

School District #5: Baie Verte, Central, Connaigre

Regular School Board Meeting

March 20, 2002

MINUTES

IN ATTENDANCE

Terry Brown, Chair
Carolyn Andrews
Clarence Brown
Randy Edison
Robert Elliott
Raymond Gray
Gail Hoskins
Winston Keeping
Sharon Mayne
David Morrow
Sean Power
Gregory Roberts
Mabrey Winsor

Debbie Armstrong, Director of Education
Terry Hillier, Assistant Director (Finance & Administration)
Bonnie Lane-McCarthy, Assistant Director (Human Resources)
Frank Norman, Assistant Director (Programs)
Beverly Wells, Recorder
Mary Bungay, Operations Manager

OBSERVERS

10 Observers from Bay d'Espoir Area

ABSENT

Albert Hodder sent regrets.

1. INVOCATION

The Chair opened the meeting with invocation.

2. Presentations

There were no presentations at this meeting.

3. Program PRESENTATION

3.1. CRT Results for Schools

Frank Norman, Assistant Director (Programs), made a presentation on Public Exam Results and CRT Results.

Mr. Norman said meetings were held with school principals concerning the results and individual letters were sent to the principals outlining their achievements and weaknesses. Meetings were also held with those schools that scored lower than the District and Provincial levels. Overall, the District scored seventh on the Provincial Grade 3 CRTs. Dave Morrow said he doesn't like being seventh in the District. The Director said nobody is happy with it and work is being done to improve the scores during the next few years.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

On motion the Agenda was approved. (Gray/Winsor) Carried.

67-01/02

5. MINUTES OF February 12, 2002

On motion the Minutes of the February 12, 2002, Regular School Board meeting were approved. (Hoskins/ Keeping)

6. BUSINESS ARISING

6.1. School Review Committee

The Director said the work of the School Review Committees is ongoing and the reports are being prepared. The reports will be presented at the April Board meeting.

Ms. Armstrong advised the meeting that members from the Springdale Pentecostal Church Board and officials from the Pentecostal Assemblies of Newfoundland will attend the April 11, 2002, Executive meeting of the Board. It was noted that the Springdale Review Committee may not be able to present its report in April since they are waiting until the PAON meets with the Executive.

It is expected that if any schools are closed, the savings from those closures will be used for educational purposes, firstly in the communities where the schools closed and secondly in schools where there is a need.

Clarence Brown said he would like to have the number of students and classes in Indian River Middle School, Springdale.

6.2. Leo Burke Academy, Ventilation System

Terry Hillier, Assistant Director (Finance & Administration), said the problems with the ventilation system at Leo Burke Academy, Bishop's Falls, is ongoing. He said Ingrid Clarke, School Construction Engineer with the Department of Education, has promised that she would work with Works, Services and Transportation to provide a copy of the recent engineering consultant's report as soon as possible. The report should be available by the middle of April.

6.3. School Facilities in Bay d'Espoir

As a result of the desire of Board trustees to have clarification on the report from the BAE Group regarding the construction/renovations required and the estimated cost to make schools in Bay d'Espoir feasible K-12 buildings, Ingrid Clarke, School Construction Engineer, and Gary Hatcher, Senior Director at the Department of Education, met with the Board prior to this meeting to answer questions and clarify concerns.

David Morrow said as a result of the meeting with Clarke and Hatcher the Board doesn't have many options to choose from.

Robert Elliott asked if there had been a representation from the Board to meet with the Minister of Education and the MHA for Bay d'Espoir to lobby for a new school. He said the ball should be put where it belongs—in the politicians' court. Board Chair Terry Brown said the former Board had traveled to St. John's for that purpose.

Gail Hoskins refreshed trustees on some of the issues in the area, including demographics.

In answer to Clarence Brown's question as to how the money figure was determined for a new school, Terry Hillier outlined what had happened during the past years and advised him that the application to build a new school was forwarded to the Education Investment Corporation.

David Morrow gave a brief history of what had happened in the past regarding school facilities in Bay d'Espoir. Records of that history can be found in Board minutes.

