
CHIGNECTO-CENTRAL REGIONAL SCHOOL BOARD
REGULAR MEETING
09-06 MINUTES
MAY 10, 2006

The regular monthly meeting of the Chignecto-Central Regional School Board was held on Wednesday, May 10, 2006, in the New Glasgow Junior High School, 93 Albert Street, New Glasgow beginning at 7:00 p.m.

Present:

Gordon Anderson	David Myles
Kaaren Barkhouse	Elizabeth Paris
Alex Cope	Mackie Ross
Vivian Farrell	Jamie Stevens
Jim Grue	Marilyn Thompson
Keith MacKenzie	Trudy Thompson
Ron Marks	Jeff Williams
Wendy Matheson-Withrow	Bert Young
Marilyn Murray	

In Attendance:

Doug Benedict	Terri Mingo-MacNeill
Valerie Gauthier	Linda Campbell, Board Secretary
Allison McGrath	David White, Regional Education Officer
Gary Miller	Gerald Green, Legal Counsel
Herb Steeves	

Board Chair Trudy Thompson called the meeting to order and welcomed those in attendance to the meeting. She thanked Principal Bob Ballantyne and his staff for providing meeting accommodations.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

It was MOVED by Marilyn Murray, seconded by Jamie Stevens

THAT THE AGENDA BE APPROVED AS CIRCULATED.

MOTION CARRIED

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

It was MOVED by Keith MacKenzie, seconded by David Myles

THAT THE MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING HELD ON APRIL 12, 2006 BE APPROVED.

MOTION CARRIED

BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES:

There was no business arising from the minutes.

STUDENT PRESENTATION:

During his introductory comments, Principal *Bob Ballantyne* advised he and his staff were pleased to host tonight's Board meeting. Mr. Ballantyne introduced New Glasgow Junior High students *Lindsay Morton* and *Hayley MacLeod* who were in attendance to perform musical selections for the Board. Lindsay presented a lively rendition of "*The Gypsy Dance*" on piano while Hayley contributed several delightful violin pieces.

Chair *Trudy Thompson* thanked the presenters for sharing their musical talent with the Board. Board Member *Jamie Stevens*, who represents the New Glasgow area, presented each of them with a token of appreciation on the Board's behalf.

PRESENTATION:

Dr. Joan McArthur-Blair, NSCC President:

Superintendent Gary Miller welcomed and introduced *Dr. Joan McArthur-Blair, President of the Nova Scotia Community College*, who was in attendance to provide the Board with background information on the college and describe her vision for the future of the NSCC. Dr. McArthur-Blair has extensive experience in post-secondary education including teaching, international projects, administrative roles, as well as faculty and curriculum development. A dynamic keynote speaker who has facilitated many workshops on topics including leadership, organizational transformation and college education in Canada, Dr. McArthur-Blair indicated the college's approach to education will be one that engages Nova Scotians in new ways to apply knowledge and skill.

At the conclusion of her presentation Dr. McArthur-Blair addressed questions for clarification. Chair *Trudy Thompson* thanked Dr. McArthur-Blair for her remarks,

wished her well in her new position, and presented her with a token of appreciation on behalf of the Board.

CORRESPONDENCE:

No items of correspondence were brought forward.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

COMMITTEE-OF-THE-WHOLE:

Vice-Chair Keith MacKenzie, read a report from the Committee-of-the-Whole meeting held on May 3rd, 2006.

Student Presentation:

The Board received a presentation from four of the twenty Grade 11 students who recently participated in an *International Student Leadership Camp* in Campeche, Mexico. *Ali Hollis*, who attends Springhill Jr./Sr. High, along with *Ashley Lothead* and *Emma Brophy*, students at Northumberland Regional High School shared pertinent details on this unique leadership development venture. An entertaining video presented by Hants East Rural High student *Hana MacKeil* provided Board Members with a first-hand account of the experience.

Highlights from Standing Committees:

The Chairs of each Standing Committee highlighted items from the minutes of their April committee meetings. More detailed reports will be presented at the regular monthly meeting.

Issues related to the site for the elementary school slated for the west end of Truro were discussed at length. The possibility of separating the opening dates for the two new Truro elementary schools was also raised. Discussion on these matters will continue at the May 10th Board Meeting.

