

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES, THE BRANDON SCHOOL DIVISION, HELD IN THE J. L. MILNE BOARDROOM, ADMINISTRATION OFFICE, 1031 - 6TH STREET, BRANDON, MANITOBA, AT 9:00 A.M., TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2010.

**PRESENT:**

Mr. G. Buri, Chairperson, Mr. D. Karnes, Vice-Chairperson, Mr. P. Bartlette, Ms. R. Coey, Mrs. B. Jolly, Mr. B. Mayes, Mr. J. Murray, Dr. L. Ross (entered 9:15 a.m.), Mr. M. Snelling.

Secretary-Treasurer, Mr. G. F. Barnes and Recording Secretary: Ms. S. Bailey.

Senior Administration: Dr. D. M. Michaels, Superintendent, Mr. G. Malazdrewicz, Associate Superintendent, Mr. K. Zabowski, Assistant Secretary-Treasurer.

**CALL:**

The Chairperson called the meeting to order at 9:07 a.m. and referred to the Call.

The meeting had been called for the purpose of considering the following:

- a) Budget Estimates for 2010/2011

The Chairperson referred to the Call and welcomed several observers to the meeting.

Trustee Buri, providing opening remarks, noted he could not emphasize enough the importance of today, the importance of the decisions that would be made and the impact those decisions will have on everyone in the community. He anticipated a long and thought out day. Mr. Buri referenced the many consultations that had been held with various stakeholders and the different opinions that had been expressed by each group. He confirmed the Board had heard the concerns and opinions expressed but noted the Board is obligated to educate each student that comes through the Division providing quality and accessibility to every student. He concluded his statements by noting the Board will balance all they have heard with the needs of the students by hopefully providing a budget that will accomplish same. He confirmed the Board will do this judiciously and carefully.

Trustee Mayes exited the meeting at 9:10 a.m. and returned at 9:40 a.m.

The Superintendent, Dr. D. Michaels, addressed the Trustees prior to consideration of the proposed budget for 2009/2010 noting this Board has focused on the needs of the children during their tenure and she thanked the Board for their commitment. She confirmed that Senior Administration understood the challenges they face as they move forward on the 2010/2011 budget. She noted the Division works to educate the whole child and with increasing needs and diversity in the Division it is becoming even more important. She stated decisions made today would impact children and wished the Board well in this their last year of governance and budget deliberations.

Mr. Gerald Barnes, Secretary-Treasurer, highlighted the Government's proposed Tax Incentive Grant (TIG) for the Board. He noted what acceptance of the TIG would mean to the Division and the proposed budget. The Board of Trustees discussed whether or not they would take advantage of the Government's Tax Incentive Grant. Trustees spoke unanimously against accepting the grant noting the needs of the Division's students must be met. They did caution that in the future the Province may force their hand with respect to the TIG at which time reductions and reallocations would become a factor.

Mr. Gerald Barnes, Secretary-Treasurer, outlined the 2010/2011 Financial Budget document to be considered and highlighted the following:

- Enrollment/Staffing/Services and Supplies
- Budget Estimates/Variances
- Current Budget Considerations
- Capital and Maintenance Budget
- Accumulated Surplus/Reserves
- 4 Year Budget Projections
- Special Levy Tax Implications.

Trustees asked questions for clarification purposes throughout the presentation by Mr. Barnes.

**BREAK:** 10:30 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.

Trustee Mayes, Chairperson of the Finance Committee, apologized for being out of the Board Room during the vote on the Tax Incentive Grant, as he had a business commitment to attend to, however, he noted that he would have voted against the grant. He noted the Board has made both enhancements and reductions during their tenure. He spoke about budget increases both past and present noting it is a balancing act. He also confirmed the Board is not beginning this budget with as high an increase as last year.

Superintendent, Dr. Michaels, referenced the Public Budget Forum Feedback document, highlighting the Executive Summary contained within the report.

The Sustainability Requests recommended for consideration were presented by various Trustees and Senior Administration as follows:

**I. Board Committees/Trustee Requests**

	<b><u>Amount</u></b>
Grade 3-4 Transition Project - Middle Years Literacy	\$ 174,300
Pre-Kindergarten Programming	26,900
Professional Development - Teachers	200,000
Alexander School Bus	25,000
Division Workplace Safety & Health Officer	106,000
Expansion of BSSAP Program	25,000
"Girls Go To College" - Why not boys?	2,000
Translator Funds - EAL Parent/Teacher Interviews	2,000
Capital & Maintenance Budget Increase	7,500

Off-Campus Support	1,500
Library Resources - Neelin	10,000
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	\$ 580,200

