

GLACE BAY FAMILY OF SCHOOLS  
STUDENT ACCOMMODATION STUDY GROUP  
FINAL REPORT  
DECEMBER 2014

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## Introduction

The Looking Inward document was drafted in the fall of 2012 and released for public review and input in April of 2013. Public information sessions, information sessions for the NSTU and CUPE Unions, School Advisory Council focus groups, student focus groups, Principal's information and input sessions and public input sessions in each of the seven Families of Schools marked the efforts of the Cape Breton Victoria Regional School Board to engage the educational stakeholders in this planning process.

Looking Inward is a planning framework for long term facility provision and system sustainability in a time of changing demographics.

The original document contained 32 scenarios designed to start the conversation with respect to long term facility requirements within the School Board. With the completion of the first round of consultations fifty additional scenarios were put forth for consideration. These were generated from the SAC focus groups, school based administrators and public input sessions. Two web based surveys generated another four hundred responses to variables associated with attempting to establish a long range plan that would be responsive to the challenges facing the School Board.

Staff reviewed all the scenarios , generated a series of proposals for further consideration, shared the input received with the School Board, and in April of 2014 released a document entitled " Looking Inward- Disposition of Scenarios to Family of Schools Suggested Solutions" . The document also contained proposals as to how school facilities within each Family of Schools could be configured to accommodate students on the long term.

Public reaction to the proposals for each Family of Schools was sought by once again engaging stakeholders in the process. Student Accommodation Study Groups were established in each Family of Schools. The mandate of each Student Accommodation Study Group (SASG) was threefold:

- a) To continue the multi-part conversation of stakeholder engagement by soliciting input from educational partners on proposals designed to sustain required school facilities and to protect/maintain programs and services for students.
- b) To provide the Family of Schools Student Accommodation Study Group with an opportunity to reflect on the proposals with a view to commenting/recommending the identified proposal or suggesting viable alternatives.
- c) To afford educational stakeholders the opportunity to generate a response document on the evolving plan including recommendations for the consideration of the Board.

## Guiding Principles

Participants from the Glace Bay Family of Schools identified Equity, Integrity and Responsiveness as the top three principles to guide discussion with respect to addressing the proposed solutions shared at the April 30 meeting.

This Family of Schools was the only one in which all 8 guiding principles received at least one #1 (top) priority vote.

Participants appeared to be suggesting that the equity principle needs to be a major part of any reflective input process. Despite a call for improved facilities in the past, disparities exist with respect to instructional facilities within this Family of Schools.

Complete list of principles as ranked in priority by participants from the Glace Bay Family of Schools.

1. Equity
2. Integrity
3. Responsiveness
4. Sustainability and Transparency (equal)
6. Accountability
7. Adequacy
8. Stewardship

## Values & Beliefs

Seventy-five (75%) percent of participants from the Glace Bay Family of Schools identified student learning /achievement as their top belief/values statement.

Twenty (20%) percent of participants indicated that they believed it a priority (# 1 choice) to maintain a school in a community where one currently exists.

Glace Bay participants believe strongly that parental involvement in the school life of their children helps improve a school's focus on education.

Eighty (80 %) percent of Glace Bay participants indicated they valued the opportunity to address the challenges faced by the Board by participating in these consultations.

Complete list of Values and Beliefs as prioritized by participants from the Glace Bay Family of Schools.

1. Student learning/achievement is the primary concern.
2. Engaged parents help improve the focus on education.
3. Parents/community members should be engaged in addressing issues facing the Board.
4. Need to manage the stock of school buildings.
5. Maintain a school within a community.
6. and 7.

Equally rated

Establish a new school community is an option to consider.

and

Major consideration for transportation of students.

#### Looking Inward Scenario 27

Examine the option of housing the Junior High School students from Donkin - Morien at Oceanview Education Centre.

#### Looking Inward Scenario 28

As Donkin Elementary Junior High is part of the Donkin-Gowrie Complex and the Donkin School facility has the space to house all Donkin- Gowrie Elementary School students, examine the option of consolidating the students in one building at Donkin, thereby identifying Gowrie for consideration in a future school review process.

#### Looking Inward Scenario 29

Examine the option of housing the Junior High students from Bridgeport at the Oceanview Education Centre

#### Looking Inward Scenario 30

Examine the option to reconfigure Glace Bay High School from a grade 10-12 school to a grade 9-12 school with consideration for the impact such a reconfiguration would have on Oceanview Education Center.

#### Looking Inward Scenario 31

Examine the option of housing all elementary students from the seaside communities of New Aberdeen, Bridgeport and Dominion along with the Community of Reserve in one new elementary school to serve approximately 550 students served by J.B. Croak, MacDonald, Bridgeport and Tompkins Elementary.

#### Looking Inward Scenario 32

Examine the option of creating two new elementary schools in the Glace Bay area to house approximately 275 students each- replacing Tompkins, MacDonald, Bridgeport and J.B. Croak.

## Administrative Scenario 6

## Glance Bay Family of Schools

In the seaside communities of New Aberdeen, Bridgeport, Dominion, and the neighboring community of Reserve examine the feasibility of refurbishing up to two of the existing school facilities (J.B. Croak, Bridgeport, MacDonald, and Tompkins) with a view to creating up to two new educational school communities from among these four existing community school facilities.

## Public Scenario 10

## Glance Bay Family of Schools

Building on, but modifying, scenario 32, examine the option of combining Tompkins Elementary School population with MacDonld Elementary School population at the Tompkins site

and

accommodate the Bridgeport students (P-6) at St. Anne's and (7-9) at Oceanview Education Center

and

leave J. B. Croak as it is - a P-6 facility.

In this scenario the school review process would need to be initiated for Bridgeport School.

## Public Scenario 11

## Glance Bay Family of Schools

Examine the option of investing in MacDonald Elementary School with a view to providing all program and learning support spaces consistent with offering the Public School Program at the elementary level.

## SAC Scenario 12

## Glance Bay Family of Schools

Building on Administrative Scenario 6 which speaks to refurbishing two existing buildings in the seaside grouping, retain J. B. Croak as a P-6 elementary school and expand Bridgeport to include students from MacDonald Elementary and Tompkins Elementary School.

## SAC Scenario 14

## Glance Bay Family of Schools

Examine the option of transferring the Junior High student population from Donkin Complex to Oceanview Education Center and consolidate the Primary to grade 6 students from Donkin and Gowrie Elementary Schools at Gowrie Elementary School.

## SAC Scenario 15

## Glance Bay Family of Schools

Building on but modifying scenario 32, examine the option of combining Tompkins Elementary and MacDonald Elementary school populations at MacDonald

AND

Accommodate the Bridgeport students (Primary- 6) at St. Anne's and ( grades7-9 ) at Oceanview Education Center

AND

Leave J.B. Croak as it is- a primary to grade 6 school facility.

In this scenario school review processes would need to be initiated for Tompkins and Bridgeport.

## SAC Scenario 23

## Glance Bay Family of Schools

Examine the option of establishing Donkin Complex as the late French immersion Center for the Glance Bay Family of Schools.

## **Proposal 1 - Establish Donkin School as a Primary to Grade 8 facility to house all Donkin and Gowrie Primary to Grade 8 students. This proposal involves:**

### **Public Scenario 10 and Looking Inward Scenario 28**

As Donkin Elementary –Junior High is part of the Donkin- Gowrie Complex and the Donkin school facility has space to house all Donkin -Gowrie elementary school students, examine the option of consolidating the students in one building at Donkin.