Randy Edison referred to a letter the Minister of Education had written to Norbert Benoit regarding a new school for Bay d'Espoir. That letter said there is no money for a new school in Bay d'Espoir and that \$1,000,000 would be made available to upgrade one of the two schools in the area. Mr. Edison said if the Board wants the best for students in the area then the Board needs to get political and get the politicians involved.

Carolyn Andrews added that the Board has to look at all the pros and cons when making a decision regarding school facilities in Bay d'Espoir.

Sean Power said the Board has no alternative but to decide what is the best option for the students and start working on that

alternative.

Gail Hoskins said she has 200 letters and 400 names on a petition supporting a new school for Bay d'Espoir.

David Morrow said he cannot see there ever being a consensus in Bay d'Espoir. He said because of the lack of a consensus, this will cause a longer delay in getting a new school. Mr. Morrow said whereas if the Board decided to renovate one of the present buildings, it could be done more quickly. He said no matter which building is renovated, the students will get a good education.

Carolyn Andrews said she could see advantages to renovating, eg. larger classrooms.

Sean Power said the Board can keep lobbying for a new school. However, he feels the political will is not in Bay d'Espoir. He said if it were decided to stay with the status quo, the Board and the parents would have to settle with a reduction in programming for the students.

Sharon Mayne said any education is not wasted. She said she is not happy with the fact that the Minister, rather than advising the Board, chose to advise the Holy Cross Parent Action Committee in writing that there is no money available for a new school but that money is available for renovations.

Gregory Roberts asked how much money did the Board spend on new school construction during the past four years. Terry Hillier said the Board received approximately four percent of the provincial money allocated at that time.

Gail Hoskins said if the site is not important, why is there criteria in the School Planning Manual stating that a school has to be built in a larger area with community services.

Clarence Brown said he is not happy with renovating an old building.

Robert Elliott said he would like to know everything the Board is doing to get a new school in Bay d'Espoir. He said the Board is not making any decisions at the Board table. He reiterated that there was a site selected and now the Planning Manual says a new school has to be built in a larger area. Mr. Elliott commented that the Government is now giving the Board \$1,000,000 and telling the Board how to use it.

David Morrow said there are two options for the Board to consider: (1) build a new school in one of the larger centers; or, (2) renovate an existing school. If the Board renovates, what building will be renovated? He also asked if more money could be obtained to renovate Holy Cross School, St. Alban's.

Mabrey Winsor commented that according to Gary Hatcher's remarks earlier, the Board doesn't have much choice as to what decision they should make.

Carolyn Andrews said the Board has to look at the alternatives and make a decision as soon as possible.

In response to Randy Edison's question as to how long would it take before all the students could attend Greenwood Academy, Terry Hillier, Assistant Director (Finance & Administration), said the building should be ready by September 2003. Mr. Edison asked if the Board could absorb an extra \$1,000,000 to renovate Holy Cross School.

Gregory Roberts wanted to know how it would affect the Board if they fought with the Department of Education to get money for a new school.

In response to Mabrey Winsor's comment, the Board was advised that the Minister of Education did state in a letter to Norbet Benoit, Chair of the Holy Cross Parent Action Committee, that if the Board chose not to accept the \$1,000,000 it would be allocated to another provincial priority. She also stated in that letter that there is no money available in the foreseeable future for a new school in Bay d'Espoir.

Gail Hoskins said if the Board believes in a new school they should fight for the money to build one.

Sean Power made a few comments about lobbying for a new school. Mr. Power said without the political will in the Bay d'Espoir area and given the report of the BAE group, he doubts if the Department will give more money for such a project.

Robert Elliott said Labrador, because of their political contacts, received money from the Department of Municipal Affairs to build a new gym on their school. He feels lobbying would help.

On motion it was agreed that based on the fact that there is not a lot of political support for a new school in Bay d'Espoir, that the Board forego building a new school and look at the option of renovating one of the present buildings in the area. (Morrow/Power) (Carried). (6 for/5 against.)

69-01/02

It was moved that the Board apply for funding to renovate Holy Cross School in St. Albans. (Elliott/Hoskins) Defeated.

