



Education
Éducation

SCHOOL DISTRICT 8
DISTRICT EDUCATION COUNCIL
490 Woodward Avenue
Saint John, NB E2K 5N3

MINUTES

The District Education Council for School District 8 met on Wednesday, September 11, 2002 in the Conference Room at the School District 8 Office located at 490 Woodward Avenue, Saint John, New Brunswick. Present were:

<u>D.E.C. MEMBERS:</u>	<u>STAFF:</u>
Beyea, Don (S.D.5)	Terry McInerney, Superintendent
Burchill, Dan (S.D.13)	Bev Henneberry, Director of Education
Dalling, Don (S.D.12)	Chris Toole, Director of Finance & Administration
Dickeson, Gail (S.D.3)	Cheryl Ellis, Director of Human Resources
Hunter, Michael (S.D.4)	Myrna Gillis, Recording Secretary
MacKenzie, John (S.D.8)	
Mahaffy, Barbara (S.D.11)	
Milner, Pauline (S.D.9)	
Reardon, Donna (S.D.7)	

Regrets: Robert Munro (S.D.2) Leave of Absence; Marian Lucas-Jeffries (S.D.1)
Fred Horgan (S.D.6)

The media was present. The Home and School Association was represented.

1. WELCOME/CALL TO ORDER:

Mr. John MacKenzie, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m. He welcomed those present.

The meeting paused for a moment of silence to remember the victims of the acts of terrorism that occurred in the United States on September 11, 2001.

2. REVIEW DESIRED OUTCOMES/APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Chair MacKenzie reviewed the desired outcomes for the meeting, as follows:

By the end of the meeting, Councilors will have:

- received briefings with respect to the status of a ministerial appointment for the vacancy in Sub-District 10; the Council's Self-Evaluation; the Superintendent's evaluation; and policy development; and
- received information about the status of technology in the classroom.

**Milner/Hunter: (that) the agenda be approved as distributed.
MOTION CARRIED.**

3. PUBLIC COMMENT:

The Chairperson invited comments from the public.

Mr. Vern Garnett, President of the Home and School Association for School District 8 thanked District officials for the literacy program. He invited staff and/or Council members to contact him if they would like to serve on the Family Literacy Committee.

Mr. Garnett requested the District to support the *Walk for Talk* event that will be held during the period October 6 to 12, 2002 to draw attention to the long lasting negative effects of verbal abuse. Inquiries in this regard may be directed to Mr. Garnett.

4. REVIEW PREVIOUS MINUTES:

Mahaffy/Reardon: (that) the minutes of the meeting of the District Education Council held on August 21, 2002 be approved, as distributed. MOTION CARRIED.

5. BUSINESS ARISING:

i. Ministerial appointment of Council representative for Sub-District 10:

Mr. MacKenzie informed the meeting that the Minister of Education has been informed of the vacancy in Sub-District 10. Council will take the next step, which is to submit to the Minister names of potential candidates for ministerial appointment. Meanwhile, Councillors Barbara Mahaffy who will liase with Simonds Middle School, and Pauline Milner who will

liase with Bayside Middle and Bayview schools will represent the three schools within Sub-District 10.

6. COUNCIL SELF-EVALUATION:

Councillor Don Beyea reported that he, Donna Reardon and Marian Lucas-Jefferies are collating the responses received from councilors and senior staff members to date. They expect that a condensed version of the responses will be distributed to Council members in time to be considered at the next public meeting, which is scheduled for October 9th.

7. SUPERINTENDENT'S EVALUATION:

Chair MacKenzie informed those present that Fred Horgan and Gail Dickeson are working on the superintendent's evaluation. Mr. Horgan is out of the country and the process will continue upon his return. This item will be brought forward to the October 9th meeting of Council.

8. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:

Mr. Terry McInerney, Superintendent, reported as follows:

- It is a challenge to staff 38 schools and resume the bussing of approximately 7,800 students each school year. The inevitable glitches that occur in these areas during the first two weeks of school are being addressed.
- The remodeled Lakewood Heights School opened successfully. The gym floor is expected to be ready the week of September 16. An Open House for the community was held on the evening of September 10, and an official opening will be held later in the fall.
- The Department of Education has initiated a bus safety program that will be integrated into the health curriculum next year where kindergarten students will receive orientation to bus travel and safety.
- The issue of exhaust fumes from school buses idling while picking up or dropping off students on school property is being addressed in that the ignition will be turned off at such times. Buses idling in front of school buildings should now be the exception rather than the rule.
- All school buses in District 8 now are equipped with cell phones. Mrs. Mahaffy commented that this has been a longstanding need and she thanked staff for making it one of their priorities.
- Students have been invited to enter a contest to develop a new logo for the school district. Each school may submit as many as six entries to Mrs. Bev Henneberry, Director of Education by Friday, October 4, 2002.
- The conditions of the new Smoke Free Environment policy are being observed for the most part. Principals continue to monitor the situation

and will be sensitive to complaints of property owners adjacent to school grounds.

