



**Chignecto-Central Regional School Board
Regular Meeting
12-00 Minutes
December 13, 2000**

The regular monthly meeting of the Chignecto-Central Regional School Board was held on Wednesday, December 13, 2000, in the Board Room at Central Office in Truro commencing at 7:00 p.m.

Present:

Kaaren Barkhouse
Robin Bourque
Jim Grue
John Henderson
Mark Lavers
Mary Macaulay
Lawrence MacKinnon
Ron Marks
Marilyn Murray
David Myles
Robert Parker
Mackie Ross
Marilyn Thompson
Trudy Thompson
Raymond Tynes (7:40 p.m.)

In Attendance:

Karen Casey
Ann Hamilton-Wood
Elmer MacDonald
Gary Miller
Brian Murphy
Robert Renouf
Dale Sabean
Nancy Mosher
Harry Munro

Absent:

Cheryl Cutler
Bernie Knockwood, with regrets

Board Chair Robert Parker called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone present to the first regular meeting of the newly-elected Board.

Approval of Agenda:

MOVED BY MARILYN MURRAY. SECONDED BY DAVID MYLES

**THAT THE AGENDA BE APPROVED AS CIRCULATED WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT THE BOARD WOULD MOVE IN-CAMERA AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE REGULAR MEETING.
MOTION CARRIED**

Approval of Minutes:

**MOVED BY JIM GRUE, SECONDED BY TRUDY THOMPSON
TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 11, 2000 MEETING AS CIRCULATED.**

MOTION CARRIED

**MOVED BY DAVID MYLES, SECONDED BY LAWRENCE MACKINNON
TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 8, 2000 ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING AS CIRCULATED.**

MOTION CARRIED

Delegation and Petitions:

The Board Chair indicated that two groups from the Brookfield area had requested to make presentations to the Board on possible grade configuration options for the South Colchester area as it relates to the construction of the new high school in Brookfield and the recommendation from the Department of Education that the Brookfield Memorial Elementary facility be decommissioned.

On behalf of the Brookfield Memorial Home and School Association President Tammy McNutt, accompanied by Laurie Robichaud, presented information to support a Grade Primary - 6 and Grade 7 - 12 configuration utilizing the present junior high facility for the elementary students and the new school building for the secondary level students. Also included with the presentation was a sketch outlining a proposed redesign of the junior high facility and documentation from the Brookfield Memorial Home and School supporting the same configuration.

Representing the Committee for the Parents and Students of South Colchester, parent Paula Altenburg and student Kristi Budd each made a presentation in support of a Grade Primary - 8 and Grade 9 -12 grade configuration. Ms. Budd also made available a petition signed by South Colchester students in support of the P-8 and 9-12 option. It was indicated during Ms. Altenburg's presentation that the South Colchester High School Advisory Council also supported that proposal.

Following each of the presentations, Board members asked questions of clarification including the issue of the impact on the feeder schools of both proposals, how two schools on adjacent properties would be supervised and how bus transportation would be affected.

The Board Chair thanked both groups for making their opinions known to the Board and indicated that the Operations Committee would be discussing the matter further at its meeting scheduled for December 19 and the Board would subsequently discuss it at Committee of the Whole on January 3.

Correspondence:

Minister of Education - Special Education Implementation Review

The Acting Board Secretary reported on correspondence received from the Minister of Education in response to a letter forwarded from the Board expressing its concerns with the membership of the committee. The Minister had responded to each of the three issues raised - the need for classroom teachers on the committee, adequate representation from school boards and little or no representation from outside the metro-Halifax area - by indicating how the Department believed the matters had been addressed.

In a related matter, it was indicated that Board members Marilyn Thompson and Mark Lavers would represent the CCRSB at a provincial focus group for board members related to the Special Education Implementation Review to be held at the NSSBA offices in Halifax on December 15.

Committee Reports:

Committee of the Whole

Board Vice-Chair Trudy Thompson reported on a Committee of the Whole meeting held on December 6, 2000. Ron Marks, Chair of the Finance and Human Resources Committee, had reported on discussions related to the membership on the Board's negotiations team. The Finance/HR Committee had recommended that the Chair of the Finance and Human Resources Committee and one other Board member serve on the team. It had been agreed that anyone interested in participating in the process would give their name to the Chair and Vice-Chair who

would make a recommendation for a member to serve on the negotiations team and Mrs. Thompson indicated that Kaaren Barkhouse had agreed to serve on the Negotiations Committee.