David Morrow said Board trustees have not had time to view the options and added that he is not clear as to what would be the best school to renovate. Randy Edison suggested that the Board hold a special meeting to deal with the issue.

Gregory Roberts said the issue should probably be brought to the Finance and Properties Committee for discussion.

On motion it was agreed that the senior administration team prepare information on the two schools and the demographics of the Bay d'Espoir area as early as possible and then a special meeting of the Board be convened to discuss the issue. (Edison/Keeping) Carried. 70-01/02

6.4. Air Quality, Greenwood Academy, Milltown

Terry Hillier said Rogers Enterprises Ltd. had completed an indoor air quality assessment at Greenwood Academy, Milltown. Mr. Hillier said the report was a good one and the CO₂ problem will be addressed. He also said the recommendations in the report will be dealt with and he doesn't expect any problems with air quality in Greenwood Academy.

6.5. MHA Forum

Copies of follow-up letters that the Board Chair wrote to the MHAs who attended the Board MHA Forum on February 4, 2002 and a response from MHA Anna Thistle were circulated to Board trustees. Mr. Brown will follow up with the other MHAs if they do not respond to his letter.

The meeting was advised that copies of the letters to the MHAs were not sent to the PC critic and the NDP because it was not the correct protocol. However, it was agreed that an information sheet will be sent to both of those parties.

7. Reports

7.1. Director's Report

The Director's Report, dated March 19, 2002, was circulated to Board trustees. She highlighted her report.

On motion it was agreed to approve the staffing appointments listed in the Director's Report dated March 19, 2002. (Gray/Hoskins) Carried. 71-01/02

On motion it was agreed to approve the leaves as listed in the Director's Report dated March 19, 2002. (Winsor/ Morrow) Carried. 72-01/02

On motion it was agreed to approve the resignations as listed in the Director's Report dated March 19, 2002. (Mayne/Keeping) Carried. 73-01/02

On motion it was agreed to accept the Director's Report dated March 19, 2002. (Brown/Gray) Carried. 74-01/02

7.2. Executive Report

The Executive Committee of the Board met on February 25, 2002. As a result the following action was taken:

On motion it was agreed that "Smoking Policy" be put on the Regular School Board Agenda and suggest that a Policy be developed through school councils. (Gray/Mayne) Carried. 75-01/02

On motion it was agreed to accept the February 25, 2002, Minutes of the School Board Executive Committee Meeting. ((Mayne/Hoskins) Carried. 76-01/02

7.3. Financial Report

The Assistant Director (Finance and Administration) presented the Financial Statements to February 28, 2002. Mr. Hillier said he expects a surplus of \$35,900 at the end of the school year.

On motion it was agreed to accept the Financial Statements of the Board to February 28, 2002. (Power/Mayne) Carried. 77-01/02

7.4. Finance & Properties Report

The Finance and Properties Committee will meet on March 27 at 6:30 p.m.

7.5. Personnel Committee Report

Sean Power spoke to the Board regarding teacher allocations. He said it is possible that the Board could lose 50 teachers. He said the most the Committee feels the Board could lose without severely affecting programming in the schools is ten. Mr. Power said the Chair of the Board has made news releases on radio and in newspapers regarding the possible loss of teachers and how it will affect this Board. He also brought the Board's concerns to the NLSBA meeting but there was no interest or concern shown by other boards. Chair Brown also wrote letters to schools councils regarding the Board's fears and asked them to contact their MHAs, the local newspapers and radio stations regarding proposed teacher loses and the impact it will have on their schools.

The Director said she and the Assistant Director (Human Resources) had met with the Deputy Minister recently but he did not give them much hope of not losing teachers.

Randy Edison and Mabrey Winsor had recently gone to Little Bay Islands. Mr. Edison said the school and community are very concerned that if they lose any part of a teaching unit they will not be able to offer the programs needed for their students.

The Director said the issue of cutbacks in teacher allocations was discussed at the Principals' Representative Council meeting and at the Zonal Principals' meetings. Principals agreed that the District Office should send out the worst-case scenarios to its schools and school councils. This was done and the principals were advised that this was not the final allocation.

