



Chignecto-Central Regional School Board
Regular Meeting

01-00 Minutes

January 12, 2000

The regular monthly meeting of the Chignecto-Central Regional School Board was held on Wednesday, January 12, 2000 in the Board Room at the Central Office complex in Truro commencing at 7:00 p.m.

Present:

Kaaren Barkhouse
George Bruce
Jim Grue
John Henderson
Tina Hurley
Bernie Knockwood
Ron Marks
Marilyn Murray
David Myles
Mary Stevenson
Trudy Thompson

In Attendance:

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

Absent:

Cheryl Cutler, with regrets
John English
Lloyd Gibbs, with regrets
Robert Parker, with regrets
Marilyn Thompson, with regrets

Chair Mary Stevenson called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone in attendance.

Agenda:

Following an indication that there had been no requests for additions to the agenda, it was

Moved by Tina Hurley, seconded by Kaaren Barkhouse
THAT THE AGENDA BE APPROVED AS CIRCULATED.
MOTION CARRIED

Minutes:

It was noted that these minutes be tabled until the next meeting, February 9th, 2000.

Correspondence:

The Board secretary reported as follows:

Correspondence has been received from Theresa MacDonnell, President of the Pictou East Unit of the Canadian Cancer Society requesting that the Board's Policy #OG-03 (Environment: Smoke-free Facilities) be extended to cover all the school property, making it all smoke free. This has been referred to the Operations and Planning, Research and Technology Committee for review and response.

Distributed to School Board members was a copy of a letter from Margaret A. Forbes, President of the Nova Scotia School Boards Association, to The Honorable Neil LeBlanc, Minister of Finance, regarding the recent announcement that the federal government will be negotiating a new infrastructure program. The letter is seeking assurance that school boards will be considered in any future such programs.

Also distributed to School Board members was a copy of the presentation that the Nova Scotia School Boards Association President, Marg Forbes, made to the Fiscal Management Task Force at its meeting in Bridgewater.

Standing Committee Reports:

Committee of the Whole

David Myles, in Vice-Chair Robert Parker's absence, reported from the Committee of the Whole meeting held on January 10, 2000 as follows:

Discussion ensued on the School Board Boundary Review Task

Force. The general consensus of the Board was that the present structure is working and the Chignecto-Central Regional School Board is in favor of the current boundaries. It was agreed that the timing of the review was premature; the structure has only been in place for three years and it would take at least another three years in order to make a valid assessment of the Board's effectiveness. It was further suggested that the Superintendent, Board Chair, and Vice-Chair compile a list of concrete successes of the Board to be presented at the meeting on January 26, 2000.

Moved by David Myles, seconded by Trudy Thompson
THAT THE SCHOOL BOARD BOUNDARY REVIEW TASK FORCE BE INFORMED THAT THE GENERAL CONSENSUS OF THE BOARD IS THAT THE PRESENT STRUCTURE IS EFFECTIVE; THAT THE CHIGNECTO-CENTRAL REGIONAL SCHOOL BOARD SUPPORTS THE CURRENT BOUNDARIES; AND THAT A LIST OF CONCRETE SUCCESSES OF THE BOARD, COMPILED BY THE SUPERINTENDENT, BOARD CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR BE PRESENTED AT THE MEETING ON JANUARY 26, 2000.
MOTION CARRIED.

Ron Marks indicated that he felt it was the intent of board members to support the boundaries and include the positive (successes) as well as the negative things such as the special interest groups criticizing the Board, communications concerns, some municipal councillors attacking the Board, etc.

Mr. MacDonald pointed out that the Board is in support of no change to the current boundaries and, as recommended by the Board at the January 10th meeting, a list of concrete successes and progresses to date will be presented at the January 26th meeting. He further noted that any Board member may attend that session and should feel free to contribute according to his/her conviction.

MOTION CARRIED
(Nay votes cast by Tina Hurley and John Henderson)

Assistant Superintendent of Operations, Dale Sabeau, highlighted the report of the Truro Town Schools Study.

Moved by David Myles, seconded by George Bruce
THAT THE BOARD ESTABLISH THREE SCHOOL ZONES IN THE TOWN OF TRURO, EACH ZONE WITH AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, GRADES PRIMARY TO 6; THAT A NEW JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL, GRADES 7 TO 9, BE BUILT IN THE TOWN OF TRURO, BUT NOT AT THE PRESENT LOCATION.

Moved by Ron Marks, seconded by David Myles
THAT THE ABOVE MOTION BE AMENDED TO DELETE THE WORDS "BUT NOT AT THE PRESENT LOCATION".
MOTION CARRIED

Vote on Amended Motion that reads as follows:

THAT THE BOARD ESTABLISH THREE SCHOOL ZONES IN THE TOWN OF TRURO, EACH ZONE WITH AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, GRADES PRIMARY TO 6; THAT A NEW JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL, GRADES 7 TO 9, BE BUILT IN THE TOWN OF TRURO.

MOTION CARRIED.

Mary Stevenson thanked the Committee for their dedication and hard work and acknowledged Jennifer Ritacco's presence at the Board meeting as well as all the Committee meetings.

It was noted that the Board had confirmed a meeting with the Minister of Education for January 21, 2000 commencing at 1:00 p.m.

Board member stipends were discussed and the Board agreed that this is not the time to address this issue in terms of making any changes. The Board agreed to remain at status at this time.

Board members supported the concept of legislative changes such that the Board membership include a representative of the African Canadian communities, elected within these communities.

It was noted that these last two items were discussed in order to give direction to the Board's representative on the Board of Directors for the Nova Scotia School Boards Association.