#### **Initial Reaction**

- This is something that has been talked about for years
- There was concern about exactly how the grade groupings would be configured
- It would allow for single grade classes where currently there are multiple grades
- There were concerns around moving Grade 9's to high school
- Some members were concerned that itinerant teachers might be adversely affected. This would alleviate transportation costs
- Some members noted that there was confusion with respect to when Donkin and Gowrie were established as a complex.
- A question was raised around the 150,000 being given to schools according to the HOGG formula.
- Members wondered if any new school with enrolment under 100 would receive the \$150,000.00.
- Parents wanting a smaller school setting for their Junior High School aged children
- Study group members wondered how staffing would be affected.

#### **Strengths**

- Transportation costs for transporting students to Donkin for itinerant subjects would lessen.
- Fewer multi aged groupings
- Ease of programming and scheduling

#### **Weaknesses**

- Increase in time on buses for students that presently go to Gowrie
- Increase in class size
- Students from Gowrie would attend school with older students
- Loss of community school in Port Morien
- Loss of community identity
- Decrease of volunteerism (community involvement)
- Possible loss of students to Glace Bay from Donkin/Morien

**What are the unknowns with respect to this proposal?**

- What would it do to grade configuration?
- Itinerant subjects, how would they be affected?
- How will staffing be affected?

Answers to these questions were provided in Appendix A

**What information is required to assist in generate a response?**

Questions were posed and answered during the first three meetings.(See Appendix A)

**What would it do to grade configuration?**

Donkin Complex would become a P-8 school under this proposal housing approximately 115 students from the Donkin/Gowrie catchment area. The grade 9 students from the Donkin Complex would attend Glace Bay High School.

**Impact on Students**

Gowrie students would be housed at Donkin. They would spend longer time on the bus going to and from school.

**Impact on Program Delivery**

All program spaces required to deliver the P-8 curriculum are in existence at Donkin School. All specialist subjects and services would be provided in accordance with the percentage of time required for each subject area.

**Impact on Community**

Port Morien would lose its community school.

**Impact on Staffing**

Staffing formulas and policy directives (e.g. class caps) will determine the number of staff members to be assigned to the new setting. Contractual agreements for NSTU and CUPE govern when it comes to how positions within the school will be filled.

**Timetable for Implementation**

The Student Accommodation Study Groups will complete their work by the fall of 2014. The board will then be in a position to make an informed decision with respect to the establishment of a long term facilities and program delivery plan. This should be completed by April 2015. Actions to be executed will have to be put on a timeline which could span between five and ten years. Decisions on grade level

configuration, P3 schools and school capital needs will need to be considered as the Board sets out its action plan.

### **Operational Costs**

There are no additional operating costs as a result of this proposal. The annual operating cost for Gowrie would be a saving if this proposal was implemented.

### **Capital Costs**

There are no additional capital costs as a result of this proposal. A recent capital improvement project valued at \$1 Million will end at Donkin in 2014-15. This project involved many upgrades to the building which include new washrooms, windows, siding and classroom/corridor refreshes.

### **Transportation Costs**

Combining all students from Gowrie Memorial and Donkin School could be easily accommodated within the transportation aspect of consolidation. The current routes transport Gowrie students on the same runs as Donkin with Gowrie School drop off taking place prior to Donkin. Impacts on pick up time would be minimal if any at all. Drop off times would be optimized with one bell dismissal for all students within Donkin. This would result in a time savings and a km savings.

## Proposal 2 – House Bridgeport Junior High students at Oceanview Education Center (OVEC)

### Looking Inward Scenario 29

#### **Initial Reaction**

- With the decline in enrolment it appears to makes sense. However, those directly impacted suggest a smaller school setting ( P-8 ) is a good thing.
- This will eliminate combined grades in Junior High at Bridgeport- a situation that has emerged lately.

#### **Strengths**

- OVEC is a state of the art new school.

#### **Weaknesses**

- Some students want a smaller school setting (more intimate program setting)
- Moving the students to a larger school might cause anxiety for the students
- There was a concern over loss of a sense of community atmosphere
- Increased transportation costs would likely occur.

#### **What are the unknowns with respect to this proposal?**

What would be the increase in transportation costs?

#### **What information is required to assist in generate a response?**

Questions were posed and answered during the first three meetings.(See Appendix A)

#### **Impact on Students**

Bridgeport students would find themselves in a much larger school. Some students would be bussed rather than walking to school. Students who flourish in a small school environment may experience some level of anxiety when placed in larger classes in unfamiliar surroundings.

#### **Impact on Program Delivery**

Students at Bridgeport School have enjoyed facilities consistent with the provision of a Junior High program. If Bridgeport middle School students were to attend Oceanview Education Center they would be instructed in a State of the Art facility with all the most recent technology and program supports.

#### **Impact on Community**

The leadership component of the student population would be loss if this proposal was to be implemented. This is viewed by some representatives from Bridgeport as the beginning of the demise of a school that has served the community well for more than 60 years. A loss of the sense of community atmosphere would likely result.

**Impact on Staffing**

Staffing formulas and policy directives will determine the number of staff assigned to a school.

**Timetable for Implementation**

The Student Accommodation Study Groups will complete their work by the fall of 2014. The board will then be in a position to make an informed decision with respect to the establishment of a long term facilities and program delivery plan. This should be completed by April 2015. Actions to be executed will have to be put on a timeline which could span between five and ten years. Decisions on grade level configuration, P3 schools and school capital needs will need to be addressed as the Board sets out its action plan.

**Operational Costs**

There are no additional operating costs as a result of this proposal.

**Capital Costs**

There are no additional capital costs as a result of this proposal.

**Transportation Implications**

Housing junior high students from Bridgeport Elementary-Junior High at Oceanview Education Center would have minimal implications on transportation. With no more than 15 students at this grade level in the foreseeable future, accommodating this number of students on CBVRSB bussing would be manageable. Currently there are bus routes through the community of Bridgeport to pick up Glace Bay High (GBH) Students. These buses stop at OVEC prior to GBH to drop off students picked up prior to and immediately after Bridgeport. Therefore, there is seating available to put these students on the current bus routes, with no change to the current pickup times within the routes.

## **Proposal 3 - Scenario # 30 – Convert Glace Bay High School from a grade 10-12 to a grade 9-12 school with consideration for the impact such reconfiguration would have on Oceanview Education Center**

### **Initial Reaction**

- Study group members wondered if the change in grade level configuration would impact staff levels. CUPE and NSTU
- Study group members were uncertain as to whether the proposed grade level configuration for Glace Bay High would be applied consistently to other High Schools in other Families of Schools.
- Concerns were voiced with respect to how grade 9 students would be instructed in a school environment where grade 10-12 students receive instruction under a semester schedule.
- There is a certain culture and attitude to semester schools.
- Some members would like to examine any research on 9-12 schools.
- Study Group members wondered how wide-spread the Middle School program exists within schools throughout the Province.
- Study Group members wondered how wide-spread the semester system is in practice in High School throughout the Province.
- Concern was voiced over the early start students transitioning to Middle School and later to High School at younger age. (young four year old students).

### **Strengths**

Glace Bay High has the space to house the grade 9 students.

### **Weaknesses**

- If this proposal happens it will affect all schools as a domino effect.
- There's a certain culture and attitude to semester schools.
- Early start students/transitioning. Young Gr. 9 students
- Sports in grade 9 will be affected.

### **What are the unknowns with respect to this proposal?**

Would there be staffing cuts?

- Would grade 9's be in semester classes like 10-12's?
- What would be the transportation implications for students?

### **What information is required to assist in generating a response?**

Questions were posed and answered during the first three meetings. (See Appendix A)

### **Impact on Students**

- Increased bussing from all areas in Glace Bay.
- Students would be entering High School at a younger age.
- Students would be leaving smaller school settings a year earlier.
- Change in sports teams for grade 9's.

