



# BRANDON SCHOOL DIVISION

## Divisional Futures & Community Relations Committee Minutes

Tuesday, March 3, 2015 11:00 a.m.  
Boardroom, Administration Office Building

Present: P. Bowslaugh (Chair), M. Sefton, K. Sumner, D. Michaels,  
Superintendent.

Regrets: G. Buri (Alternate)

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### 1. CALL TO ORDER

The Divisional Futures & Community Relations Committee Meeting was called to order at 11:01 a.m. by Chair Pat Bowslaugh.

### 2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Trustee Bowslaugh added one item to the agenda.

The agenda was approved as amended.

### 3. PREVIOUS COMMITTEE MINUTES FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES ONLY

The Minutes of February 3, 2015 were received as information.

The upcoming visit to Spring Valley School was also discussed and confirmed.

At the previous meeting, the school visits were discussed and it was decided that the Committee would meet at St. Augustine School on Friday, February 20, 2015 to have lunch with some of the students. The Committee was later advised by the school that there was an away from school event planned for the grades 7 & 8 students on this day. The date of Tuesday, March 24, 2015 was then chosen for the Committee's visit to St. Augustine School. B. Sangster will contact Chris Czarnecki, Principal, St. Augustine School, to schedule this lunch.

### 4. COMMITTEE GOVERNANCE GOAL ITEMS

#### a) **Meeting with Assiniboine Community College re: Programming Partnerships**

The funding announcement from the Minister of Education on March 3, 2015 was discussed.

Trustee Bowslaugh asked about the Aboriginal students in the Comprehensive Health Care Aide program at Crocus Plains Regional Secondary School. Dr. Michaels responded that the class is about ½ Aboriginal students.

A meeting with ACC was suggested, with President Mark Frison or other representatives from the College (School Deans or Chairs). Dr. Michaels and Ms. Sangster will schedule a meeting date.

Trustee Bowslaugh noted that Dr. Fearon, President of BU, was very verbal at the last Brandon Urban Aboriginal People's Council meeting and he indicated that he would like to meet with the Division. Dr. Michaels stated that work is currently ongoing between the Division and Dr. Fearon and his group. There will be a report in an upcoming Board agenda.

## **5. OTHER COMMITTEE GOVERNANCE MATTERS**

### **a) BSD – City Joint Task Force Ad-Hoc Committee Meeting- March 3, 2015**

Trustee Bowslaugh reviewed the agenda items for this upcoming meeting:

- Playgrounds
- Shared Facilities
- New housing in the Green Acres area and the impact on Green Acres School
- Aboriginal work being done in the Division
- Land in terms of low income housing and Division land
- School policing
- Maryland Community Gardens
- Dates and times to be set for future meetings

### **b) Letter from the Canadian Parents for French**

The Committee received a letter from the Canadian Parents for French – Brandon Chapter, thanking the Committee for meeting with them on January 27, 2015. Some of the points in the letter are as follows:

- Enrolment caps and French immersion population growth;
- They are working at advocating, communicating, building community partnerships, and collaborating on extending the offerings available to French Immersion students through high school;
- “What is your plan to address the growing French Immersion demands at the high school level” and “How can we be included in the planning and development of those solutions?”;
- They agree with the suggestion that Parent Councils should lobby the Province for a new school, but are unsure how building a K-8 English school bears on French Immersion programming at École Neelin High School;
- Difficulties in staffing French Immersion Programming and creative solutions to address this;
- The possibility of working with the French Language Staff Liaison.

### **c) Miscellaneous topics discussed:**

- Special Needs funding – meeting with the Minister of Education
- Communications from parents regarding the school startup date for fall 2015

## **6. OPERATIONS INFORMATION**

NIL

The meeting adjourned at 11:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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P. Bowslaugh, Chair

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M. Sefton

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K. Sumner

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G. Buri (Alternate)

February 26, 2015

Thank you for taking the time to meet with us on January 27, 2015. We appreciate the opportunity to start a dialogue that we look forward to continuing with you.

We resurrected a Canadian Parents for French Chapter in Brandon to support the increased French Immersion enrollment in the Brandon School Division. Since its inception year, 2010, École Harrison has had to cap its registrations due to physical space restrictions. Meanwhile, the French Immersion population at École New Era School has grown from 150 students in September 2010 to 250 students for the 2014-15 school year. In addition, École O'Kelly School's French Immersion population has grown by 25% in the last four years.

Brandon School Division's vision is "to be a centre of educational excellence, built on community partnerships, effective leadership and exemplary practices." CPF-Brandon supports and wants to be a part of this vision and work cooperatively and creatively together as a strong French Immersion educational voice.