Discussion / Information / Decision Items:

Provincial School Closure Review:

Board Members *Vivian Farrell*, *Marilyn Murray*, *Marilyn Thompson* and *Jeff Williams* agreed to develop a proposed list of key questions, concerns and observations to be the framework for the Board's presentation to the Department of Education committee reviewing the school closure process.

Vice-Chair MacKenzie reported he would substitute for Member Vivian Farrell who had subsequently advised she would regretfully be unavailable to serve as a member of the ad hoc Committee.

It was MOVED by Keith MacKenzie, seconded by Jamie Stevens

THAT THE COMMITTEE-OF-THE-WHOLE REPORT FROM A MEETING HELD ON MAY 3RD, 2006 BE RECEIVED FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES.

MOTION CARRIED

EDUCATION SERVICES:

Gordon Anderson, Committee Chair, provided a report on the Education Services Committee meeting held on April 18th.

Health Promoting Schools Program:

Coleen Davidson, Coordinator of Community Education & Partnerships, shared information on the *Health Promoting Schools Program*, a joint initiative among the Chignecto-Central Regional School Board, the District Health Authorities, the Nova Scotia Department of Health Promotion and Protection, and the Department of Education. The program, currently in phase one of a three-phase pilot, is designed to encourage students to make healthier nutrition choices and to participate in a variety of physical activities on a regular basis.

“1 to 1” Laptop Initiative:

Dr. Larry Elchuck, Assistant Director of Education Services, along with Gail Coldwell, Instructional Designer for the “1 to 1” *Laptop Initiative* and Jo-Ann Mumford, Grade 4 teacher at Brookfield Elementary School gave an overview on the initiative currently being piloted in Grade 4 classes at the following four schools: *Brookfield Elementary, Cobequid Consolidated Elementary, Junction Road Elementary* and *Thorburn Consolidated*. This exciting initiative, a two-year pilot, has proven in its first year to be an extremely positive learning tool for the students involved. A project evaluation will be conducted and reported to the Education Services Committee at the end of the 2006-2007 school year.

High School Mathematics Course Selection:

David McKillop, Coordinator of Mathematics, provided details of a process that the Chignecto-Central Regional School Board has undertaken to assist students in choosing the most suitable Mathematics courses in high school. Math teachers have

distributed an information packet to students and parents regarding which courses are most suitable in ensuring students' success.

Education Services Committee Chair Gordon Anderson reported that overall feedback from parents regarding the Math information package has been positive.

Student Support Worker Review Completed:

Professor *David Divine*, James R. Johnston Chair in Black Canadian Studies at Dalhousie University, completed his interviews with various staff and students within the Board pertaining to the *Student Support Worker* role. Professor Divine's report with recommendations will be shared with Committee Members at the next Education Services Committee Meeting.

In response to a question from Board Member Jim Grue, it was clarified that Professor Divine's report would subsequently be provided to the full Board.

Personal Communication and Entertainment Devices - Guidelines for Students:

Committee Members reviewed proposed guidelines for students regarding the use in schools of personal communication and entertainment devices, such as cell phones, blackberries, and all other wireless communication devices. A copy of the guidelines was attached to the Education Services Committee minutes for review and discussion as warranted at the May 3rd, 2006 Committee-of-the-Whole meeting.

It was MOVED by Gordon Anderson, seconded by Keith MacKenzie

THAT THE BOARD RECEIVE THE EDUCATION SERVICES COMMITTEE REPORT FROM A MEETING HELD ON APRIL 18, 2006 FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES.

MOTION CARRIED

CORPORATE SERVICES:

Committee Chair Mackie Ross read a report from the Corporate Services Committee meeting held on April 19th.

Continuing Records Check:

The Corporate Services Committee reviewed questions and answers which will be circulated to all staff once the revised policies and procedures have been implemented. The Committee approved a recommendation that all Board Employees (NSTU, NSGEU, CUPE and Non-Union) hired prior to 1997 be urged to complete the Child Abuse Register and Police Records Check, at no cost to the Employee.

Committee Chair Mackie Ross advised that although a recommendation proposing that Board Members and Senior Management also complete Child Abuse Register and Policy Record Checks was to have come forward for consideration this evening, it was decided to defer the matter to the Corporate Services Committee for additional discussion.

French Immersion:

Legal Counsel for the Board has advised that if the Board moves a French Immersion Program from one location to another, a consolidation and/or reorganization study would not be required.