**Impact on Program Delivery**

Students from smaller schools (Donkin/ Bridgeport) will be exposed to larger facilities and be positioned to experience a transition year in a High School environment.

**Impact on Community**

Students would be going from small school setting to larger school setting.

**Impact on Staffing**

Contractual agreements for CUPE and NSTU govern when it comes to how positions within a school will be filled.

**Timetable for Implementation**

The Student Accommodation Study Groups will complete their work by the fall of 2014. The board will then be in a position to make an informed decision with respect to the establishment of a long term facilities and program delivery plan. This should be completed by April 2015. Actions to be executed will have to be put on a timeline which could span between five and ten years. Decisions on grade level configuration, P3 schools and school capital needs will need to be considered as the Board sets out its action plan..

**Operational Costs**

There are no additional operating costs as a result of this proposal.

**Capital Costs**

There are no additional capital costs as a result of this proposal.

**Transportation Implications**

Reconfiguring Glace Bay High School from a grade 10-12 to a grade 9-12 would have the following implications:

- Morning bus routes would see little or no change as all buses that have runs for OVEC school also pick up for Glace Bay High. These buses simply drop at Oceanview prior to Glace Bay High. The buses currently accommodate the numbers for both and based on projected numbers it appears they will be able to continue to do so. There will be no change to pick-up times.
- Afternoon bus routes would have to accommodate approximately 75 grade 9 students out of Glace Bay High in the afternoon. These numbers can be accommodated on runs currently coming out of Glace Bay High. Afternoon routes from Glace Bay High would have to see adjustments made to accommodate some students. The drop off times and locations would change minimally with the reconfiguration.

## **Proposal 4 – Reconfigure Oceanview Education Centre from a grade 7-9 Junior High School to a grade 6-8 middle school**

### **Initial Reaction**

- Young age of students will be transitioning from grade 5 to 6 due to change in Primary entry level date (Oct 1<sup>st</sup> to Dec 31<sup>st</sup>). Representatives expressed concerns over sending Gr.6's with 7's and 8's.
- Some Study Group members expressed concern that if grade 6 students are moved to a Middle School additional surplus space will exist at St. Anne's. They believe the students should remain at St. Anne's until all decisions on Grade Configuration are completed.
- Study Group members commented on their understanding of the Minister's announcement on timing for school reviews.
- Home and school concerns:
  1. It was felt that the students' best interests aren't being looked at in this process.
  2. Members question whether students could be housed at St. Anne's in a P-8 instructional environment.
  3. It was felt that students would be too young to make the transition.
- Study Group members believe that this proposal is contrary to the position held by the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development
- Concern was expressed in the New Aberdeen community about John Bernard Croak being proposed for school closure.

### **Strengths**

- Oceanview has the space to house the students.
- Oceanview is a new, state of the art facility.

### **Weaknesses**

- Consensus among the representatives was that they are not in favor of the Middle School model.
- Some representatives felt like there was not enough support for children in the Glace Bay area and concerns such as high anxiety with students in this area and social-emotional needs was questioned. There were some major concerns over support and services for the Glace Bay area students.
- Participants believed that excess space will continue to exist after grade configuration occurs.

### **What are the unknowns with respect to this proposal?**

- What is the transitioning plan for younger students?
- How will the transportation implications be handled?
- What are the staffing implications?

### **Impact on Students**

- Anxiety issues/social-emotional needs will exist among some students. Some students will experience some difficulties going to a new school with new grade level configurations.
- Some students will be going from a small school setting to a larger school setting.
- Making some school sport teams may be a challenge for some grade 6's.

### **Impact on Program Delivery**

Oceanview Education Center has all of the appropriate facilities to deliver a Middle School Program.

### **Impact on Community**

No known impact on community.

### **Impact on Staffing**

Staffing formulas and policy directives will determine the number of staff members assigned to the school. Contractual agreements for CUPE and NSTU govern when it comes to how positions within a school are filled.

### **Timetable for Implementation**

The Student Accommodation Study Groups will complete their work by the fall of 2014. The board will then be in a position to make an informed decision with respect to the establishment of a long term facilities and program delivery plan. This should be completed by April 2015. Actions to be executed will have to be put on a timeline which could span between five and ten years. Decisions on grade level configuration, P3 schools and school capital needs will need to be considered as the Board sets out its action plan.

### **Operational Costs**

There are no additional operating costs as a result of this proposal.

### **Capital Costs**

There are no additional capital costs as a result of this proposal.

### **Transportation Implications**

Reconfiguring Oceanview Education Center (OVEC) from a Grade 7-9 Junior High to a Grade 6-8 Middle School will have the following implications:

- Morning bus routes would see little or no change as all buses that have runs for OVEC school also pick up for elementary while picking up for OVEC. These buses simply drop at Oceanview following their drops at the elementary schools. The buses currently accommodate the numbers for both elementary and Jr. High and based on future enrollment can continue to do so. The stops in between the elementary schools and OVEC could still be accommodated because the majority of elementary will still be getting off the buses at these schools. There will be no change to pick-up times.
- Afternoon bus routes would have to accommodate approximately 75 grade 9 students out of Glace Bay High in the afternoon. These numbers can be accommodated on runs currently coming out of Glace Bay High. Afternoon routes from Glace Bay High would have to see adjustments made to accommodate some students. The drop off times and locations would change minimally with the reconfiguration.

**Proposal 5 - Request the construction of a new school to serve the Grade Primary to Grade 5 student body from Bridgeport, MacDonald and Tompkins Elementary Schools.**

**Scenario 31 - Examine the option of housing all elementary students from the seaside communities of New Aberdeen, Bridgeport, Dominion as well as the community of Reserve in one new elementary school to serve approximately 550 students served by J.B.Croak, MacDonald Elementary, Bridgeport School and Tompkins Elementary.**

**Initial Reaction**

- Request for a new school has been submitted when the proposal hasn't been put forth. (there was a concern that the decision to get a new school was pre-determined)
  - Concern regarding previous meeting proposals and scenarios not matching current proposals and scenarios. For example it was thought that scenario 31 was not in the original set of scenarios at previous meetings.
  - Study Group members were not clear on how the Board disposed of original scenarios and replaced them with new ( and different ) proposals.
  - There was interest on P3 Building ownership which prompted these questions:
    1. Who owns the schools and what affect will that have on school closures?
    2. How many P3 schools do we have in our board?
    3. Can the board decide to close a P3 school?
  - Study Group members believe it is important for the school Board to clarify the time frames that any anticipated changes would be implemented.
  - Study Group members were curious as to the effect enrolment numbers would have on decisions with respect to facility retention and usage.
  - Members of the Study Group wondered if the motivation for this exercise was to fill spaces or to support student learning.
  - Study group members questioned if the schools not identified in the proposal would be impacted by the Looking inward process.
  - We need to have a complete plan in place.
  - Concerns were expressed around potentially closing schools and cutting jobs as well as the overall student enrolment decline
- Study group members wonder how the school review Process legislation will impact the Looking Inward process

**Strengths**

- Aging schools strengthen the case for a new school
- Tompkins and MacDonald share a lot of services already (band, gym time for sports teams.)
- Tompkins and MacDonald know they can work together. There is a lot of connection between the 2 communities (Reserve/Dominion) – For example, shared churches and kids already know each other through participation in clubs and sport teams

The SAC members from both schools have met on this and are on board with a new school to be located somewhere in between the 2 existing schools. This is a positive ongoing conversation with the will and desire to go forward to achieve a solution.

- New state of the art school.

### **Weaknesses**

- The original scenario (#31) for 4 schools, 550 students is considered to be too large. Tompkins and MacDonald would like one new school to replace their 2 schools.
- Increase in length of time on buses time for some students would be a reality.
- Likely increased transportation costs.
- Loss of small schools in communities.

