



**HALIFAX REGIONAL SCHOOL BOARD
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
MINUTES
March 27, 2014
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	Steve Warburton
Melinda Daye	Nancy Jakeman
Gin Yee	Cindy Littlefair
Dave Wright	Christy Linders
Sheryl Blumenthal-Harrison	

Denise Bell, Regional Education Officer
Chris Abraham, Student Advisor
Tristan Maxwell, Student Advisor

REGRETS:

Kirk Arsenault
Alison Leverman, Director, Program
Tracey Jones-Grant, Coordinator, Diversity Management

STAFF:

Elwin LeRoux, Superintendent
Gary Adams, Senior Staff Advisor
Selena Henderson, Corporate Secretary
Terri Thompson, Director, Financial Services
Doug Hadley, Coordinator, Communications
Danielle McNeil-Hessian, Director, School Administration
Mike Christie, Director, Human Resource Services
Ron Heiman, Director, Operations Services
Gerard Costard, Coordinator, Information Technology
Susan Tomie, Coordinator, School Administration
Vicki Palmetter, Assistant to the Corporate Secretary

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was moved and seconded (Blumenthal-Harrison/Boutilier) to add two in-camera items to the agenda.

(CARRIED)

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

(CARRIED)

3. AWARDS / PRESENTATIONS

4. CHAIR'S REPORT

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

5. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Elwin LeRoux, Superintendent, presented the Superintendent's Report. A copy of the report is filed with the minutes.

6. PUBLIC SUBMISSIONS

7. APPROVAL OF MINUTES/BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

February 26, 2013 (Regular Board)

It was moved and seconded (Jakeman/Boutilier) that the minutes/business arising from the minutes of the February 26, 2014, Regular Board meetings be approved.

(CARRIED)

8. CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence to report.

9. ITEMS FOR DECISION

10. COMMITTEE REPORTS

10.1 Audit Committee

Board Member Christy Linders provided an update from the March 27, 2014, Audit Committee meeting.

10.2 Policy Development and Review Committee

It was moved and seconded (Warburton/Linders) that the Governing Board rescind Policy B. 001 Bomb Threats.

(CARRIED)

10.3 Nova Scotia School Board Association - Board Member Melinda Daye, NSSBA Director

10.3.1 Nova Scotia School Boards Association Resolutions

It was moved and seconded (Linders/Boutilier) that the Governing Board put forward the following resolution:

WHEREAS The Nova Scotia Department of Education (as it then was) commissioned Chester Sabeau to compile a Student Walking Distance Review which was delivered to the Department in December 2007,

AND WHEREAS one of the recommendations of that review was that ‘We recommend that the walking distance for elementary students be 1.6 kilometers and for secondary students, 3.0 kilometers. That is Section 6 of the Regulations, subsection (1)(a) be changed to read “one more elementary students who reside more than 1.6 kilometers from the school to which they are to be transported and one or more secondary students reside more than 3.0 kilometers from the school to which they are to be transported”.’,

AND WHEREAS currently the province has defined the walking distance for all students as 3.6 kilometers,

AND WHEREAS the most appropriate walking distance for public school students in Nova Scotia is one that is long enough to allow students to obtain exercise while travelling to school but short enough so as not to provide an inequitable hardship to some students,

AND WHEREAS currently Nova Scotia School Boards are having to subsidize transportation costs at the expense of other educational items in their limited discretionary budget in order to reduce the number of students who must walk near the maximum distances to prevent such inequitable hardship,

Be it resolved that the Department of Education and Early Childhood Education adopt the recommendation from the Sabeau Review of Student Walking Distances that that the walking distance for elementary students be 1.6 kilometers and for

secondary students, 3.0 kilometers and provide targeted funding to enable boards to provide additional transportation to students who live beyond the limits of the new walking distances.

(CARRIED)

It was moved and seconded (Daye/Blumenthal-Harrison) that the Governing Board put forward the following resolution:

WHEREAS the Minister of Education to Reality Check 2009 stated the following: *"We have developed a network of supports, and now we have opportunities through committed leadership to make our educational system even richer and more successful"*

WHEREAS the consultants Dr. Enid Lee and Mr. Clem Marshall encouraged Nova Scotia's educational structure to work more as a team with African Nova Scotian communities and all our partners to gather data, to reflect on what the data is telling us, and to adjust our programs and strategies accordingly, the model the Consultants presented has the potential to help not only African Nova Scotian students but all students in our system, we however cannot lose sight of the fact that African Nova Scotian learners face greater obstacles, which have their roots in racism

WHEREAS the NSSBA, HRSB and DOEEC agree that systemic racism undermines the commitments of our society to build an inclusive community, and it is the responsibility of the institutions, such as the public school system, to act and be part of the solution;

Whereas we have challenging times ahead, we will strive to work with our partners to make the Reality Check recommendations a reality;

Be it resolved that the NSSBA will strongly encourage and support all school boards to review the IPP of every ANS student and make changes in programming where deemed necessary

Be it resolved that the NSSBA will strongly encourage and support educational partners in collecting quantitative data on the academic performance of, and the opportunities to learn, that are provided to ANS students

Be it resolved that the NSSBA will strongly encourage and support Boards and the NSTU to intensify efforts to recruit more ANScotian teachers while negotiating with unions where necessary to align the positions, and salaries.

(CARRIED)

It was moved and seconded (Wright/Warburton) that the Governing Board put forward the following amendment to the resolution as follows:

Whereas the question has been raised whether or not there is a disproportionate number of African Nova Scotian students on IPPs.