Curtis Drive Property:

Correspondence has been received from the Department of Education regarding Board-owned property on Curtis Drive. The Department was inquiring whether the Board would be willing to make the Curtis Drive site available to be utilized as part of the negotiation process in acquiring the property for the new elementary school in the west end of Truro.

The Committee agreed to refer the discussion to the May 3rd Committee-of-the-Whole meeting where a decision was made to postpone a decision on the matter until the May 10th Board Meeting when Board Member Bert Young, Truro representative, would have an opportunity to contribute to the debate.

Mr. Young, in providing his interpretation of the process to date, expressed disappointment with the procedure. In light of the lack of information surrounding the acquisition of the Kaulback Street property for the site in question, Mr. Young voiced his opposition to utilizing the Curtis Drive site as part of the negotiation process.

Member Alex Cope provided a rationale and support for building the new school on the Curtis Drive property as opposed to the Kaulback Street site.

The Board subsequently determined it required additional information regarding the progression of the Kaulback Street land acquisition in order to make an informed decision. Director of Operational Services Herb Steeves was asked to invite the *Department of Education, Facilities Management, and Department of Transportation and Public Works* representatives involved in the process to the Corporate Services Committee meeting on May 23rd to provide a status report regarding the land acquisition.

Truro East and Truro West:

As a result of delays in acquiring land for the new elementary school in the west end of Truro, the Department of Education has asked if the Board would like to delay construction of the new elementary school for the east side (Harmony Road site) as well, in order to maintain concurrent opening dates for the two schools.

The Committee agreed that the matter be referred to the May 3rd Committee-of-the-Whole Meeting where the topic was discussed at length. During additional discussion on the matter at the May 10th Board meeting Keith MacKenzie, Board Vice-Chair, introduced a notice to reconsider a motion that carried at the June 9th, 2004 meeting of the Board approving a recommendation that the two new elementary schools slated to be built in Truro be constructed and opened at the same time.

Members agreed in principle with a suggestion, put forward by Board Member Jim Grue, to advise the Department of Education that it would be best to separate the construction schedules of the two new elementary school projects in order to prevent further delays. An official decision on this matter will be provided to the Department of Education following the Board's formal vote at the regular monthly meeting on June 14th.

It was MOVED by Mackie Ross, seconded by Marilyn Murray

THAT THE BOARD RECEIVE THE CORPORATE SERVICES COMMITTEE REPORT FROM A MEETING HELD ON APRIL 19TH, 2006 FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES.

MOTION CARRIED

Employment Equity Committee Update:

Member Marilyn Thompson who serves as the Board's representative on the *Employment Equity Advisory Committee* welcomed fellow committee members *Glenda Talbot-Richards*, Acting Coordinator of African-Nova Scotian Cultural Services, and *Crystal States*, Regional Educator with the Black Educators Association, to the table to discuss the work of and challenges facing the committee.

Following the discussion, Allison McGrath, Director of Human Resources Services, reminded those in attendance of the threshold provision in the Board's collective agreement with the NSTU local which has resulted in a number of promotions. She advised she is looking forward to joining the Employment Equity Advisory Committee in June.

FINANCE SERVICES:

Committee Chair Ron Marks read reports from a Finance Services Committee meeting held on April 26th and from the May 9th meeting to which all Board Members had been invited.

Status Quo Budget:

A status quo Budget with cost pressures totaling \$6,052,930. and proposed additions for 2006-07 was reviewed.

Mileage:

The Arbitration Update – *NSGEU Receives Civil Service Interest-Arbitration Award* was distributed. Included in the award was mileage rate and allowance increases retroactive to April 1, 2004. The mileage rate currently paid to Board Members and employees is .34 cents per kilometer. According to the Board Member Stipend Report, Board Members must follow the provincial rate. An Order-in-Council is required to change the Provincial rate for non NSGEU provincial employees.

The Finance Services Committee agreed to wait for the Order-in-Council before proceeding with payment of retro travel allowances to April 1, 2004.

Band Council Receivables Update:

With no funds having been received from either Pictou Landing or Shubenacadie Band Councils as of April 26th, the Finance Services Committee agreed that MacIntosh, MacDonnell and MacDonald be contacted with regard to immediate action on this matter. At the May 3rd Committee-of-the Whole meeting Mr. Marks outlined the negative impact this delinquency would have on upcoming budget and audit issues. He reported that since making that statement, partial payments from both Band Councils had been received.