### **What are the unknowns with respect to this proposal?**

- When the decision on grade configuration will be made?
- The staffing implications.
- The transportation implications.
- The site for the location of a new school.
- The time frame for implementation.
- Impacts of the transition to larger school for students.

### **Impact on Students**

- Students unable to be educated in their own small community.
- Longer commute times for some students.
- Possible difficult integration into large school setting.

### **Impact on Program Delivery**

A new school to serve students from Reserve Mines and Dominion would contain all of the appropriate program spaces that are currently lacking in existing and aging school facilities at Tompkins and MacDonald Elementary Schools.

### **Impact on Community**

Loss of school and identity within the community

### **Impact on Staffing**

Staffing formulas and policy directives (e.g. Class Cap) will determine the number of staff members to be assigned to a new school setting. Contractual agreements for NSTU and CUPE govern when determining how positions within a school will be filled.

### **Timetable for Implementation**

The Student Accommodation Study Groups will complete their work by the fall of 2014. The board will then be in a position to make an informed decision with respect to the establishment of a long term facilities and program delivery plan. This should be completed by April 2015. Actions to be executed will have to be put on a timeline which could span between five and ten years. Decisions on grade level configuration, P3 schools and school capital needs will need to be considered as the Board sets out its action plan..

### **Operational Costs**

The building operating costs for this school are estimated to be \$250,000 per year. This represents a operational cost savings of \$330,000 per year.

### **Capital Costs**

The capital costs for a new school to replace Bridgeport, MacDonald and Tompkins as a P-5 school are \$13,750,000.

### **Transportation Implications**

The construction of a new school to serve the Grade Primary to Grade 5 student body from Bridgeport, MacDonald and Tompkins Elementary school would have the following implications:

- The implications on the transport of students would depend on the location of the newly constructed school.
- Should the school be located in Reserve Mines transportation would see little or no change for Tompkins students and very little change for MacDonald students. Bridgeport school is a walking school so new bussing would have to be put in place for those students which would have a big impact on transportation as bussing is optimized within the Glace Bay and area district. A bus may have to be added to accommodate these students.
- This situation also holds true if the new school were to be constructed in Dominion. Should the school be constructed in Bridgeport the impact on transportation would be less than that of building in the other 2 communities. Tompkins would likely see minimal changes in their routes with slight changes to pick up and drop off times. MacDonald would see slight changes to its pick up and drop off times. Bridgeport students would remain unchanged as walking students.
- Should these schools be bussed to any of the new locations it would require restructure of routes which would travel in the opposite direction of the junior and senior high. Timing would be of concern and the possibility of additional bussing may be required.

## **Proposal 6 – J. B. Croak grade Primary to grade 5 student body to be housed at St. Anne's Elementary.**

**Considerations: In the disposition of Scenario 31, it was determined that the student population at J. B Croak could be housed at St. Anne's. This change would reduce the size of the proposed new school to 400. The CBVRSB have requested a new school to replace Bridgeport , MacDonald and Tompkins in its May 6 2014 submission to the School Capital Construction Committee. It should be understood that in making this request the Board is not pre-empting the Looking Inward process but rather establishing a placeholder for a capital project pending the outcome of the deliberations and the ultimate establishment of a long term facilities plan.**

### **Initial Reaction**

- Principal of John Bernard Croak (JBC) met with the home and school association and the SAC and they do not support the grade 6 students going to a middle school
- Some study group members question why J.B. Croak is being considered as surplus to the needs of the Board when economic initiatives are be considered to revitalize New Aberdeen in the Glace Bay community.
- Proposal 6 should be removed.
- Considering the state of JBC (recent renovations) the proposal should not have been put forth.
- St. Anne's is proposing to be changed to a P-8 school

### **Strengths**

Saint Anne's can house the JBC students based on classrooms.

### **Weaknesses**

- Do not agree school should close – physical plant is in good shape; have all the facilities (gym, schools plus, music room, art room, snoozlin room, library, computer labs, playground, lunch room facilities, band program, many sports teams, everything within school), recent renovations – new floor in gym. Recent plumbing upgrade, elevator, new heaters in the gym.
- The school is the centre of the community.
- The Daycare is close by and this is considered essential to all families.
- Government is working towards rejuvenating New Aberdeen.
- Enrollment is increasing in this area.
- Classrooms at Saint Anne's are used for other purposes for the students. There's potential for the building to be crowded with JBC students added.

### **What are the unknowns with respect to this proposal?**

- How would the classes be configured?
- What are the implications for Staff?
- What are the transportation implications?
- What would happen to some of the current programming at JBC? (i.e. Schools Plus)

**Impact on Students**

- Students unable to be educated in their own small community.
- Longer commute times for some students.
- Possible difficult integration into larger school setting.
- Daycare issues for families.

**Impact on Program Delivery**

Concern was expressed that the Schools Plus initiative would be lost to New Aberdeen if such a move was made. Other program offerings and program spaces would be similar at St. Anne's.

**Impact on Community**

From the perspective of representatives of the J.B. Croak School community, this proposal would destroy the community revitalization effort by removing a pillar for continuous and future growth of the area. The closure of J.B. Croak School in New Aberdeen would result in the center of the activity within the community being lost.

**Impact on Staffing**

Staffing formulas and policy directives (e.g. Class Cap) will determine the number of staff members assigned to a school. Contractual agreements for CUPE and NSTU govern when it comes to how positions within a school will be filled.

**Timetable for Implementation**

The student Accommodation Study Groups will complete their work by the fall of 2014. The board will then be in a position to make an informed decision with respect to the establishment of a long term facilities and program delivery plan. This should be completed by April 2015. Actions to be executed will have to be put on a timeline which could span between five and ten years. Decisions on grade level configuration , P3 schools and school capital needs will need to be considered as the Board sets out its action plan.

**Operational Costs**

There are no additional operating costs as a result of this proposal. However, the annual operating costs associated with running J.B. Croak would be a saving to the Board if J.B. Croak students were attending school at St. Anne's School. There would also be a reduction in excess capacity space within the Glace Bay Family of Schools.

**Capital Costs**

There are no additional capital costs as a result of this proposal.

### **Transportation Implications**

The movement of JB Croak grade primary to grade 5 student body to be housed at St. Anne's Elementary would have the following implications:

- The implications of such a move would be minimal on transportation service. Student pick up times would remain the same with drop off times changing. The route that services JBC students also picks up OVEC and GBH students. This route consists of 2 runs picking up students in different areas for all three schools. The adjustment in these runs would be in the order of drop off for the schools. Current JBC students and OVEC students would see a 5-7 minute change in their drop off to their schools.
- Students who currently walk to J.B. Croak School would need to be integrated into existing bus runs.

## ALTERNATE PROPOSAL # 1

Explore the option of St. Anne's School being reconfigured from a P-6 to P-8 school.

### RATIONALE

St. Anne's Elementary School has a grade Primary to grade 6 student population of 318 for the 2014-15 school year. Over the past five years the average primary enrolment has been 45 students. If that number of students was projected based on the average plus existing enrolment, St Anne's School would house approximately 400 students. The current calculated capacity of St. Anne's School is 525. The grade 7 and grade 8 students from St. Anne's could be accommodated with some classroom space left over to allow for Middle School program instruction to be established.

The costs associated with creating Middle School program spaces would need to be calculated and a business case developed for presentation to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. Costs for the creation of this space would be a Provincial charge and would not be reflected in the operating budget of the School Board.

A number of large Middle Schools exist as Primary to grade 8 structures in Nova Scotia. Tamarac education in Port Hawkesbury is one example.

Such a proposal would allow for an alternate school model (P-8) in the Glace Bay Family of Schools along with the proposed grade 6-8 model at Oceanview Education Center.

