



BRANDON SCHOOL DIVISION

Divisional Futures & Community Relations Committee Minutes

Wednesday, February 27, 2013 (12:20 p.m.)
Betty Gibson School

Present: P. Bowslaugh, Chairperson, M. Snelling.
Ms. Stacey Bradley, IB Coordinator and approximately 25 IB Students
Regrets: K. Sumner

A) **Equity and Sustainability in Education (Meeting with École Secondaire Neelin High School International Baccalaureate Students)**

Mrs. Bowslaugh thanked all in attendance for their participation. She noted the Committee had met with the International Baccalaureate (IB) students a few years ago and looked forward to the Committee's discussions with the current class of IB students.

Mrs. Bowslaugh opened discussions by asking students to introduce themselves and provide feedback as to why they choose the International Baccalaureate program. Students noted the programming was challenging. It provided better learning opportunities, taught critical thinking, time management and organizational skills. They enjoyed the classroom dynamics, appreciated the dedication of the teachers, and stated everyone in the classroom was there because they wanted to learn. Smaller class sizes allowed for in-depth discussions and individual attention when needed. Students also spoke to the fact they felt the program better prepared them for post-secondary education.

Students attending the meeting with the Committee were either in Grade 11 or 12. Course load varied with students taking anywhere from one course in the IB program to a full course load of 6 courses in the IB program. The confirmed class sizes ranged from three to twenty students.

When asked what was the best part of participating in the IB program, students provided the following input:

- IB taught students to analyze information and build on that information, which in turn often lead to further questions;
- the program built confidence in their own ideas and in thinking critically;
- students were allowed to speak their mind and have an opinion, however, they also needed to be able to back up that opinion;
- classes were more in-depth;
- courses were often self-directed which meant students needed to learn time management and independence, qualities that would assist them in post-secondary education;
- no-one was holding the class back and everyone there wanted to learn. Students had to apply themselves and could not coast. Students in IB program were all at the same level.
- Provincial exams were easier after having taken IB exams.
- Students felt prepared to move on to post-secondary education.

Students provided information on their future plans following high school. Many were moving on to post-secondary education and felt that IB had provided them with the opportunity to receive university credits for general university courses, thereby allowing them to focus on other courses in university. Some students felt that IB courses had opened them up to thinking about careers they had not previously thought of considering before.

Prior to concluding the meeting students were asked what else they may be participating in besides the IB programming. Despite the heavy workload and commitment to the IB program, a majority of the students held part-time jobs. Many students also participated in school activities such as sports teams, drama, choir and student council. Many students also volunteered in various community activities outside of school hours.

Trustee Bowslaugh thanked the students for their participation noting Trustees would remain following the meeting to take with students about anything they felt would help enhance the International Baccalaureate Program.

The meeting adjourned at 1:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

P. Bowslaugh, Chair

M. Snelling

K. Sumner

D. Karnes (Alternate)