- The following dates have been set for Parent School Support Committee elections: September 23 (K-5); September 24 (6-8); and September 25 (9-12). Schools have flexibility in terms of having open houses coincide with elections. An information session for new and seasoned school administrators regarding the election process will be held as well (September 17).

BREAK [5 minutes]

9. POLICY DEVELOPMENT:

The Chairperson informed those present that the Monday evening policy development meetings will resume on September 16 and continue thereafter with the exception of September 23. Meetings begin at 7:00 p.m. weekly.

10. PRESENTATIONS:

The Superintendent, Mr. Terry McInerney, introduced Ms. Louise Connell, Manager of Information Technology and Mr. Ron Badger, Supervisor of Technology and Distance Education who were present as part of an ongoing process of providing information to Council regarding resources and infrastructure of the school district.

Council members received information prior to the meeting that provided an overview of the Information Technology Department, its role and challenges regarding staffing, infrastructure, budget, and integration of technology in the classroom. Relevant policies and guidelines, and an inventory of equipment also formed part of the information distributed.

Discussion points included but were not necessarily limited to the following:

- At the elementary level, District Office officials would encourage the use of technology as a tool but would not want technology used to the exclusion of students attaining basic skills in the areas of literacy/numeracy at that level.
- There are very little District initiatives taking place at the elementary level in terms of technology. Computers at this level are old. However, the District has made major strides in breaking up the former computer labs to create pods, which resonates with proven educational practices.
- Technology is funded by the Province, but not to the extent that is needed. School districts have difficulty maintaining and refurbishing the influx of computers received over the past several years. School districts are dependent on the Computers in Schools program and other federally

funded programs, as well as local Home and School Associations for funding to purchase equipment. Still, the infrastructure to support the equipment needs funding as well.

- The technician to computer ratio is 600:1 in District 8, leaving no time to allocate to preventative maintenance. Technicians also are required to provide software support. 79% of computers in District 8 are over six years old.
- To some extent, computers are allocated to schools based on programs that they offer. Mainly, computers are placed where they will get maximum use. Broadbased Technology/Labs are given priority.
- Broadbased Technology (BBT) operates but somewhat differently than the original model in terms of curriculum. The focus now is on six to eight modules being developed locally, which the Department of Education will support.
- The school district has solicited used computers from businesses, etc. in the past but the condition of the equipment that was received and the cost attached to refurbishing and maintaining such equipment has been prohibitive.
- Staff will look into resurrecting the notion of a FAQ manual for teachers to possibly reduce the number of routine calls for technical assistance.
- Students begin to study technology as a subject area at the middle school level. At the K-5 level, technology is integrated in other subject areas.
- On a positive note, Saint John High School and River Valley Middle School received an Industry Canada award in connection with the Network of Innovative Schools program, each receiving a \$10,000 grant annually for three years.

Mr. McNerney complimented the technology staff in District 8. He referred to their enthusiastic and progressive work in the area of technology, and the fact that representatives from this school district play a major role in curriculum development and related activities at the provincial level.

Chair MacKenzie thanked Mr. Badger and Ms. Connell for participating in the discussion. He commented that the discussion was enlightening and expressed the need to raise the level of concern about funding for technology with Department of Education officials.

ii. ISSUES IDENTIFICATION:

ii. Meeting with Local MLAs:

The Chairperson will contact local MLAs to arrange a meeting with Council members. Council members reserved the evenings of September 30 and October 7 as possible dates for such a meeting. The Chairperson will communicate the exact date as soon as it is known. Council members

will have an opportunity for input with respect to an agenda for the meeting.

ii. **Natural Gas:**

It was suggested that the school look at the possibility of converting some or all of its facilities to natural gas. The Superintendent will determine whether or not the Department of Education is considering converting to natural gas and report to Council in this regard.

12. TERMINATION OF PUBLIC MEETING:

There being no further business, the Chair terminated the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John MacKenzie, Chair

Myrna Gillis, Recording Secretary