St. Anne's School has recently undergone a major refurbishment. Students would continue to be housed in a bright, inviting and familiar surrounding under this proposal.

## ALTERNATE PROPOSAL # 2

Revisit Glace Bay Family of Schools proposal # 6 with a view to retaining John Bernard Croak Memorial School as a Primary to grade 5 school in the New Aberdeen area of Glace Bay.

### RATIONALE

The school is an integral part of the New Aberdeen revitalization program involving the Federal and Municipal Governments. The school is one of the mainstay pillars in the community supporting social and recreational needs of students and the public. There is a strong historical connection between the school and the community.

John Bernard Croak Memorial School has benefitted from a major investment of funds from the School Board to improve the infrastructure. All program spaces compatible with providing a primary to grade 5 program are present at the school.

Our first guiding principle was one of **EQUITY**. This school was identified in Scenarios 31 and 32 for replacement consideration. It is a long way from replacement by a new school facility to closure and loss of identity as suggested in Board proposal 6. We are having a hard time finding the fairness and equity in a proposal that would suggest the closure of J.B. Croak and the subsequent housing of the students from New Aberdeen at St. Anne's School.

### ALTERNATE PROPOSAL # 3

Consistent with Looking Inward Scenario 32, examine the option of combining Tompkins Elementary and MacDonald Elementary in one new school designed for 250-275 Primary to grade 5 students.

#### RATIONALE

We are neighboring communities with aging school facilities. We have been identified by the School Board as meriting consideration for a new school facility by virtue of inclusion in the last submission to the School Capital Construction Committee.

In recent years our enrolments have been stable while other areas of the Board have experienced decline.

With buildings that border on 50 years of age (MacDonald 1964, Tompkins 1967), we believe we have worked our way close to the top of the list when replacement facilities in sustainable communities are being considered.

MacDonald students have had to be bussed to neighboring Bridgeport since 2002 to receive their Physical Education Program. An opportunity exists to provide program **equity** and to enable both MacDonald and Tompkins students to be instructed in modern facilities.

#### **ALTERNATE PROPOSAL # 4**

Building on SAC scenario 10, re-examine the option of establishing Bridgeport as a P-8 small school to serve as an alternate instructional setting to the larger school ( Oceanview Education Center) in the Glace Bay Family of Schools.

#### **RATIONALE**

Bridgeport School has a long standing history of service to the students and public in the Bridgeport area of Glace Bay. With proposed grade level reconfiguration under consideration, it is the opinion of the Bridgeport representatives serving on the Student Accommodation Study Group that Bridgeport School is positioned to serve as a P-8 small school in the Glace Bay catchment area.

Bridgeport School contains program spaces to support both the elementary school and the middle school program without any major capital renovation at this time. In essence, the acceptance of this proposal would mean that the school would continue to serve rather than having to be created as a small school option.

Bridgeport School has been identified in the past as a suitable and favourable option for some students who require a change in school location for personal and/or social reasons.

A P-8 learning environment would reduce by one the number of transitions students would experience during their P-12 school years.

The existence of a P-8 school at Bridgeport would provide an alternate small school setting for students who learn best in a school with a smaller number of students.

Some students experience anxiety and adjustment issues when placed in a new school setting or a setting with a large number of students. Students in this smaller school setting could avoid these issues.

Students from neighboring schools could gain access to the smaller setting by initiating an application under the current Student Transfer Policy.

## ALTERNATE PROPOSAL # 5

To explore the option of re-creating John Bernard Croak Memorial School as a Primary to Middle School to serve the primary to grade 8 student population of New Aberdeen in the Glace Bay Family of Schools.

### RATIONALE

John Bernard Croak Memorial School has been a focal point in the community of New Aberdeen since it was constructed as a Primary to Grade 9 facility in 1974. With the opening of Glace Bay High in 1988 and the establishment of Morrison and St. Michael's as junior high schools, John Bernard Croak was reconfigured to a Primary to Grade 6 facility and continues to serve in that capacity.

In addition to Federal and Municipal initiatives to revitalize the New Aberdeen community, the Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board has made substantial investment in refurbishing the infrastructure of John Bernard Croak Elementary.

With a Primary to Grade 6 enrolment of 193 students, John Bernard Croak student population remains relatively stable while other areas of the Board suffer significant enrolment decline. The current identified capacity of John Bernard Croak is 325 students. Existing grade level enrolment range from twenty (20) to thirty-two (32) students. These numbers would enable John Bernard Croak School to accommodate Grade 7 and Grade 8 students while allowing for refurbishment of program spaces (Tech Ed. and Family Studies) for a modest capital investment.

John Bernard Croak representatives on the Student Accommodation Study Group believe that the school is the centre of activity and service provision for students and community residents. The establishment of the Schools Plus initiative at John Bernard Croak validates the central and unifying role the school plays in the community.

## EXCESS CAPACITY

Table 1 reflects the challenge of excess student capacity faced by the schools within the Glace Bay Family of Schools.

**TABLE 1**

Bridgeport	67%
Donkin	71%
Glace Bay Elementary	4%
Glace Bay High School	16%
Gowrie School	63%
John Bernard Croak School	47%
MacDonald Elementary	0%
Oceanview Education Centre	12%
St. Anne Elementary	38%
Tompkins Memorial School	52%

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Our Student Accommodation Study Group was provided with six (6) proposed solutions for review and consideration. These arose out of the Disposition of the Scenarios.

Members of our Study Group identified five (5) additional proposals.

Board staff provided us with an overview of the financial implications of the original six (6) proposals as well as our five (5) proposals. Table 2 illustrates the information shared with us.

**TABLE 2**

	Original Six (6)	Alternate Proposals
Capital	\$13,750,000	\$17,400,000
Operating Costs	\$2,146,000	\$2,255,500
Loss of Revenue	\$158,200	-\$1,800
Net Savings (Staff)	\$193,675	\$43,675
Net Savings (Operations)	\$421,300	\$171,800
Total Estimated Cost Change	\$614,975	\$215,475

### IMPLICATIONS FOR SCHOOL SUSTAINABILITY

Table 3 represents a comparison of the implications the original six (6) proposals and five (5) alternate proposals would have on school facility sustainability.

**TABLE 3**

School	Original Six (6)	Alternate Five (5) Proposals
Glance Bay High	9-12	9-12
Oceanview Education Centre	6-8	6-8
Glance Bay Elementary	P-5	P-5
St. Anne Elementary	P-5 + John Bernard Croak	P-8
John Bernard Croak	(Surplus)	P-8
Donkin	P-8 + Gowrie	P-8
Gowrie	(Surplus)	P-5
Bridgeport School	Replaced by new P-5 school	P-8
MacDonald Elementary	Replaced by new P-5 school	MacDonald +Tompkins new P-5 school
Tompkins School	Replaced by new P-5 school	Tompkins + MacDonald new P-5 school

Student Accommodation Study Group Draft Report  
Glance Bay Family of Schools  
Public Input Session

Glance Bay High School

November 30, 2014

Participants: 80 registered

Participants at the Public Input Session for the Student Accommodation Study Group for the Glance Bay Family of Schools made input and asked questions on the draft report.

Of the 81 registered participants, 46 represented John Bernard Croak Elementary School.

For purpose of this input summary, the perspective of the large turnout of John Bernard Croak representatives will be represented in the first part, Part A, of this input summary and the other inputs will be found in Part B.

## **PART A**

Twenty-two (22) of forty-six (46) people registered spoke against of Proposal 6 which suggested John Bernard Croak students be housed in St. Anne's. Individuals who approached the microphone shared single and/or multiple comments on the following:

1. Support for Students

Nine parents related stories of issues faced by their children and how, with the support of the administration and staff of John Bernard Croak, students are adjusting, anxiety levels are being reduced and the children are progressing as expected.