May 9th, 2006 Meeting:

Education Budget Overview ~ Province of Nova Scotia:

The *Education Budget Overview* which was provided to Board Chairs, Superintendents and Directors of Finance on Monday, May 8th, 2006 was presented. A Directors' meeting to receive further information regarding the funding will be held on Thursday, May 11th, 2006.

Review of CCRSB's Funding Profile Sheet:

CCRSB's draft funding profile sheet for the period April 1, 2006 to March 31, 2007 was circulated and reviewed. The projected funding allocation totals \$161,631,600., an increase of \$8,187,950. over last year.

The Board's funding encompasses the full implementation of the Hogg Report for 2006-07 as well as a formula adjustment of \$1,050,300. which was based on a provincial commitment that no Board would experience a decline in funding as a result of conversion to the new funding model.

Recommendation Re NSTU Staffing Level 2006-07:

Discussion was held regarding the NSTU staffing level for 2006-07. Based on recommendation of the Finance Services Committee,

It was MOVED by Ron Marks, seconded by David Myles

THAT THE BOARD ESTABLISH A "BASE" STAFFING COMPLEMENT OF 1467.5 FTES PLUS A MINIMUM OF 25 ADDITIONAL POSITIONS TO BE MADE AVAILABLE THROUGH "TARGETED" FUNDING.

MOTION CARRIED

It was MOVED by Ron Marks, seconded by Kaaren Barkhouse

THAT THE BOARD RECEIVE THE FINANCE SERVICES COMMITTEE REPORTS FROM MEETINGS HELD ON APRIL 26TH, 2006 AND MAY 9TH, 2006 FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES.

MOTION CARRIED

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:

Superintendent Gary Miller welcomed *Valerie Gauthier* to her first regular Board Meeting since recently being appointed *Director of Finance Services*. Ms. Gauthier, a Chartered Accountant who has served as the Board's Acting Director of Finance Services since August 2005, brings to the position 14 years of experience working with school boards, as well as employment for 9 years in the private sector with the accounting firm Doane Raymond.

Mr. Miller highlighted several items from his administrative report including: *the May 5th Heritage Fair, Elementary Literacy Assessment Results; Provincial School Closure Review Meeting Schedule; and, Budget 2006-07.*

Superintendent Gary Miller also publicly congratulated member *Ron Marks* on having been chosen as the winner of the *Nova Scotia School Boards Association 2006 Board Member Recognition Award*. An external panel of judges with no prior involvement with School Boards chooses the award recipient. The official presentation of the award will take place during the NSSBA AGM and Conference on May 26th.

BOARD CHAIR / VICE-CHAIR REPORT:

No report was presented.

NSSBA REPORT:

Board representative to the Nova Scotia School Boards Association, David Myles, reviewed a number of topics from the Highlights of the May 5th Board of Directors' Meeting including *Educational Goals and Priorities; RFPs on Superintendent Performance Evaluations; Forum on Alternate Programs (originally planned for June 16-17 postponed until September 2006); Audit Committee; Recommendation to Separate the Resolutions and Elections Committee; and, Executive Director Evaluation*.

Mr. Myles encouraged members to attend the *NSSBA AGM and Conference* in Baddeck on May 25th – 27th.

NSSBA – School Board Governance Development Program:

NSSBA President Ron Marks presented David Myles with a School Board Governance Development Program certificate for successful completion of Module 1, Financial Literacy. Mr. Marks advised the NSSBA delivers a series of 5 governance modules and encouraged participation in the worthwhile development sessions.

NEW BUSINESS:

There was no new business brought forward.

NOTICE OF MOTION:

No notices of motion were presented.

PUBLIC QUESTION PERIOD:

There were no questions from the public.

IN-CAMERA SESSION:

It was MOVED by Wendy Matheson-Withrow, seconded by Marilyn Murray
**THAT THE MEETING MOVE TO IN-CAMERA SESSION REGARDING A
PERSONNEL ISSUE.**

MOTION CARRIED

It was MOVED by Vivian Farrell, seconded by Marilyn Murray
THAT THE MEETING RECONVENE IN PUBLIC SESSION.

MOTION CARRIED

DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

The next regular meeting of the Board, scheduled for **June 14, 2006**, will be held in the **Spring Street Academy** beginning at 7:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT:

On motion of Mackie Ross the meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

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Trudy Thompson, Board Chair

June 14, 2006
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Date

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Linda Campbell, Board Secretary

June 14, 2006
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Date