## **II. Senior Administration Requests**

EAL - Reception Center	\$ 186,400
EAL - Teaching Staff	235,500
Education Assistants - Speech Language Program	150,000
Assistive Technology In The Classroom	29,800
Reading Recovery Teaching Staff	132,600
Senior High Programming Co-Curricular & Extra Curricular	10,000
Middle Years Student Support	117,900
Life Fitness Centers	10,000
Fixed Gym Equipment	4,000
Vice-Principal Positions	160,000
School Secretarial Allocation	102,800
Student Assessment Tools	5,000
MHSAA Travel	3,000
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	\$1,147,000
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	<u>\$1,727,200</u>

The Sustainability Requests recommended by individual Board members and Committees for consideration were discussed with Trustees speaking for or against each recommended enhancement item with the following results:

1. Grade 3-4 Transition Project – Middle Years Literacy - \$74,300 – **agreed.**

It was noted this item needed to be balanced with the enhancement request for Reading Recovery. It was agreed that the request for 2.5 FTE was high and that although Trustees were in favour of the program, more research was still required to determine where this initiative was going. Senior Administration was asked in which schools this enhancement request would be utilized with the Superintendent noting George Fitton, Riverview, King George and New Era Schools. It was agreed to reduce the request from \$174,300 to \$74,300 for this year.

2. Pre-Kindergarten Programming - \$18,500 – **agreed.**

Discussions were held regarding the current EDI results of pre-school students entering Kindergarten, noting the Brandon School Division students score among the Province's lowest in school readiness. Further discussions were held regarding the responsibilities of day care providers, parents, school division and community to prepare pre-schoolers to enter Kindergarten. It was noted that the Division currently receives \$83,300 from the Government with respect to pre-school programs which the Division then disburses into the Community. It was suggested that the enhancement be reduced to \$18,500 from the originally proposed \$26,900 and the Division keep the additional \$8,400 grant for a total of \$26,500 which would be provided for pre-kindergarten programming within the Division. Further discussions were held regarding how the EDI results are obtained and the difference between a licensed programmed day care and daytime babysitters. Suggestions were also made to look at the possibility of partnering with such programs as "Food for Thought" to meet the budget requirements to provide a healthy snack, therefore possibly reducing the cost of the proposed program even further.

3. Professional Development – Teachers/Support Staff - \$35,000 – **agreed.**

It was noted this was the second year this item had been brought to the table. The Board reviewed the information requested by the Finance Committee with respect to how Professional Development Funds have been distributed over the last several years to both the teaching staff and the support staff. Discussions were held regarding the value of professional development for staff citing the benefits received by those who had attended the HALEP conference last year. It was noted that a number of the current enhancement requests already had professional development included in the request and suggestions were made to possibly wait until the end of the day to determine whether or not this enhancement was feasible and how much money could be included in the proposed enhancement. It was further noted that support staff is often in direct contact with students and that something in the area of professional development should be done for these staff members. Further discussions were held regarding how much money the Division receives from the Province for professional development; whether or not the professional development budget was increased with the increase in staff; how professional development funds are disbursed within the school. It was agreed this was an important enhancement and would be reviewed again at the end of the day, prior to finalizing the draft budget. At the end of the Board deliberations an amount of \$35,000 was agreed to.

Trustee Snelling exited the meeting at 11:30 a.m. and returned at 1:30 p.m.

4. Alexander School Bus - \$25,000 – **agreed.**

It was noted the Division had made a commitment to Alexander School and the Learning Through the Arts program and needed to continue that commitment.

A lunch break was taken from 12:00 p.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Mr. Murray – Mr. Mayes

That the Board do now resolve into Committee of the Whole In Camera.

Carried.

#### IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE IN CAMERA

The Secretary-Treasurer reviewed the Confidential pink section of the Budget regarding staff salaries and reductions. Senior Administration responded to Trustee inquiries.

Dr. Ross – Mrs. Jolly

That the Committee of the Whole In Camera do now resolve into Board.

Carried.

#### IN BOARD

5. Division Workplace Safety & Health Officer - \$106,000 – **agreed.**

Discussions took place regarding the need to be pro-active and provide consistency. It was agreed the Division did not really have a choice in this area and needed to provide this position. Further discussions were held regarding whether or not the \$50,000 assigned to the enhancement for repairs etc. should be placed in the capital maintenance budget rather than the regular budget; a full-time officer versus a part-time officer; who the officer would report to and how they would disburse the money they receive.

6. Expansion of the BSSAP Program - \$25,000 – **agreed.**

It was noted this was probably one of the most single worthwhile items in the budget and had a very positive effect on student achievement in the Division. The work of the program facilitator at New Era School was referenced. George Fitton being the school to receive the program; the space required and the resources needed to implement the program were all considered.