2. Historical Connection to Community

Five parents spoke about the connection to the community war hero John Bernard Croak has to the school named after him. Several parents mentioned the understanding the children have of the contribution of the veterans and how the children celebrated the freedom provided by the veterans.

3. Retention of a Community School

Ten speakers included a comment that John Bernard Croak School should not close as it meets the needs of many as a community school.

4. Strengths vs Weaknesses

One parent commented that the strengths of John Bernard Croak School as noted in the report outweighed any weaknesses.

#### 5. Larger Class Sizes Would Result

One parent commented that class sizes are such at John Bernard Croak that students can obtain help. This individual wondered if the suggestion to house John Bernard Croak students at St. Anne's was financially motivated as larger class sizes would surely result at St. Anne's

#### 6. Community Growth/Revitalization

Two speakers reinforced the points made in the draft report with respect to the efforts of Municipal and Federal governments to revitalize the community of New Aberdeen through housing developments.

One speaker also noted that an opportunity exists to explore the development of Devco lands adjacent to the school as a green area.

One speaker suggested that the school board, community and municipality representatives should meet for discussions prior to any action being taken by the School Board with respect to Proposal 6.

One participant wondered if the potential for growth at John Bernard Croak, because of revitalization, was given its proper consideration.

#### 7. Child Care Issues

Three participants spoke of the relationship that exists between the school, parents and the day care. Child care is an important issue in New Aberdeen and parents believe social and economic hardships will ensue if John Bernard Croak was to close.

#### 8. Pride in Giving Back to the Community

One parent spoke to the fundraising efforts of the student body of John Bernard Croak on behalf of the Heart and Stoke Foundation. Students exhibit pride in their efforts to support this charity.

A second example of pride and concern for others was demonstrated through the literacy initiative where older students support and assist younger students with reading initiatives.

Parents demonstrated their support for the retention of John Bernard Croak in the form of a petition which was presented at the meeting and forms part of the Input Record.

#### 9. St. Anne's Refurbishment/Addition

Two speakers suggested that the St. Anne's expansion and refurbishment was initiated so that John Bernard Croak could be accommodated and the excess space at that school addressed.

Two individuals questioned the functioning of the cafeteria at St. Anne's when John Bernard Croak was losing a Lunch/Bus/Grounds supervisor.

Two individuals wondered if the inclusion of John Bernard Croak students at St. Anne's would create an overcrowded situation.

## **PART B**

### Proposal 1

Establish Donkin as a P-8 facility to house all Donkin and Gowrie students.

One participant noted that this proposal called for small children to be transported longer distances to another school.

Another individual noted that announcements were pending on activity at the Donkin Mines. This individual questioned whether any growth in student population could be adequately handled if Gowrie was to close.

One speaker spoke about the impact the potential of three hundred plus jobs would have on the real estate market in the Donkin area and of the potential to bring young families with school age children to the area.

### Proposal 2

House Bridgeport students at Oceanview Education Centre

Four participants spoke against this proposal. Two speakers expressed support for Bridgeport as a P-8 facility.

One individual noted that Bridgeport School was the focal point in the community.

Two individuals noted that Bridgeport School provides a safe, secure, small school learning environment for students and is a viable option to larger middle school/junior high school settings.

One individual noted enrolment can vary and that the projections for primary students attending Bridgeport last year were reported inaccurately.

### Proposal 3

Convert Glace Bay High from a 10-12 to 9-12 school.

Three individuals spoke to this.

One speaker was opposed to Grade 9's going to High School

Another individual did not support the notion of grade level reconfiguration at all.

A third individual questioned if a decision on grade level configuration would be one of the first things the Board would do in setting out its long term facilities plan.

#### Proposal 4

Reconfigure Oceanview Education Centre from a Grade 7-9 to a Grade 6-8 middle school.

One individual indicated that he did not support grade level configuration at all.

One individual noted that her child would be going to Oceanview in 2016. She indicated there is much anxiety around the grade level switch and that it would be in everyone's best interest if a decision could be made soon to counteract the anxiety.

One individual indicated that 10 and 11 year olds would be housed with older students if this proposal became a reality.

#### Proposal 5

Request construction of a new school to serve P-5 population for Bridgeport, MacDonald and Tompkins.

No one spoke in favor of this proposal nor did anyone speak against it.

Comments from participants centered around:

- a) Support for retention of Bridgeport School as a P-8 small school alternative.
- b) Support for a new school for Grade P-5 for MacDonald/Tompkins to replace aging facilities. (Alternate Proposal 3)

#### Proposal 6

John Bernard Croak School P-5 students to be housed at St. Anne's Elementary.

As noted in Part A, twenty-two (22) of the forty-six (46) registered participants from John Bernard Croak School in attendance at the meeting expressed support for the retention of John Bernard Croak School and opposition to this proposal.

The opposition was augmented by the presentation of a petition in support of retaining John Bernard Croak School.

### Alternate Proposal 1

Explore the option of St. Anne's being reconfigured from a P-6 to P-8 facility.

No one spoke to this Alternate Proposal.

### Alternate Proposal 2

Revisit the Glace Bay Family of Schools Proposal 6 with a view of retaining John Bernard Croak Memorial School as a P-5 school in New Aberdeen.

The focus of speaker after speaker was addressing the retention of John Bernard Croak School not the grade level configuration it would have as a result of this input process.

### Alternate Proposal 3

Consistent with Looking Inward Scenario 32, examine the option of combining Tompkins Elementary and MacDonald Elementary in one new school designed for 250-275 P-5 students.

Six participants spoke in favor of this alternate proposal.

One speaker reinforced the working relationship that exists between the two communities.

Another speaker noted the land in the Neville Street area would border on the two communities and make a good site for a new school.

One participant noted MacDonald was lacking in facilities.

One speaker asked that consideration be given to students from Tanglewood, with respect to time on buses, as the alternate proposal for a new school is considered.

### Alternate Proposal 4

Building on SAC Scenario 10, re-examine the option of establishing Bridgeport as a P-8 small school to serve as an alternate instructional setting to the larger school, Oceanview Education Centre, in the Glace Bay Family of Schools.

Two individuals expressed support for Bridgeport as a P-8 facility.

One individual noted Bridgeport School was the focal point of the community.

Two individuals noted the Bridgeport School provided an alternate setting for students who were experiencing difficulties in other settings and that this school provides a small school alternate learning environment for students.

### Alternate Proposal 5

To explore the option of recreating John Bernard Croak Memorial School as a primary and middle school (P-8) to serve students in the New Aberdeen area of the Glace Bay Family of Schools.

The focus of speaker after speaker was addressing the retention of John Bernard Croak, not the grade level configuration it would have as a result of this input process.

### Other

#### 1. Loss of Former High Schools

One individual noted both Reserve Mines and Dominion had lost their high school students to Glace Bay High and that some students did not fair off so well in making the move.

#### 2. Many Choices

One individual noted that each proposal has strengths and weaknesses, some proposals are unacceptable to some communities, and that some proposals, obviously, need to be a priority if the issues facing the Board are to be addressed.

Another individual noted that the alternate proposals may offer the greatest hope of sustain schools within the various communities comprising the Glace Bay Family of Schools.

#### 3. Funding Formula

One participant questioned whether the funding formula could be adjusted to reduce the number of potential school closures. This individual believes that the Glace Bay Family of Schools has been downsized enough.

#### 4. P3 Consideration

One individual noted that while the Glace Bay Family of Schools does not have any P3 schools, it will be important for the Board to deal with this matter first from a capital budget perspective.