(CARRIED)

It was moved and seconded (Jakeman/Wright) that the Governing Board put forward the following:

WHEREAS technology plays a significant role in students' lives and education;

WHEREAS digital citizenship is "defined as the norms of responsible behavior related to the appropriate use of technology" (PEEL school board policy);

WHEREAS we support student achievement and crucial to this achievement is the ability to use technology responsibly;

WHEREAS digital citizenship is an important part of what students learn in school;

That the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development develop a Digital Citizenship policy for implementation in school boards across Nova Scotia.

(CARRIED)

It was moved and seconded (Blumenthal-Harrison/Jakeman) that the Governing Board put forward the following:

WHEREAS section 64D of the Education Act directs that school boards provide for the supervision of students at a public school during the student's lunch break at no cost to the student;

WHEREAS school boards have not been allotted any additional funds from the EECD to cover these costs;

WHEREAS funds that were once directed to the classroom are now being spent on lunchtime supervision in some school boards;

BIRT:

That the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development provide appropriate funding to school boards to cover the costs associated with the supervision of students at a public school during the student's lunch break.

(CARRIED)

It was moved and seconded (Yee/Wright) that the Governing Board ask the Corporate Secretary to assist in providing background information for the resolutions.

(CARRIED)

Board Member Christy Linders was nominated as the Resolution Committee volunteer.

It was moved and seconded (Yee/Blumenthal-Harrison) nominated Board Member Melinda Daye as a nominee for Vice-Chair of the Nova School Board Association.

(CARRIED)

Board Member Melinda Daye accepted the nomination.

Board Member Melinda Daye was nominated as the NSSBA Board of Director.

Board Member Melinda Daye was appointed the NSSBA Board of Director by acclamation.

Board Member Christy Linders was nominated as the NSSBA Alternate Board of Director.

Board Member Christy Linders was appointed the NSSBA Alternate Board of Director by acclamation.

It was moved and seconded (Yee/Wright) that the following Board Members be voting delegates at the Nova Scotia School Board Annual General meeting: Gin Yee, Melinda Daye, Bridget Boutilier, Christy Linders, Cindy Littlefair, Steve Warburton, Sheryl Blumenthal-Harrison, and Dave Wright.

(CARRIED)

10.3.1 Hector Montgomery Award

It was moved and seconded (Boutilier/Blumenthal-Harrison) that the Governing Board nominate Chair Gin Yee for the Hector Montgomery Award.

(CARRIED)

Chair Gin Yee accepted the nomination.

11. INFORMATION ITEMS

11.1 Report #14-03-1458 - Occupational Health and Safety Quarterly Report – Mike Christie, Director, Human Resource Services, and John Swales, Manager, Occupational Health and Safety

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

11.2 Report #14-03-1459 – Focus on Learning: Gifted Education and Talent Development – Alison Leverman, Director, Program

Item deferred until the April Regular Board meeting.

12. NOTICE OF MOTION

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Board Meeting – April 23, 2014

14. IN-CAMERA

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

(CARRIED)

14.1 Capital Repair – Ron Heiman, Director, Operations Services

14.2 PEG Salary Increase 2014 - Mike Christie, Director, Human Resource Services

It was moved and seconded (Daye/Wright) to move into regular sessions.

(CARRIED)

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

(CARRIED)

15. ADJOURNMENT

It was moved and seconded (Boutilier/Daye) that the meeting be adjourned.

(CARRIED)

Meeting was adjourned at 10:14 pm.

Gin Yee
Chair
Halifax Regional School Board

Selena Henderson
Corporate Secretary

Prepared by Vicki Palmetter
Assistant to the Corporate Secretary

Chair's Report
Board Meeting – March 27, 2014

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

I want to thank you all for making the arrangements necessary to attend tonight's meeting after yet another Wednesday snow storm.

When I was reflecting on what I might say this evening, I kept thinking, "What a difference a year makes."

A year ago this evening, we completed the school review process for three schools in Bridget's area and we were debating whether to initiate the process for three more schools.

We had a full house in the chambers and no, there was no snow on the ground. And lastly, Judy was in the chair to my left.

While much has changed, the work of the board continues.

I expect the provincial budget to be tabled next week and we should receive our profile sheet soon after the budget is passed.

The budget and business planning process will be a priority for us over the next couple of months and I am optimistic the government will make education funding a priority.

Despite this, I'm sure Terri would tell us that passing a balanced the budget will not be a walk in the park. Even if we receive a funding increase the board is facing cost pressures for inflation, salary increases and the rising cost of utilities. How it plays out still remains to be seen.

One thing I know for sure is that the fiscal picture for the province is still not entirely positive. Finance Minister Diana Whalen said as much on Tuesday at the Chamber of Commerce lunch I had the opportunity to attend. Minister Whalen announced that the provincial budget will be in deficit and all government departments, with the exception of health and education, will face a one percent reduction.

Given these constraints, I want to thank the government for recognizing the need to reinvest in education. It is much needed.

Typically each month, I recap some of the events and I attended on behalf of the board. There are a couple I want to highlight tonight.

This past Sunday I had the opportunity to attend the Elimination of Racism event at Cornwallis Street Baptist Church. It was a moving event and I want to thank Board member Daye for the invitation.

I've also met individually with several board members, accompanied by vice-chair Wright and the superintendent, to gather feedback and discuss how we can continue to be effective. These meetings started in February and I believe there are only two more to be done.

I want to thank all the members for the frankness and willingness to share their thoughts. I've found these meetings to be extremely helpful and I appreciate your feedback.

And on that note, I will conclude my remarks.

Thank you.