



BRANDON SCHOOL DIVISION

Divisional Futures & Community Relations Committee Minutes

Friday, April 12, 2013 (10:00 a.m.)

Constituency Office – Brandon-Souris MP, Merv Tweed

Present: P. Bowslaugh, Chairperson, M. Snelling, D. Karnes (alternate), M. Sefton, D. Labossiere, Chris Kennedy, Merv Tweed, Brandon-Souris MP

A) **Meeting with local Member of Parliament, Merv Tweed, as per Committee Governance Goal to meet with local representatives of all levels of Government.**

Mrs. Bowslaugh thanked Mr. Merv Tweed for meeting with members of the Divisional Futures and Community Relations Committee. Mrs. Bowslaugh spoke to the Committee's work and the various groups and organizations they have met with to date.

The Committee members began their discussions with Mr. Tweed regarding the Federal Government's three way partnership initiative re: skills and trades, and to obtain his feedback on the implementation timelines with respect to this initiative. Mr. Tweed noted the response to this announcement has been very positive. There is a shortage of skills in all of Canada. Implementation of the program will likely take place in the fall for a spring start of 2014. Trustees noted the recent meeting held with the Chamber of Commerce and their willingness to partner with the Division regarding mentorship. The Chamber had also spoken to the skills deficit in Brandon. Mr. Tweed noted this initiative will be business/community driven in order to address the skills needed and the areas in which these skills are required in various communities. Mr. Tweed confirmed that as information regarding the implementation of this partnership becomes available it will be passed on to the public. When Trustees inquired about funding of skills development through education, Mr. Tweed cautioned that the federal government is careful not to cross any boundaries with respect to funding and that money needs to flow through the provincial government.

Discussions were also held regarding Bill 18 and the proposed amendment to The Public Schools Act. Mr. Tweed confirmed this is a provincial issue. However, he thinks it will be tested in the Federal courts and onto the Supreme Court. He also confirmed this often happens to new laws in order for everyone to understand the laws. There was discussion that this proposed bill has a number of positive aspects; however one item in the proposed bill has become a lightning rod. The Chairperson of the Board stressed that the Board unanimously approved a message of support for Bill 18 and passed that message on to the Minister of Education.

The Committee provided Mr. Tweed with an update regarding immigration and the increasing number of EAL students in the Division. This includes the hope of being able to use ACC's facility in the future. In concluding discussions, Mr. Tweed noted he does follow the Board's work and is aware of the issues Trustees are currently facing. He acknowledged the pressures put on the school division to provide services; noting that if the community continues to grow then the services provided also need to grow.

Mrs. Bowslaugh, on behalf of the Divisional Futures and Community Relations Committee, thanked Mr. Tweed for taking the time to meet with them.

The meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

P. Bowslaugh, Chair

M. Snelling

K. Sumner

D. Karnes (Alternate)