#### 5. Neighbouring Schools

One participant noted that neighbouring schools like Breton Education Centre should be looked at with a view of generating savings.

**Glace Bay Family of Schools  
Post November 30, 2014 Public Meeting  
Input**

Sixteen (16) pieces of correspondence were directed to the Board through Communications Officer Michelle MacLeod.

Many of the comments made at the Glace Bay SASG public meeting on November 30, 2014, were reinforced in the comments received in the post public session period.

Five (5) individuals indicated support for John Bernard Croak as a P-8 school. Three (3) parents expressed a desire to keep John Bernard Croak open.

Five (5) parents spoke about how their children are supported at John Bernard Croak noting that the children are provided with excellent educational services.

Two (2) individuals spoke to the opportunities for growth for a school that already has a stable school enrolment.

One (1) individual noted that John Bernard Croak is a school where children feel safe and protected. Another individual noted that small classes exist at John Bernard Croak and children will find themselves in larger classes at St. Anne's if they go there.

Two (2) individuals noted that the school enjoys exceptional community support, is named after a veteran, and should continue to carry forward the name of John Bernard Croak in the service of students.

Three (3) individuals noted that their children are anxious about the potential closure of John Bernard Croak. These individuals hope the children will be able to stay at John Bernard Croak for many years to come.

One (1) individual believed the refurbishing of St. Anne's was planned by the Board to provide space for John Bernard Croak students and close John Bernard Croak School.

One (1) individual believes equity and fairness should guide the decision making for the Board. Other schools should not enjoy special protection at the expense of John Bernard Croak.

## APPENDIX A – Q&A FROM MEETING #1 Glace Bay Family of Schools Initial Meeting Question

**PROPOSAL 1** Donkin as P-8 facility for Donkin and Gowrie

### Question 1

What would this do for grade level configuration?

Utilizing the enrolment figures from 2013-2014 the numbers look like this:

	Donkin	Gowrie	Total
P	8	6	14
1	7	5	12
2	5	5	10
3	10	8	18
4	6	2	8
5	9	5	14
6	8	8	16
7	11		11
8	9		9
9	<u>13</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>13</u>
	86	39	125

If we applied the class cap to these numbers, grade level groupings might look like this:

P - 1	20
1 - 2	16
3	18
4 - 5	22
6	16
7 - 8	20

Grade nine would not be at this site in this proposal.

### Question 2

How would itinerate subjects be affected?

All specialist subjects and support services would be provided in accordance with percentages of time required for the subject area or circumstance.

**Question 3**

When were the schools changed to a complex?

On March 3, 2003, the then principal Vernon Maclsaac reported to the Gowrie Memorial School Advisory Council that on February 24, 2003, Gowrie Memorial School and Donkin-Morien School had been twinned by the Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board.

**Question 4**

Would any school with under 100 students receive the \$150,000 under the Hogg Funding Formula?

When the Hogg Funding Formula was introduced in 2004-2005 it contained a recommendation to provide school boards with a grant of \$150,000 for each school that had fewer than 100 students. This recommendation was designed to support sustainability of small schools – many of them rural and some isolated.

This recommendation did not apply to schools that were complexed such as Donkin-Gowrie and Mountainview-East Bay.

**Question 5**

How will staffing be affected?

Assuming the students from Donkin-Gowrie were all served at the Donkin School facility in a P-8 instructional environment, staffing formulas and policy directives (e.g.: class cap) will determine the number of staff members to be assigned to the new setting.

Contractual agreements for NSTU and CUPE will govern when it comes to how these positions are filled.

**PROPOSAL 3** All Grade 9 students go to Glace Bay High

**Question 1**

How will staffing be handled?

NSTU - A new local agreement was ratified on May 13, 2014. Teaching staff impacted by school consolidations that may emerge from this process will be covered under Article 11.18.

Supervisory positions impacted by changes that emerge from this process would be covered by Article 10.03.

- CUPE - The current contract deals with reductions in staffing. Seniority is often a major consideration in effecting change in times of change.  
The Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 5050 were provided with information and opportunity for input into the Looking Inward process.  
Human Resources staff will be engaging the union executive in dialogue with respect to how any change can be effectively managed so as to provide the least amount of inconvenience to those involved.

## **Question 2**

Would these changes be for all junior/senior high schools across the Board?

The proposals that are currently under review would see the following if fully instituted by the Board:

Victoria South - Rankin and Baddeck would remain P-12 schools

Victoria North - Cabot would become a 9-12 school  
North highlands and Cape Smokey would become P-8

Northside - Memorial would be 9-12  
- New middle school for Northside to include North Sydney/Sydney

OR

Dr. T. L. Sullivan to house all 6 – 8 students from Northside

OR

P-8 established at Dr. T. L. Sullivan for Florence and include 6-8 from Bras d'or and Boularderie

Riverview - Riverview to remain 10-12 for now  
- Malcolm Munroe to be 7-9 for now  
- MacLennan to become P-8 for Westmount  
- George D. Lewis or Riverside to be P-9 for now

Sydney - Sydney Academy to become 9-12  
- Brookland to become Sydney middle school  
- Harbourside to become P-8 for Whitney Pier

New Waterford - Breton Education Center to be replaced with grade 6-12 school  
- P-5 for all New Waterford and area P-5 students at Greenfield

- Glace Bay
- Glace Bay High to become 9-12
  - OVEC to be middle school 6-8
  - Donkin to become P-8 for Donkin-Gowrie area

### **Question 3**

Would grade 9 students change to semester schedules?

Grade 9 students, while being housed in a high school setting, would not function under a semester schedule.

### **Question 4**

How much of the province has middle schools?

The Annapolis Valley regional School Board is the leader in the introduction to P-5, 6-8, and 9-12 instructional settings with about 75% of its schools set in this fashion.

The Strait Regional School Board, immediately after its inception in 1996 introduced an organizational structure of P-8 education centers and grade 9-12 academics which were operational by 2000.

In March of 2013, the staff of the Halifax Regional School Board recommended to the governing board that hereafter all new schools be 9-12 schools instead of 10-12. This, if adopted and implemented will have a fall down impact on existing junior high schools as well.

### **Question 5**

When you look at the student population provincially, how many are on the semester system?

Almost all of the approximately 80 schools offering high school programs are semester.

**PROPOSAL 4** Reconfigure Oceanview Education Centre to a 6-8 middle school

### **Question 1**

If St. Anne's doesn't remain P-6 there will be empty classrooms. Why can't the students remain at St. Anne's until all the changes are made?

The possible reconfiguration of St. Anne's to a P-5 school would reduce the student population to approximately 260 students if the 2013-2014 enrolment was used in the calculation. This reduction

coupled with the approximately 40% excess capacity that existed in St. Anne's at the time of the release of Looking Inward makes it a possible suitable location for J. B. Croak students as well.

With respect to students remaining at St. Anne's there is no timeframe for the introduction of a change. The facilities plan needs to be developed and put in place by the Board and then decisions on timeframes with respect to implementation can take place. Until then, these are simply proposals that now require reaction and response to assist the Board in making an informed decision.

## **Question 2**

Why aren't school closures discussed?

The Looking Inward process was designed to identify the facilities that the Cape Breton Victoria Regional School Board would require to sustain programs and services for students.

The School Review Process was placed under review by former Minister R. Jennex. The new government permitted the School Review Process to continue. In February, 2014, Bob Fowler presented his report. Minister Casey responded to the report and indicated all 19 recommendations were accepted.

In her response to the report's first recommendation Minister Casey indicated she supported the recommendation to have school boards undertake a long term plan to discuss the future of schools and education delivery at the school board level.

Looking Inward was initiated in 2012 and takes a look at the facilities of the Board with a view to long term facility provision and system sustainability. Looking Inward will provide the framework for the long term plan called for by the Minister in recommendation 1.