7. “Girls Go To College” – Why not boys? - \$2,000 – **withdrawn.**

Trustee Mayes advised that Senior Administration indicated they will fund this item and do the work sooner rather than later, therefore, he would be withdrawing the budget sustainability request. He thanked the Divisional Futures and Liaison Committee for their support of this item.

8. Translator Funds – EAL Parent/Teacher Interviews - \$2,000 – **agreed.**

The difficulties that some of the Division's immigrant parents have in understanding conversations when meeting with their children's teachers was noted. It was agreed that the Division needed to lobby the Government for funds in this area and Trustees expressed their frustration at having to provide support this year. However, the Board agreed that this was a need that must be met and therefore agreed to the request.

9. Capital & Maintenance Budget Increase - \$7,500 – **agreed.**

The Board reviewed the background and history of this request noting the enhancement would help school principals maintain their school buildings. Trustees unanimously agreed to accept this enhancement.

10. Off-Campus Support - \$1,500 – **withdrawn.**

It was agreed that support was required in this area in order to provide the Off-Campus students with the ability to complete the Grade 11 and 12 physical education credits. Trustees were advised that money had been allocated to Neelin; timing and access were an issue; and that this is not a required 40S subject to graduate. The Board agreed that this enhancement could be handled internally and requested that a report be provided to the Board prior to September. The budget sustainability request was then withdrawn.

11. Library Resources – Neelin - \$10,000 – **agreed.**

Discussions were held regarding how library funds were allocated; the number of books that could be purchased with \$5,000 or \$10,000 and the loss of the small schools grant. It was noted that this request was a one-time item to meet the equity requirements and assist Neelin in building their library. It was agreed that \$5,000 would be funding out-of-surplus for this year and \$5,000 for next year for a total of \$10,000.

The Sustainability Requests recommended by Senior Administration for consideration were discussed with Trustees speaking for or against each recommended enhancement item with the following results:

12. EAL- Reception Center and

13. EAL – Teaching Staff - \$250,000 – **agreed.**

Trustees addressed the budget sustainability requests for an EAL Reception Center in the amount of \$186,400 and EAL Teaching Staff in the amount of \$235,500 together. It was noted that Trustees supported the concept of a reception center but questioned whether or not it would be required after three or four years. Trustees agreed the request for \$186,400 for a reception center was too high. It was agreed the clerical position would be required but questioned the need for all the teaching staff requested. Further discussions were held regarding the possibility of using the reception center in the future for aboriginal students, however it was noted that aboriginal students are not immigrants. Trustees agreed to support the sum of \$250,000 for both the request for an EAL Reception Center and additional EAL teaching staff allowing Senior Administration the freedom to allocate the funds for the best possible use.

14. Educational Assistants – Speech Language Program - \$100,000 – **agreed.**

Trustees noted they understood the need for this request but agreed to support this enhancement for four positions only.

15. Assistive Technology in the Classroom - \$29,800 – **agreed.**

It was noted the benefit of this technology for students had been demonstrated at the Board Table. It was agreed to split this request and have \$15,400 come out of surplus for this year with the remaining \$14,400 be included in the budget.

16. Reading Recovery Teaching Staff - \$99,500 – **agreed.**

It was noted that the Board has seen the results of this program as well as the number of students who need the program and the importance of investing in early years education. Discussions were held regarding the need to support the Board's goal of ensuring 80% of grade 3 children are reading at grade 3 level. It was further noted that this item had been discussed under the request for the first enhancement regarding Grade 3-4 Transition Project – Middle Years Literacy and that the two items should run parallel. It was agreed to support 1.5 FTE positions for this request.

17. Senior High Programming Co-Curricular & Extra Curricular - \$10,000 – **agreed.**

Trustees requested clarification regarding how these funds were disbursed in the schools. Discussions were held regarding equity; a hand-up versus a hand-out and the growing need to help families in this area. It was agreed to support this request in the full amount.

18. Middle Years Student Support - \$22,000 – **agreed.**

It was noted that the Board did not feel they could fully support the request this year. They requested that the idea be more thought out and brought back another year. They noted the presenters had done a great job and there was some value and merit in the idea however Trustees were uncomfortable with moving the students downtown to the current off-campus location with the older students. It was agreed there should be some support for the current program in the form of an additional social worker or resource teacher. Trustee Ross felt that something needed to be done, noting that children may officially drop out of school at the age of 16 but many tune out unofficially at 13. She volunteered to participate in any way possible with Senior Administration and those involved in developing this concept further. The Board was provided with the history and brief overview of these children who need one on one counseling before any academics can take place. Discussions were held regarding whether to provide a .25 FTE Resource Teacher or .25 FTE Social Worker. It was agreed to support a .25 FTE social worker.