Assistant Superintendent of Programs and Student Services, Gary Miller, had updated the Board on the various types of French programs, particularly immersion, as they are offered across the region. Mr. Miller had highlighted the application and approval process for French Special Projects funding and the impact it has on the ability of the Board to initiate and maintain French programs.

Dale Sabeau, Assistant Superintendent of Operations, had provided the Board with background information on the grade configuration issue in the South Colchester area and also updated the Board on recent visits by the provincial Capital Construction Committee to schools in our region that the Board has recommended for replacement or major renovation. It is anticipated that a provincial list of priority projects will be compiled and publicized early in the new year.

**MOVED BY TRUDY THOMPSON, SECONDED BY LAWRENCE MACKINNON
TO RECEIVE THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE.
MOTION CARRIED**

Finance and Human Resources Committee

Committee Chair Ron Marks reported on a meeting of the Finance and Human Resources Committee held on November 29, 2000. In addition to the discussion regarding membership on the Negotiations Committee, the Committee had discussed three other items to be brought forward to the Board. Those included Board member conference allocations for the balance of the fiscal year, financial statements to the end of September and a review of the budget transfer process.

During discussion, concerns were expressed with the continuing increase in fuel oil costs and the impact this may have on the Board's financial position. It was reported that preliminary information coming from the Department of Education indicated that there may be some financial relief coming for school boards to assist with heating costs but the Superintendent indicated that to date no confirmation has been received.

**MOVED BY RON MARKS, SECONDED BY JIM GRUE
TO RECEIVE THE REPORT OF THE FINANCE AND HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE FOR
INFORMATION PURPOSES.
MOTION CARRIED**

Operations and Planning, Research and Technology Committee

Marilyn Thompson, Chair of the Operations and Planning, Research and Technology Committee, reported on a committee meeting held on November 8, 2000 with two items coming forward to the Board.

**MOVED BY MARILYN THOMPSON, SECONDED BY LAWRENCE MACKINNON
THAT THE BOARD APPROVE THE SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL LETTERS OF AGREEMENT
FOR THE COBEQUID DISTRICT SCHOOL (NOEL) AND RIVERSIDE EDUCATION CENTRE
(MILFORD).
MOTION CARRIED**

**Moved by Marilyn Thompson, seconded by Lawrence MacKinnon
THAT ALL SCHOOLS BE NOTIFIED IMMEDIATELY THAT THE LIABILITY INSURANCE
REQUIREMENT FOR NON-SCHOOL USERS BE WITHDRAWN PENDING FURTHER REVIEW
AND DECISION BY THE OPERATIONS AND P/R/T COMMITTEE.**

A question was raised as to how principals and schools would be advised of this change and Dale Sabeau, Assistant Superintendent of Operations, indicated that he would contact principals the following day. It was noted that this change had been originally initiated at the request of and with the advise of the School Insurance Program (SIP). It was agreed that a letter would be forwarded to SIP indicating that the Board had taken this action and that we were awaiting further information and advise from our solicitors.

MOTION CARRIED

**Moved by Marilyn Thompson, seconded by Lawrence MacKinnon
TO RECEIVE THE REPORT OF THE OPERATIONS AND PLANNING, RESEARCH AND
TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE.
MOTION CARRIED**

Programs and Student Services Committee

Programs and Student Services Committee Chair, John Henderson, reported that the Committee did not have a meeting in November and that a report from the December meeting would be coming forward in January. There were two items of information that were circulated to Board members - a copy of the submission to the Special Education Implementation Review Committee and the recently-completed report on the Student Support Workers initiative.

- **Conference Reports**

Nova Scotia School Boards Association Orientation Seminar

Board member Mary Macaulay reported on the Nova Scotia School Boards Association Orientation Seminar held for new and returning board members from October 29 - 31, 2000. Ms. Macaulay outlined information from the sessions she attended including curriculum initiatives and conducting effective meetings and she also shared comments made by the various guest speakers and panel presenters. Ms. Macaulay indicated that it was a very informative conference and mentioned in particular the "Welcome on Board" handbook that was supplied to participants. A total of eight Board members attended the seminar.