There has been a publicly-noted misunderstanding as to what we are working towards as a group. We want to set the record straight. **As a collective group, we are working at advocating, communicating, building community partnerships, and collaborating on extending the offerings available to French Immersion students through high school. With such a significant influx in the numbers of French Immersion students currently enrolled in K-8 we want to be a part of the equation that plans and works together with all vested parties to not only meet the requirements, but expand the offerings. We want to be included in the discussion.**

The growing French Immersion community looks forward to continuing the set trend of providing and delivering a quality K-8 French Immersion program that people have invested in. During our meeting Trustee Sefton expressed the statement that success builds success. We completely agree. That is why we are looking to expand the offerings available to students at the Secondary School level. We want to know, "What is your plan to address the growing French Immersion demands at the high school level?" and "How can we be included in the planning and development of those solutions?"

In the meeting of January 27<sup>th</sup>, it was repeatedly stated how desperately BSD needs a new school and that this is of the utmost priority. We understand this, and support this as parents, citizens, and taxpayers. We will encourage Parent Councils to lobby for this with the Province. We feel it best that this lobbying effort be done through individual school Parent Councils, rather than the CPF umbrella to avoid any further confusion as to our objective for French Immersion.

We are not sure how the building of a K-8 English school bears on French Immersion programming at École Neelin..We understand that this is your biggest concern, but feel that there are other items of importance, such as the potential of nearly double the French Immersion students enrolled in high school coming within the next 3 years. In our meeting you had indicated that maybe in the next 6-7 years the programming will catch up. We believe that the demand will come in 3 years and feel it would be prudent to be proactive rather than reactive to the increased demand. This would be the best for the students, schools, and teachers.

It was discussed to look at creative solutions to address the difficulties in staffing French Immersion programming. We would like to look at other Divisions and what it is they are doing to meet their programming needs. One suggestion was to look at creating French Language bursaries for educators to become Immersion teachers. There are already some of these in existence and we would like to look into this further as to availability, qualifications, and how to promote their availability.

A suggestion was made that moving forward representation at the Parent Council Stakeholders meeting would be the best course of action. To avoid confusion regarding our representation of all French Immersion schools, not a singular Parent Council, could a representative from CPF be included in addition to Parent Council representatives?

There is a French Language staff liaison. Is this someone that we could work with moving forward? Should we be meeting with them regularly?

As indicated in the meeting, we appreciate that we are now "on your radar" and we view this meeting as a starting point to an ongoing working relationship. Thank you again for your time and ears and we look forward to future meetings and ongoing dialogue.

Sincerely,

Kerri Lynn Gudz  
Canadian Parents for French, Brandon Chapter

**March 6, 2015**

**10:00 a.m.**

**Pat Bowslaugh, Mark Sefton, Kevan Sumner, Sherilyn Bambridge**

**Regrets: George Buri**

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The Committee Members arrived at the Colony and were greeted outside by Mike Hofer. Once inside the school, the Committee met teachers Jacklyn Hutchison and Kelsey Penner. The teachers gave the Committee a few minutes to wander around the classrooms and see what the students were working on.

The students then gave the Committee members guided tours of the school and answered questions about the happenings in each classroom, the gym, library, etc.

Trustee Bowslaugh spoke to the Middle Years group about the role of Trustees and Senior Administration and introduced the Committee members.

Trustee Bowslaugh then asked the children a few questions regarding their school:

- 1) What is the best thing about your school?
  - Gym, gym teacher. They like to play fun games and get exercise
  - New tablets – they like the touch screen and games
  - Library – they are all avid readers
  - Classroom – great teachers
  - Art class
- 2) Is there something that would help make your school an even better school?
  - Music teacher (this was something that would have to be discussed with Mr. Hofer as the teachers were not sure that instruments would be allowed)
  - Gym teacher
- 3) Is there anything you'd like to tell us about your school that you haven't already told us?
  - More reading time, less math!
  - Walks i.e. nature activities
  - An iPad for every student
  - Shorter weeks
  - Personal computers
  - Dressing up for special events (Book Party)

Trustee Bowslaugh thanked the students for the visit and for the tours and their input.

Trustee Sumner wondered about the Artist in the School program being used at this school. Trustee Bambridge noted that the Artist in the School program is a complicated application process and a very big job. Perhaps they could partner with a smaller school in Brandon? Or an art teacher from another school could come to teach?

A part-time music teacher was discussed – this was a strong request and had a lot of interest from the students.

Trustees asked about any bullying issues in the school and the Teachers acknowledged that there are instances of impulse control and exclusion issues at times.

The Trustees ended their visit after enjoying lunch as guests of the Spring Valley Colony.