**BREAK:** 3:10 p.m. to 3:25 p.m. (Trustee Murray entered at 3:30 p.m.)

19. Life Fitness Centers - \$10,000 – **agreed.**

Clarification was requested regarding the five year replacement plan. It was noted this was another example of downloading by the Provincial Government who mandated the Grade 11 and 12 physical education but had not supplied the funding to implement this program. The Board agreed to support this request in the full amount

20. Fixed Gym Equipment - \$4,000 – **rejected.**

The need for new scoreboards at the K-8 schools was acknowledged. It was suggested that schools look elsewhere for the funds noting there were other business besides Coca-Cola who might be interested in sponsoring the scoreboards through the Friends of Education Fund. The Board agreed to reject this request.

21. Vice-Principal Positions - \$80,000 – **agreed.**

It was noted this request has come before the Board in previous years and the Board had not been prepared to fund this request. Clarification was requested as to whether or not the .5 FTE at New Era school would still be required with the changes being made to New Era in the fall. It was noted that the position would remain at New Era to keep the school fully bilingual and that Harrison's school numbers did not qualify them for a part-time vice-principal position. Trustees discussed whether to give Meadows School a .5 FTE position or to give the three schools noted in the request a .25 FTE position. Discussions were held regarding whether the administration positions would be considered in or out of ratio; the need to develop a policy on this matter; the diversity of students in Meadows school; and the need for flexibility in staffing at the school level. It was agreed to approve three .25 FTE positions in the amount of \$80,000 at this time.

22. School Secretarial Allocation - \$50,000 – **agreed.**

It was noted the Board had put money into this two years ago to address the changing needs of the schools and it was agreed that it is important to have a secretary in the school to answer phones when parents call after school has let out. Discussions were held regarding what the difference would be to schools in providing \$20,000 and \$50,000 to schools. It was noted that \$102,800 would provide schools with one extra hour per day; \$50,000 would provide schools with a ½ hour extra per day; \$20,000 would go to overtime pay. Trustees inquired as to why this was listed as a second tier priority by Senior Administration. It was noted that not every request could be a priority one request and Senior Administration had prioritized those enhancements that directly effect the classroom as number one in priority. It was agreed to provide \$50,000 for this request.

23. Student Assessment Tools - \$5,000 – **agreed.**

Trustees requested clarification on the use of the Nagliere Ability Testing. It was noted that most of this item would be a one-time request with \$65.00 per pupil testing cost as a continual expense. It was agreed to support this item for the full amount out-of-surplus.

24. MHSAA Travel - \$3,000 – **rejected.**

Mr. Murray – Dr. Ross  
That the Board do now resolve into Committee of the Whole In Camera.  
Carried.



## IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE IN CAMERA

The Board returned to In-Camera discussions to review the proposed reductions and reallocations contained in the Confidential pink section of the Budget.

Mr. Snelling – Dr. Ross

That the Committee of the Whole In Camera do now resolve into Board.

Carried.

## IN BOARD

Mr. Mayes, Finance Committee Chairperson, noted the Board had agreed to a reduction of \$100,000 for one year in the school bus allocation. It was noted the Division would therefore be purchasing two buses instead of three.

25. Reduction to School Bus Allocation - \$100,000 – **agreed.**

Trustee Mayes presented the final budget numbers to be brought forward to March 8, 2010 at which time the Board would approve the budget. He noted the proposed Special Levy would be 9.1% which is down from 10.5% the previous year. The result is approximately 6.5% increase on the average residential tax bill keeping in mind this year was a reassessment year. He further noted that there was a 4 million increase in expenditures this year compared to a 4.6 million increase the year before. Finally he confirmed that \$829,200 in enhancements had been approved which is down from the last two year but significantly attempts to address the needs of the children. The proposed budget request list had been reduced by slightly less than 50%. The Board unanimously agreed to accept this proposed budget and not to use surplus. It was noted a lot compromises had been made and the Board had worked hard to bring the 2010/2011 budget down.

The Superintendent thanked the Board on behalf of Senior Administration noting they recognized the time, energy and thought that had been put into each of the sustainability requests agreed to.

The Chairperson confirmed that the draft budget will be finalized at the Regular Meeting of the Board on March 8, 2010 and that a Special Board Meeting will be held on Monday, March 1, 2010 to hear public presentations regarding the proposed budget. He thanked Trustees for their hard work in deliberating the budget as well as Senior Administration for providing all the information requested and assisting to make the day run smoothly.

Mr. Murray – Mr. Snelling

That the meeting do now adjourn (5:30 p.m.).

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Chairperson

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Secretary-Treasurer