



Divisional Futures & Community Relations Committee Minutes

Thursday, February 16, 2012 – 12:00 noon
Conference Room, Admin Office

Present: P. Bowslaugh, Chairperson, K. Sumner, M. Snelling (Alternate)
Dr. D. Michaels (entered 11:45 a.m.)

Guest: Drew Caldwell, MLA Brandon East

Regrets: J. Murray

1. CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 11:30 a.m. by Chairperson, Trustee Bowslaugh. Mrs. Bowslaugh welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. COMMITTEE GOVERNANCE GOAL ITEMS

A) Equity and Sustainability in Education

Mrs. Bowslaugh provided information regarding the responsibilities of the Divisional Futures & Community Relations Committee. She highlighted the various groups, organizations and stakeholders the Committee has met with over the past several years, including: Parent Councils; City Council; First Nations; Students; Maple Leaf; Brandon Regional Health Authority; ACC and Brandon University. She noted the Committee had recently met with the MLA for Brandon West as well as the PC Education Critic. She spoke about several of the initiatives, partnerships, challenges and solutions which had been reached through this open-dialogue format.

Discussions were held regarding initiatives which had been implemented by the School Division to increase student achievement including: the success of the Neelin High School Off-Campus Program and the All-Day/Every-Day Kindergarten pilot. It was noted these initiatives had been established, through the School Division, in order to meet the specific needs of Division students. Trustees further stated the various mandates from the Government, without the dollars to fund those mandates, resulted in the Division using operational funds which could have funded Division initiatives which make a difference to the Division students.

The Committee members spoke in detail about the increase in English as an Additional Language student population. It was noted the cost to educate an EAL student was \$1,500 over and above an English speaking student.

The Committee members expressed their concern regarding the make-up of the Oversight Committee. They requested that representation on such Government Committees move beyond the City of Winnipeg, to include a rural voice.

The impact of the Bill 13 legislation amendment "Preparing Students for Success Act" to keep students in school until the age of 18 was also discussed. It was noted the Division had developed an "Upper Deck" at the Neelin High School Off-Campus site. Discussions were held regarding the needs of "At-Risk" students and the influx of Adjudicated Youth to the Division. Mr. Caldwell noted Mr. Kevin Chief, Minister of Children and Youth Opportunities, would be visiting him on February 23, 2012. He suggested the Committee and Senior Administration meet with Mr. Chief following a visit to the Neelin Off-Campus site.

Final comments were provided regarding class size versus composition and school capacity vs. physical capacity. Mr. Caldwell commented favourably on the Division's Budget Process and commented on the Board's efforts to keep the public informed.

The Chairperson concluding the meeting by thanking Mr. Caldwell for his attendance.

The meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

P. Bowslaugh, Chair

J. Murray

K. Sumner

M. Snelling (Alternate)