do indicate that the school population in South Bruce is declining, we believe that a number of exciting initiatives will result in growth in South Bruce in the very near future.

- Gay Lea Foods Co-op recently announced a \$60 million expansion to their facility in Teeswater.
- Bruce Power and the County of Bruce have teamed up to establish a regional economic development initiative to leverage opportunities in our area with the upcoming refurbishment program at the nuclear facility.
- South Bruce is one of 3 remaining communities in Southern Ontario that is considering the possibility of siting a deep geological repository for nuclear waste within its boundaries.
- The newly developed Business to Bruce program is expected to provide a climate for business success and economic growth.

- Interest and activity for commercial/industrial lands and residential investments and developments are on the rise.
- Many local businesses that are currently located in South Bruce are expanding operations. Examples include the addition of Ace's Hardware to the Huron Bay Co-op Operations, continued expansion at R&R Machine & Tool, etc.
- Wightman telecom is investing millions of \$ in Teeswater to bring fibre optic technology to Teeswater this year.
- These investments are expected to provide full-time jobs to more workers who will live and raise families in South Bruce.

In addition to the above noted signs of growth, the closure of the Mildmay Catholic Junior School has resulted in higher enrolment numbers at the Mildmay Carrick Public School.

Both Teeswater and Mildmay schools have been identified as having available unused space that could be used in appropriate community partnerships. South Bruce has ideas that could be investigated to partner with the school board to maximize the facilities' use.

- Licenced day care facilities/spaces (there are currently no licenced day care facilities in South Bruce)
- Expansion of before and after school programs
- Health & wellness programs and facilities
- Small business/trade training opportunities.
- Seniors' programs, services and activities.
- Youth skills training and activities.
- Agriculture programs and training

Although we recognize the fiscal challenges to keeping small schools open, the Board's primary purpose is to support student achievement and well-being. Sitting for extended hours on a bus, while travelling to schools in other communities, does not contribute to the well-being of a student. The student will miss out on recreational and work opportunities that also contribute to a healthy lifestyle and well-being.

Council asks the members of the Bluewater District School Board members to join the communities in the development and promotion of a strategy that keeps our small rural schools open.