Divisional Futures and Liaison Committee Minutes

Tuesday, March 9, 2010 – 4:30 p.m.
Brandon City Council Chamber Offices
Present: B. Jolly (Chairperson), M. Snelling, G. Buri, Dr. D. Michaels
Regrets: B. Mayes, G. Buri

The Divisional Futures Liaison Committee was invited to attend the City of Brandon Poverty Committee Meeting held on Tuesday, March 9, 2010 in the Council Chambers of the Civic Administrative Building, 410 – 9th Street, Brandon, Manitoba at 4:30 p.m.

The City of Brandon Poverty Committee called the meeting to order and introduced themselves to all present. The Divisional Futures Liaison Committee was welcomed by the Poverty Committee Chairperson, Mr. Garth Rice, under New Business and invited to make their presentation to the Poverty Committee.

Divisional Futures Liaison Committee Chairperson, Mrs. Bea Jolly, speaking on behalf of the School Division's Committee, noted the efforts being made by the Brandon School Division to assist students from lesser privileged homes, including the following:

1. New Era School will remain a dual track school;
2. The School Division Parent Liaison Committee is currently holding discussions regarding standardizing school supplies. She also encouraged parents to attend their child's school parent council meetings and take an active part;
3. Breakfast programs throughout a number of schools;
4. The new EAL Resource Centre to be housed in New Era School which was recently approved in the 2010/2011 budget;
5. Reading Recovery Programs and Multi-aging;
6. Neelin High School's Off-Campus Program housed in the core area;
7. The Division's relationship with Assiniboine Community College and Brandon University;
8. The recently approved 2010/2011 budget enhancement regarding extra-curricular and co-curricular activities and financial assistance for those who cannot afford to participate in these activities;
9. Reviewing early-years education.

Trustee Snelling expanded on the budget enhancement regarding extra-curricular and co-curricular activities. He also noted the Poverty Committee's impact, during the Public Consultations on French Milieu, with respect to the Board's final decision regarding the location of the Single Track French Immersion program. Mr. Snelling confirmed the Breakfast program is a good example of Division partnerships at work noting that a number of concerned Brandon Area Business people support the program.

Superintendent, Dr. Michaels, spoke the EAL Centre; the BSSAP Program; the Professional Development School partnership with Brandon University; the importance of literacy with respect to combating poverty; and the Board's recently directed goal regarding increasing literacy achievement in the Division.

The City of Brandon Poverty Committee thanked the Divisional Futures and Liaison Committee for their presentations and commended the Brandon School Division on their efforts to elevate poverty and create equity throughout the Division. Discussions were held and the Poverty Committee requested clarification on a number of issues including: possible future expansion of the Off-Campus program; accessing the funding for extra-curricular and co-curricular programs; expanding the breakfast program to other schools; the possibility of lunch programs; inclusion and education of homeless children in the school system; the elimination of school fees; the cost of school supply items such as math calculators and how students access funds to assist in obtaining such expensive supplies.

The Poverty Committee also suggested that when the Division develops a policy relating to accessing funds for extra-curricular and co-curricular they consider the following points:

1. Maintaining student confidentiality;
2. Ensuring full publicity to all families regarding the funds availability so everyone know this money is available and not just for children chosen by the teaching staff;
3. Limit the range of trips and costs of trips regarding extra-curricular and co-curricular program.

The City of Brandon Poverty Committee again applauded the Brandon School Division for their efforts with respect to equity and continued with the remainder of the items listed on their agenda.

NEXT REGULAR MEETING: 10:00 a.m. Thursday, April 29, 2010, Board Room.

The Divisional Futures and Liaison Committee meeting adjourned the City of Brandon Poverty Committee meeting at 5:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

B. Jolly, Chair	G. Buri (Alternate)
B. Mayes	M. Snelling