Moved by David Myles, seconded by Tina Hurley
THAT THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE REPORT BE RECEIVED.
MOTION CARRIED

Finance and Human Resources Committee

Committee Chair Ron Marks indicated that they did not meet; therefore nothing to report.

Operations and Planning/Research & Technology

George Bruce, Committee Chair, reported as follows:

Mount Uniacke High School Students

A meeting of Board staff and school administration was held with Jim Gunn, Superintendent, Annapolis Valley Regional School Board, to discuss further what would happen to the Uniacke high school students who now attend Windsor Regional High School if the proposal made to the Annapolis Valley School Board for a new high school in Windsor and a new Middle School in Brooklyn becomes reality. Mr. Gunn is willing to be available for a public meeting in Uniacke to talk to the parents at a date to be determined.

Trudy Thompson asked to be informed when the date for this meeting is known.

Laidlaw Contract

The contract has been signed and forwarded to the Department of Education for final execution.

Research Project

As a result of Dalhousie University requesting permission to do a research project on Ethnic Diversity for Education, an Interview Guide for Students on the Racial Diversity in Education for Public Schools was shared with the Committee. Applicable school board staff and representatives from both the First Nations and the Black Communities will be requested to review the material for the purpose of determining whether approval will be given for the research on this topic to begin.

Moved by George Bruce, seconded by Kaaren Barkhouse
THAT THE REPORT OF THE OPERATIONS AND PLANNING/RESEARCH &
TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE BE ACCEPTED.
MOTION CARRIED

Programs and Student Services

Committee Chair Trudy Thompson reported as follows:

NSSBA Ad Hoc Committees

i) John Henderson gave an interim report on the activities of the Ad Hoc Committee on APEF (Atlantic Provinces Education Foundation). At the most recent meeting, representatives from the Department of Education and the NSTU made presentations with differing views. The NSTU expressed concern with the lack of teacher involvement in APEF curriculum development and with the "outcomes based" external assessment program. The Department of Education representative defended the external assessment program as an important component of APEF implementation. Mr. Henderson will continue to give the Programs and Student Services Committee regular updates.

ii) Marilyn Thompson presented the final report from the Ad Hoc Committee on "Inclusion" and reviewed the report's recommendations. The NSSBA Board of Directors will be seeking reaction from Boards across the province. The Programs and Student Services Committee will discuss the report at the January meeting next Wednesday.

French Special Projects 2000-01

Annually the Board makes application to the Province for French Special Project funding. The funding for approved projects is cost-shared: 50% by the Federal Government, 30% by the Province and 20% by the

Board. All projects applied for may not be approved. After discussion, the Committee agreed to forward the proposed 2000-01 French Special Projects applications to the Department of Education.

Moved by Trudy Thompson, seconded by Tina Hurley
THAT THE REPORT OF THE PROGRAMS AND STUDENT SERVICES COMMITTEE
BE ACCEPTED.
MOTION CARRIED

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Elmer MacDonald, in his message, cited the following quote by Omar Khayyam, 1048 - 1122,

The moving finger writes; and, having writ, moves on: nor all thy piety nor wit shall lure it back to cancel half a line, nor all thy tears wash out a word of it."

Mr. MacDonald asked that we heed this common sense message that the past is over and as we stand at the entrance of a new year, new century and new millennium, let us move on.

Also in his report, Mr. MacDonald cited a number of events scheduled over the next three months that will have a profound impact on the future direction of this school system; namely, School Board Boundary Review, Voluntary Planning Preliminary Report and Education Funding Review Work Group. These are expounded upon in the Administration Report.

Mr. MacDonald also made note that he had just received word that the Education Funding Review Work Group process has been postponed until further notice.

Mr. MacDonald complimented both Karen Casey and Eric Stoodley on the tremendous amount of work done in preparation of Y2K.

It was noted that school board members would be notified by e-mail as to the outcomes of the various School Board Boundary Review meetings.

In response to a question about the Forum for Young Canadians, it was noted that all schools received this information and that everyone who applied had been accepted.

Also distributed as an addendum to the Administration Report was the Response to the Report: Shaping Nova Scotia's Future, prepared by the Task Force on Fiscal Management.

In response to a question about what is being done in Finland, Norway and Germany, Mr. MacDonald explained that in these countries, education covers the needs of youngsters who are not necessarily going on the University; they are being educated artistically, musically and vocationally. Further discussion ensued and it was

suggested that the Board might benefit by hearing a speaker expound on the attributes of education in these countries.

Board Members responded positively to the Provincial Superintendents working cooperatively as a Council. The press release from the Superintendent's Council was discussed and it was agreed that the Board would like further information on this. Mr. MacDonald stated that there is a void in leadership across the Province that the Superintendents believe they must fill on behalf of the 160,000 students we serve. He further stated that Superintendents are trying to help focus the debate on the fundamental issues.

Nova Scotia School Boards Association

Ron Marks, Board representative to the NSSBA Board of Directors, indicated that the Minutes had been distributed.

Public Question and Answer Period

Peter Heckbert, Truro Daily News, asked about the letter regarding the Town of Truro Schools. It was noted that this letter would go in the mail on Friday.

Steve Proctor, Chronicle Herald, asked about the author of the response to the Task Force on Fiscal Management. It was noted that Mr. MacDonald, Mary Stevenson (Board Chair) and Robert Parker (Board Vice-chair) prepared this as directed by the Board and that senior staff had input as well. It was pointed out that individual school board members could also write their own report.

Date of Next Meeting

The next regular meeting of the Board will be held on Wednesday, February 9, 2000, at the Board Offices, 60 Lorne Street, Truro.

Adjournment

On motion from George Bruce, the meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Helene C. Smith,
Board Secretary

Mary Stevenson,
Board Chair