The meeting was informed that time frames depend on when the teacher allocations are received. The allocations will come to the District staff, from there to the Personnel Committee for review, and then to the schools.

Robert Elliott asked if the Board has any input into how the allocations are distributed in the District. Mr. Elliott was informed that the units will be allocated as per the Board's approved formula. That formula will be circulated to Board trustees.

Deborah Armstrong said students may have to start using the bursary program if schools lose too many teachers to provide the program they need.

Sharon Mayne brought attention to Motion 62-01/02 reminding the Board that meetings should end at 10 p.m.

On motion it was agreed to extend the meeting to 10:35 p.m. (Edison/Mayne) Carried. 78-01/02

7.6. Programming Report

David Morrow presented the March 5 Report of the Programming Committee Meeting.

Mr. Morrow said the Board allocated \$10,000 in its budget for school councils. Part of the money was used to register all school councils in the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of School Councils.

The following action was taken as a result of the Programming Committee Meeting Report:

On motion it was agreed that a portion of the \$10,000 budget for school councils be used for a two-day session for small schools and that the balance of the money be used to plan a session with School Board trustees and school councils. (Morrow/Brown) Carried. 79-01/02

On motion it was agreed that school council training be imbedded in the school calendar for November of each year. (Morrow/Gray) Carried. 80-01/02

On motion it was agreed that the Board would sponsor a retreat for school councils to coincide with the School Board Trustees' Retreat each year. (Morrow/Mayne) Carried. 81-01/02

The issue of early childhood enrichment will be brought back to the Programming Committee and recommendations will be brought to the next Board meeting.

7.7. CRSC Report

Information was circulated to trustees. David Morrow gave a report on recent meetings he attended of the CRSC. Mr. Morrow said the CRSC is trying to find a way for speech language pathologist services to be shared between health and education.

7.8. CSBA Atlantic Conference

David Morrow will present a written report at the next Board meeting covering his trip to the CSBA Atlantic Conference.

8. NEW BUSINESS

8.1. Student Appeal

The Board Chair said the most recent student appeal was solved by mediation.

8.2. Exploits Valley High – Furnace Problems

The Director said someone entered the furnace room at Exploits Valley High (Maple Division) and broke the fuel line and tampered with the breaker to the furnace. The fuel leaked into the basement area and workers have been on site cleaning the area. It is expected that school will reopen on March 21. The extent of damage is not yet known.

9. Correspondence

9.1. Allen/Foote re Speech Pathologist on Connaigre Peninsula

A copy of a letter from Everett Allen, Harbour Breton, to the Minister of Education regarding the lack of speech language pathologist services on the Connaigre Peninsula was circulated to School Board trustees.

9.2. Foote/Fancey re Ventilation System at Helen Tulk Elementary

A copy of a letter from the Minister of Education to Jody Fancey of Bishop's Falls concerning work on the ventilation system at Helen Tulk Elementary School was circulated to School Board trustees.

9.3. Ingram re Conflict of Interest

A copy of a letter from Richard Ingram, Bay d'Espoir, expressing concerns about Board Trustee Gail Hoskins being in a conflict of interest position by putting her community involvement before her commitment to all students in the Bay d'Espoir area was circulated to Board trustees. A response to Mr. Ingram's concerns by Ms. Hoskins was also circulated to Board trustees.

10. Outstanding Business

10.1. Home Schooling Policy (pg. 4, 00/01)

10.2. Sale of Board Office (pg. 23)

10.3. By-Laws

10.4. Renaming Schools (pg. 22, 00/01)

10.5. Policy on Partnerships (pg. 33, 00/01)

10.6. Renovations at Windsor Academy (pg. 42)

11. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on April 16 at the School Board Office in Grand Falls-Windsor.

12. Motion to convene in-camera meeting

On motion it was agreed to convene an in-camera session. (Power/Mayne) Carried.

82-01/02

Beverly Wells, Recorder

Terry Brown, Chair of the Board