



**HALIFAX REGIONAL SCHOOL BOARD  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
MINUTES  
September 25, 2013  
6:00 p.m.**

**A Regular Board Meeting** was held this date in the Board Chambers,  
33 Spectacle Lake Drive, Dartmouth, NS.

**PRESENT:**

Bridget Ann Boutilier	Sheryl Blumenthal-Harrison
Melinda Daye	Nancy Jakeman
Gin Yee	Cindy Littlefair
Dave Wright	Kirk Arsenault
Christy Linders	Steve Warburton

Chris Abraham, Student Advisor  
Alan Lowe, Senior Advisor, School Board Relations

**REGRETS:** Denise Bell, Regional Education Officer

**STAFF:**

- Judy White, Superintendent
- Elwin LeRoux, Senior Staff Advisor
- Selena Henderson, Corporate Secretary
- Mike Christie, Director, Human Resource Services
- Terri Thompson, Director, Financial Services
- Doug Hadley, Coordinator, Communications
- Danielle McNeil-Hessian, Director, School Administration
- Ron Heiman, Director, Operations Services
- Gerard Costard, Coordinator, Information Technology
- Tracey Jones-Grant, Coordinator, Diversity Management
- Sandra Thomas, Executive Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent
- Vicki Palmeter, Assistant to the Corporate Secretary

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:14 pm.

**2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**It was moved and seconded (Blumenthal-Harrison/Boutilier) that the agenda be amended to add items 14.2 and 14.3 Contract Awards and a motion from Board Member Dave Wright as item 9.1**

**(CARRIED)**

**It was moved and seconded (Wright/Daye) that the Governing Board wave rule of order and consider Board Member Dave Wright's motion as follows:**

I move that the Halifax Regional School Board strike a standing committee called the Policy Development and Review Committee and that the bylaws be amended to reflect this change.

**It was moved and seconded (Blumenthal-Harrison/Boutilier) that the amended agenda be approved.**

**(CARRIED)**

**3. AWARDS / PRESENTATIONS**

3.1 Anti-Bullying Presentation – Springvale Elementary - John Dobrowolski, Principal

**The students from Springvale performed an anti-bully presentation.**

**4. PUBLIC SUBMISSIONS**

**5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES/BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

June 19, 2013 (Regular)  
June 25, 2013 (Special)  
September 11, 2013 (Special)

**It was moved and seconded (Littlefair/Boutilier) that the minutes/business arising from the minutes of June 19, 2013, Regular Board, June 25, 2013 and September 11, 2013 Special Board meetings be approved.**

**(CARRIED)**

**6. CORRESPONDENCE**

**7. CHAIR'S REPORT**

**Gin Yee, Chair, presented the Chair's report. A copy of the Chair's report is filed with the minutes.**

**8. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

**Judy White, Superintendent, presented the Superintendent's Report. A copy of the Superintendent's Report is filed with the minutes.**

**9. ITEMS FOR DECISION**

Board Member Dave Wright provided the following notice of motion:

I move that the Halifax Regional School Board strike a standing committee called the Policy Development and Review Committee and that the bylaws be amended to reflect this change.

**It was moved and seconded (Wright/Boutilier) that the Governing Board wave the rule of order of the one month notice period.**

**(CARRIED)**

**It was moved and seconded (Wright/Blumenthal-Harrison) that the Governing Board strike a standing committee called the Policy Development and Review Committee and that the bylaws be amended to reflect this change**

**(CARRIED)**

**10. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**10.1 Audit Committee**

**10.1.1 Report #13-09-1426 - June 30, 2013 Quarterly Financial Update**

**Board Member Dave Wright, Chair of the Audit Committee, presented the June 30, 2013 Quarterly Financial Update**

**10.1.2 Report #13-09-1424 - Purchasing Policy Annual Report 2012-13**

**Board Member Dave Wright, Chair of the Audit Committee, presented the Purchasing Policy Annual Report.**

**Board Member Melinda Daye indicated that the meeting will be held on September 26, 2013, and an update will be provided at the next Regular Board meeting.**

**11. INFORMATION ITEMS**

11.1 Report #13-09-1422 – Occupational Health & Safety Quarterly Update, Q2 2013, April 1, 2013 to June 30, 2013 – Mike Christie, Director, Human Resource Services and John Swales, Manager, Occupational Health & Safety

**Mike Christie, Director, Human Resource Services and John Swales, Manager, Occupational Health & Safety, presented the report.**

11.2 Report #13-09-1430 – Update on Response to the External Review of the Halifax Regional School Board’s Support of Rehtaeh Parsons – Judy White, Superintendent

**Judy White, Superintendent, presented the report.**

**12. NOTICE OF MOTION**

Board Member Dave Wright provided the following notice of motion:

I move that staff prepare a report in response to the transportation recommendations by the Sackville High and Millwood High Boundary Review proposal (doc # 13-03-1397) referred to on Page 5 – Map Exchange 6 and Map Exchange 7 by the November Regular Board meeting.