Child Poverty Conference

Trudy Thompson gave a detailed report on her attendance at the Children, Poverty and Education Conference held at Mount Saint Vincent University from November 16 - 18, 2000. Mrs. Thompson stated the conference, sponsored in part by the NSSBA, the NSTU and the Department of Education, was excellent and clearly highlighted the impact that poverty has on children and their ability to learn. As part of the report, it was

Moved by Trudy Thompson, seconded by Mary Macaulay

THAT THE BOARD BUILD A TASK FORCE COMPRISED OF TEACHERS, COMMUNITY MEMBERS, SCHOOL AND BOARD ADMINISTRATORS AND BOARD MEMBERS WHOSE FOCUS WILL BE TO DRAFT A POLICY THAT OFFICIALLY RECOGNIZES POVERTY AS AN IMPEDIMENT TO LEARNING AND TO A FULL AND AUTONOMOUS ADULTHOOD AND DEVELOPS A COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGY FOR ADDRESSING THE ISSUE OF POVERTY AS IT AFFECTS EDUCATION.

MOTION CARRIED

While recognizing the importance of the issue, the Superintendent reminded members of the former Board's decision to not place new initiatives on the table without prior notice as they often do not provide board members and staff with adequate lead time to assess the implications of the initiative.

Commonwealth Minister's of Education Parallel Symposium

Mr. MacDonald reported on his recent attendance at the Commonwealth Minister's of Education Conference Parallel Symposium held in Halifax. He indicated that the conference clearly showed that the member countries do not share a "common wealth" and outlined rather staggering statistics on the impact that HIV is having in developing countries, particularly in Africa. The conference had highlighted the use of technology in many countries while in many other areas of the world the more important issue is basic literacy.

- **Superintendent's Report:**

In the opening comments for his Administration Report, Mr. MacDonald reminded Board members that as the new year approaches we should all reflect on the problems of poverty, prejudice, wars and sickness throughout the world and how human beings can best use the advances made in genetics, medicine and all aspects of learning to benefit human kind. Mr. MacDonald asked Board members to review the balance of the report at their leisure.

Nova Scotia School Boards Association:

Ron Marks, Board representative to the NSSBA Board of Directors, reported that their December meeting had been postponed until January. Mr. Marks advised the Board that the NSSBA is encountering some financial difficulties resulting from the move of the office from Scotia Square to the new site at the Dartmouth High School. Despite assurances from the landlord that the previous facility would be easily rented, to date it is still unoccupied and the Association is therefore paying double occupancy costs. The move had been undertaken as the

result of the drastic reduction in the Association's budget last spring. Mr. Marks will keep the Board apprised of the situation as the fiscal year progresses.

A question was asked of Mr. Marks regarding what steps the NSSBA has taken to encourage the Department of Education to address the issue of the large number of teachers that will be retiring in the next few years and what effect that will have on the availability of qualified teachers. Mr. Marks indicated that the Association has adopted at least one resolution on that topic which had been forwarded to the Minister. Nancy Mosher, Regional Education Officer, commented that she had been part of a task force that examined the matter and made several recommendations to the Minister for consideration. Discussion followed on what boards might do to encourage new teachers to remain in the province. Many are currently being lured away from the province by attractive salaries and signing bonuses in other parts of Canada and the United States.

New Business:

There was no new business to bring forward to the meeting.

Question Period:

There were no questions raised by the public or media in attendance.

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In-Camera:

Moved by Trudy Thompson, seconded by Marilyn Murray

THAT THE BOARD MOVE TO IN-CAMERA.

MOTION CARRIED

Moved by Marilyn Murray, seconded by Robin Bourque

THAT THE BOARD MOVE OUT OF IN-CAMERA.

MOTION CARRIED

Adjournment:

On motion from Lawrence MacKinnon, the meeting adjourned.

Robert Parker,
Board Chair

Ann Hamilton-Wood
Communications Officer/
Acting Board Secretary

Return to Governance