



BRANDON SCHOOL DIVISION

Divisional Futures & Community Relations Committee Minutes

Wednesday, June 5, 2013 (11:30 a.m.)
Board Room, Administration Office Building

Present: P. Bowslaugh, Chairperson, M. Snelling, D. Karnes (alternate), K. Sumner (via conference phone) D. Michaels, Superintendent/CEO, G. Malazdrewicz, Associate Superintendent.

Guest: Mr. Richard Bruce, Executive Director, Westman Immigrant Services

A) **Meeting with Mr. Richard Bruce, Executive Director, Westman Immigrant Services.**

The Chairperson thanked Mr. Bruce for meeting with members of the Divisional Futures and Community Relations Committee. Mrs. Bowslaugh spoke to the Committee's work. Mrs. Bowslaugh invited Mr. Bruce to the New Era/Earl Oxford Transition Committee BBQ to be held on June 6th as an example of the work being done by the Division to help the Immigrant families feel welcome in the Division.

Trustee Bowslaugh asked Mr. Bruce, Executive Director, Westman Immigrant Services to speak to the services provided by Westman Immigrant Services to newcomers to the City of Brandon. Mr. Bruce noted there were several services provided to the local immigrant population with respect to language skills. He confirmed the organization provided settlement services which would include such specific areas as navigating the legal system and the health care system. He also noted the organization provided interpretive services, which he confirmed, the Brandon School Division often uses.

Mrs. Bowslaugh asked Dr. Michaels, Superintendent/CEO to speak to the services provided by the Brandon School Division to Immigrant families. Dr. Michaels noted services had been provided since 2005 to English as an Additional Language students and their families. She spoke to the numerous supports provided by the Division, including the EAL reception centre. Mr. Malazdrewicz, Associate Superintendent, provided specific information regarding the work completed at the EAL reception centre. He noted the equivalent of 22 FTE EAL teaching positions have been assigned in the Division. He confirmed there are approximately 1,500 EAL students currently in the system. Mr. Malazdrewicz provided information regarding programing and professional development. He noted the next step would be to assist EAL students at the high school level to work towards eligibility for post-secondary education.

Trustee Bowslaugh expressed concern regarding information provided by a speaker at the Manitoba School Boards Association Trustee Education Session held in Brandon, Manitoba on April 26, 2013, wherein the speaker provided data that some of the Immigrant population in Brandon was not satisfied with the Brandon School Division. She stated that more communication needed to be provided to the community with respect to the dollars spent on EAL education in the Division and the regulations the Division must follow under Manitoba Education guidelines.

Mr. Bruce confirmed that he was not overly concerned with the comments made on April 26, 2013. He considers the school division to be very successful in the integration of EAL students into the system. He referenced the cultural activities which take place at King George School as an example of the work currently taking place in the Division in this area.

Discussions were held regarding how the Division and Westman Immigrant Services could best work together to meet the needs of the City of Brandon's immigrant population; including what services could be offered to each organization in order to avoid duplication of services. Examples of such work could include: joining forces to meet with representatives from Maple Leaf regarding employment, and the benefits of meeting with management positions of each organization on a regular basis. Further discussions were held regarding translation services and the difference between certified and non-certified translators. Mr. Bruce noted he would provide further information on this item to the school division.

It was agreed a meeting involving Senior Administration, key division staff members, Westman Immigrant Services staff and Mr. Bruce would take place in the near future. The meeting would be held at the Westman Immigrant Services office. The Committee thanked Mr. Bruce for meeting with the Divisional Futures and Community Relations Committee.

The meeting adjourned at 12:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

P. Bowslaugh, Chair

M. Snelling

K. Sumner

D. Karnes (Alternate)