**13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Board Meeting – October 23, 2013

**14. IN-CAMERA**

**It was moved and seconded (Linders/Boutilier) to move in-camera.**

**(CARRIED)**

14.1 Contract Award – Audit Committee

14.2 Contract Award – Ron Heiman – Director, Operations Services

14.3 Contract Award – Ron Heiman – Director, Operations Services

**It was moved and seconded (Arsenault/Blumenthal-Harrison) to move into regular sessions.**

**(CARRIED)**

**It was moved and seconded (Linders/Wright) to approve motions made in-camera.**

**(CARRIED)**

**15. ADJOURNMENT**

**It was moved and seconded (Daye/Arsenault) that the meeting be adjourned.**  
**(CARRIED)**

Meeting was adjourned at 8:11pm.

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Gin Yee  
Chair  
Halifax Regional School Board

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Selena Henderson  
Corporate Secretary

Prepared by Vicki Palmetter  
Assistant to the Corporate Secretary

**Chair's Report**  
**September 25, 2013**

Fellow board members, Madame Superintendent, members of staff, ladies and gentlemen, good evening.

It is great to be back for our first regular school board meeting of the year.

I want to begin by thanking our staff for all of their efforts to ensure we had a successful start to the school year. I understand it was a relatively smooth start up.

Even though we haven't been together for a regular meeting since the end of June, the work of our board continued throughout the summer and I want to take a couple of moments to mention a few highlights:

Throughout July and August, the board meet several times regarding our ongoing search for a new superintendent. And while I cannot give you a specific timeline tonight on when a new superintendent will be announced, I feel confident that we will be in a position to complete this process in the near future.

In the meantime, Judy continues to provide superb leadership and we are fortunate to have someone of her abilities leading our system.

I attended two announcements in the summer regarding the Early Years Learning Initiative in Nova Scotia.

The first announcement took place at the Halifax Developmental Centre for Early Learning which is located in Joseph Howe School. It was here the province announced that the Margaret and Wallace McCain Family Foundation would be providing a \$500,000 grant to help establish the province's first early years centres. Board member Linders attended this announcement as well.

And in August, I was at Rockingstone Heights School where Minister Jennex announced that Rockingstone would be one of the first locations for the early years centres in Nova Scotia.

In July, board member Jakeman and I attended the announcement of the new Eastern Passage High School. I had the opportunity to speak at the announcement and on behalf of the HRSB, I indicated that the board was pleased that the province reaffirmed its commitment to both the high school

project in Eastern Passage and the renovation of Cole Harbour District High School to create a new skilled trades centre.

On August 30, I was at Kingswood Elementary where the province announced they were extending the class size cap to Grade Six beginning next year with Grade Four classes. This extension will be phased in over three years and the province will invest an additional six point five million dollars to support the cap by hiring as many as 100 new teachers.

I was actually quoted in the news release regarding this announcement and I applauded the province saying that I have heard from parents, guardians and teachers who have told me smaller class sizes provide for better learning and teaching opportunities, especially in the younger grades.

And last night I had the opportunity along with a number of my fellow board members to attend the retirement dinner for our staff who have retired in the last year.

It was a wonderful night and a terrific send off to our retiring employees for their years of service to the H-R-S-B and our predecessor boards. I want to thank our Director of Human Resources, Mike Christie, and his team for organizing a great event.



Those are just a few of the highlights for me since we last met in June. In closing I want to extend a very heartfelt thanks to my fellow board members for their continued hard work and I look forward to the year ahead.

Thank you.

## **Superintendent's Report**

**September 25, 2013**

Good evening board members!

Welcome back to the first Regular Board Meeting of the 2013-14 school year. I hope you all had a restful summer break. I'm pleased to report that we have had a very positive start to the school year.

Classes started on Wednesday, September 4. Here are a few moments captured at St. Mary's Elementary School on that very first day. There were some tears...lots of hugs and some very excited children.

Two days later, the new CP Allen opened its doors for the very first time to a VERY eager group of students! From what I understand, everyone is settling in nicely. The community was recently invited to an open house to see the facility and tour the school.

Also on Friday, September 6, Rocky Lake Junior High welcomed students to the new-to-them school.

As well, Bedford Education Center, located at the former Bedford Junior High building, opened for FLECs and YPT students.

We've also split our two largest elementary schools. Both Beechville-Lakeside-Timberlea Elementary and Tantallon Elementary have each been sub-divided into a junior and senior elementary. The four new schools now operate independently.

Together with the other 133 schools, it has been a very smooth transition into the school year!

Just before the year began, I met with principals from all of our schools here in this room.

I took time to address the Halifax Regional School Board's 4-year Strategic Plan and its impact on the work being done at the school level.

We went over the new vision, mission and the 4 goals.

I then asked the principals to consider three questions in small groups. They were:

1. How does the Board's Strategic Plan connect with your school's Continuous School Improvement plan?
2. What elements in the Board's Strategic Plan will you focus on at your school this year?
3. What steps will you take to ensure that everyone in your school community understands and can articulate how your school is ***providing a high quality education for every student every day?***

I was encouraged by the feedback I received from principals following this discussion. Many of them told me their school improvement plans are strongly aligned with the Strategic Plan. Others said they are pleased to have a plan to help guide them on their journeys.

Following our discussion on the Strategic Plan, I addressed Principals about the findings of the external review of the Halifax Regional School Board's Support for Rehtaeh Parsons, and the subsequent changes to legislation and what they mean for us.

We went over the two recommendations specific to the Halifax Regional School Board.

We talked about the steps that could be taken to make sure the safety net is secure for students as we work through the recommendations and respond to the legislated changes.

I told them there is no one-size-fits-all solution... and every student's case is different. But it's critical for each of us to be asking the right questions in order to support each and every student.

I emphasized that this is not simply an issue at the secondary level – it's an issue that spans Grade Primary through Grade 12.

To spark discussion, I asked principals to consider these 3 questions at their tables:

1. What plans will you put in place to **support students** to report directly to adults in your school when they are feeling bullied or experiencing cyberbullying?
2. If every teacher emphasized every day during the first week of school that they were available as a support to each of their students whenever they felt bullied at school, would that reduce anonymous reporting of bullying? How could you make this happen?
3. What type of support will principals need?

The discussion on this topic marked a strong beginning point to ensure that principals understand the issues and are addressing the recommendations immediately.

While great change will take time, I am confident we are making progress. I have heard from School Admin Supervisors that they have already noticed a change in how administrators are dealing with out-of-area requests and high school transfers.

I told Principals that these are only short term strategies but it is our intention to revise the formal policy by December, 2013.

We also talked about the new CyberSCAN unit, the new Cyber-safety Act and the new online anonymous reporting tool that went live on September 16.

As you know, there are so many changes, and as a result, so many questions. I promised to keep principals informed, as I receive more information.

There is a more detailed update on our progress with each of the recommendations in the report on the agenda later this evening.

However, I would like to highlight one new resource that will be available to all students throughout the year.

Through a partnership with the IWK, we will soon have a full-time Program Developer and Service Facilitator working out of Central Office to support students with mental health needs. The purpose of this new role is to address more mental health needs at an early intervention stage.

Judy Elliott will begin transitioning into her role next week. We are very pleased that she will be with us.

After a morning of very important, albeit heavy, conversation, we ended the day with the Superintendent's Awards of Excellence.

Each year, employees are invited to nominate fellow employees who are demonstrating excellence in supporting schools and students. The winners are chosen by a committee made up of HRSB employees and community leaders.

Congratulations to this year's winners. I will introduce you from left to right in this photo:

**Joanne Williams**, Coordinator of Excel won an Excellence in Leadership Award;

**Brian Ellenburger**, Principal at Southdale-North Woodside Elementary also won an Excellence in Leadership Award;

**Claire Hilchie**, Educational Program Assistance at Gaetz Brook Junior High School won an Excellent Support Staff Award;

**Kelly Ryan**, a Supervisor in Human Resources Services won an Excellent Support Staff Award;

and to the far right, **Lisa Rounsefell**, Learning Centre Teacher at Brookside Junior High School won an Excellence in Teaching Award.

Congratulations to all of our award winners and nominees!

Earlier this month, Selena Henderson, Elwin LeRoux and I presented to this year's Leadership Development Program group (also known as the LDP). We led a workshop on governance for these future administrators – which outlined the alignment of governance from the board level, right down to the classroom. We also talked in great detail about the Strategic Plan – and how it is the backbone for everything we do as an organization.

That same evening, Danielle MacNeil-Hessian talked about the role of School Advisory Councils.

I'd like to welcome members of this year's LDP to tonight's meeting! It is great to have you here.

Another exciting event I had the opportunity to take part in was the Kick off to 'We Day' Atlantic Canada which took place at Ellenvale Junior High.

As you know, 'We Day' is happening at the Halifax Metro Centre on November 27. Co-Founder of Free the Children, Craig Kielburger himself, came to Ellenvale to create a buzz about 'We Day' and the 'We Act' program. And what a buzz he created!

Not only did he talk about how students can change the world by starting in their very own schools and communities, he talked about the power of youth engagement. The energy in the gym was beyond measure...

Let me give you a little taste of what the energy was like that day...

**((VIDEO RUNS :29 sec))**

And that energy only grew throughout the presentation – especially when he announced the line-up of talent that would be part of We Day Halifax.

Here are just some of the names: Martin Sheen, Michaelle Jean, Classified, Spencer West, Hedley,

The Kenyan Boys Choir and Shawn Desmon.

You can't buy a ticket to We Day – you must earn it through service. And I'm glad the Metro Centre is the size that it is – because I know that students from across this Board – and this Province – will demonstrate the action they're taking to improve their own communities, and communities abroad.

This year, we have an incredible opportunity to support the work of the United Way by tying our school support in with our commitment to the 'We Act' program, through *Free the Children*.

Yes, they are two different charities – but our schools will be in a unique position to fulfill a commitment to the 'We Act' program by supporting the United Way and the organizations it serves.

That's because 'We Act' encourages youth involvement and engagement both on a global – AND a local level. The program is meant to enhance and build on the great work that students – are already doing here at home and abroad.

And they're already doing so much!

I am continually amazed by what I see on my school visits and hear from others in the system about what schools are doing! Every time I turn around, I find out about how our students and staff are giving back and doing what they can for others.

Students today have a deep desire to make a difference in their communities.

And we, as educators, have a responsibility to cultivate that desire and provide the opportunities to allow it to flourish. Young people who learn the importance of being engaged in their communities – will become our thoughtful, compassionate and empathetic leaders of the future.

I know that our schools will be successful in their involvement in both incredible charities – I look forward to seeing what's in store!

As you know, the second Thursday in September is 'Stand Up Against Bullying Day.' I am so pleased with the participation of schools on this day – and every day. We have received a number of photos of schools in pink that we hope you had the pleasure of viewing on our website, Twitter and on the big screen before the meeting started tonight.

I commend all of our students and staff members for their involvement in this very important day. Even Central Office took part in the event!

I also want to take a moment to thank the students from Springvale Elementary for tonight's amazing performance. You don't know this, but our Director of HR, Mike Christie's daughter Laine was one of the performers. Well done!

Last week, members of the Board and NSGEU bargaining teams signed the Collective Agreement. This new agreement is effective until Sept 2016.

Yesterday, I visited Oyster Pond Academy. I met with Principal Karen Webber to talk about the school's Continuous School Improvement plan – and to visit a few classrooms.

I even got some instruction from Grade 7 students working on vanishing points in pencil drawings.

Last week, staff gathered outside of the cafeteria to dedicate a bench and a picnic table to Roger Morgan, one of our commissionaires who worked at the front desk and for years at the Bell Building. Roger passed away after a short battle with cancer this past school year.

This was something initiated by staff. Molly Gammon, principal of Duncan MacMillan collected donations from schools and Central Office. She and Bernie McKenna organized the event, which was a moving tribute to a kind man. Roger's wife Gwen also attended the event.



Here's what the plaque looks like. I urge you to take a moment to see the bench and picnic table, located just outside the cafeteria.

Last night, we hosted a retirement event for HRSB staff. I gave a farewell message to 177 retirees and their families. I thanked them for their service to the Halifax Regional School Board – and sent them on their way to retirement. It was a lovely event, where former staff members were recognized for their service with the HRSB. I was pleased to share how sweet retired life can be!

I even had a moment to catch up with a former colleague, Kevin Currie, who taught at CPA when I was there.

Congratulations to all of our retirees.

It's been a busy September, but also a very rewarding and positive beginning to a new school year.