The regulations to guide the new school review process have not been developed as yet.

## **Question 3**

The School Review process calls for an independent facilitator. Is this Jim Burton? Is the Department providing a facilitator?

Recommendation 8 in the School Review Report calls for financial support to better assist Boards with the work of the subsystem/family of schools review. The Minister fully supports the recommendation that a facilitator be appointed to support review committees (the facilitator would be appointed by the Board). The Minister indicated that the Department will consider various ways to ensure this support is provided (she did not commit to the funding amount recommended in the report).

Jim Burton drafted the Looking Inward document and has served as a resource person to the board staff in planning and executing the information and consultation phases of the process. He has nothing to do with the facilitator's role called for in recommendation 8 of the School Review Report.

In 2011, he was engaged by the Board to facilitate the school review process by serving as the resource person to assist the communities with information gathering useful in generating a response to the Impact Assessment Report.

#### **Question 4**

Where does our review fit with what Minister Casey said?

Looking Inward is a planning framework for long term facility provision and system sustainability in a time of changing demographics. Student Accommodation Study Groups for each Family of Schools are now reviewing proposals with respect to facilities required by the Board to house students and in which programs and services will be delivered.

The Board expects to develop a long term facility plan that has (through the Looking Inward process) engaged educational stakeholders. This will position the Board to deal with the first requirement under the new School Review Process which is the creation of a long term plan.

#### **PROPOSAL 5** Construction of new P-5 school for all Seaside communities

#### **Question 1**

Why did scenario 31 show up?

The four schools identified in scenario 31 are among the top 20% of older buildings in the system.

Bridgeport	1952 and 1975
J. B. Croak	1974
MacDonald	1964 and 2003
Tompkins	1967

All buildings in this grouping are in need for refurbishment to the buildings and operating systems. MacDonald students have no gym and are served by Bridgeport for Physical Education. A consultant's review was commissioned to establish cost estimates to refurbish each building, to have each building sustain a student population of 275 (2 schools together) as well as an estimate to house a student population of 550.

With cost estimates to breathe new life into aging buildings ranging from 8.56 million to 14.35 million, a stronger business case could be made to consider a new school to serve these schools.

The initial scenario (31) proposed that the 4 schools be consolidated into one new school.

### **Questions 3**

Were some proposals already removed as not an option from the original Looking Inward meeting presentation?

The original Looking Inward presentation was an information session. The document contained 32 scenarios (scenarios 27-32 impacting the Glace Bay Family of Schools). Following a series of focus groups and public sessions the scenarios grew to 82 in number.

Staff of the Board reviewed all of the scenarios and determined how the input received could be transformed into proposals or options. Student Accommodation Study Groups were established to reflect on the proposals/options, provide feedback in the form of a draft report, share your observations and reactions to the proposals with the public served by your Family of Schools and finalize a report for the consideration of the Board.

Each scenario was addressed, some kept, some set aside, and other considerations emerged. In the review of the scenarios and the development of the options/proposals it appeared that St. Anne's would be able to accommodate more students. The option to remove J.B Croak from inclusion in original scenario 31 and consolidate it with St Anne's emerged as a possibility. In responding to this option your study group can identify strengths and weaknesses with respect to this option and include your conclusions in your draft report.

### **Question 4**

There was an interest in learning more about P3 ownership even though there are no P3 schools in the Glace Bay Family of Schools.

- a) Who owns the schools and what effect will they have on school closures.

Ashford Investments, a Nova Scotia numbered company, are the owners of the seven P3 schools operating within the CBVRSB.

P3 schools were leased to the province for twenty years. By November 2016, the province, after receiving information from the Board, needs to identify which schools will be needed as school facilities to serve the Board.

The province has the option to:

- 1) Purchase the school(s)
- 2) Return/surrender the school to the owner
- 3) Extend the lease

b) How many P3 schools do we have in our Board?

There are seven P3 schools in Cape Breton Victoria:

Sherwood Park Education Center  
 Harbourside  
 Greenfield  
 Jubilee  
 Riverside  
 North Highlands  
 Cape Smokey

c) Can the Board decide to close a P3 school?

The Board is responsible to identify the schools it requires to house and serve the students in each Family of Schools and throughout the Board as a whole.

If the Board determines it can provide accommodation for students in board owned schools, it has a responsibility to advise the provincial government (through the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development) that the P3 school is no longer required.

The province who holds the lease with the private sector partner would then surrender the school back to the private sector owner.

The Board does not close the school but it is the Board's responsibility to determine if the school is needed to continue to serve students

### **Question 5**

What is the time frame on the Looking Inward process? When will the changes be complete?

The Student Accommodation Study Groups will complete their work by the fall of 2014. The board will then be in a position to make an informed decision with respect to the establishment of a long term facilities and program delivery plan. This should be completed by April 2015. Actions to be executed will have to be put on a timeline which could span between five and ten years. Decisions on grade level configuration, P3 schools and school capital needs will need to be addressed as well.

**Question 6**

Proposal 5

How will enrolment numbers effect decisions over the next couple of years?

Severe and continuous enrolment decline has contributed to 30 of 52 buildings having excess student capacity greater than 40%.

Over the next five years (including this year) between 1074 and 1378 students are eligible to graduate – going out the door. Incoming students in primary for the past five years has ranged from 860 to 950. It is reasonable to expect these entry level numbers will remain consistent with the numbers of the last five years. As we approach 2020 we expect the gap between those leaving and those entering to narrow to half of what it is today. This too is a projection.

**Question 7**

Does administration (principal) have to support the process?

The principals of all schools within the Board have been informed and engaged in the process since its inception. The principals have supported the process by suggesting six scenarios that were different than the original 32. The principals have identified staff and community members to be part of the focus groups. Principals have identified students to participate in the seven student focus groups that were held across the system. Principals hosted focus groups making their school facilities available for public sessions as well. Principals have identified a number of issues with respect to Grade level configuration and requested that if the grade level configuration changes, professional development activities will need to be instituted to address the concerns.

Principals have and continue to be engaged and offer support to the process.

**Question 8**

Are we doing this for the purpose of students or to fill spaces?

We need to fill the spaces and identify specifically what space is required within the system to house students comfortably and safely while delivering the public school program.

In 2012-2013 the Cape Breton Victoria Regional School Board received \$17,818,960 within the property service funding allocation. It expended \$19,201,829, a shortfall of 1.3 million dollars. This funding came from other budget centers.

As long as funding is being transferred from other cost centers to operations to sustain excess space in school buildings, programs and services to students will remain in jeopardy.

### **Question 9**

What about schools who won't have any changes or cuts. Will they be affected?

There are proposals or options for schools in every one of the Families of Schools (seven Families of Schools).

In the Riverview Family of Schools the issue of grade level configuration cannot be addressed until at least 2016-2017. But within that Family of Schools is

- a complex,
- an opportunity to create one school instead of two in another community,
- a decision on a P3 school's future or refurbishment of a board owned school and
- the possible consolidation of one school with another.

The circumstance in each Family of Schools is different and requires different actions.

### **Question 10**

Who is providing answers to all the questions?

The responsibility to create responses to these questions for information or clarification rests with Jim Burton.

Lewis MacDonald and Paul Oldford generate financial data relating to construction costs and facilitate the acquisition of support services data.

### **Question 11**

What is the cost going to be for these changes?

Much of the information generated to date has been with respect to estimated costs if a proposal was to go forward. For example, the new school project at Breton Education Center is estimated to cost 25 million dollars. This capital money would be provided by the province if this project is approved to go forward.

Some of the cost estimates are being generated now (e.g. Northside proposals). Others will follow.

**PROPOSAL 6****Question 1**

What is the purpose of closing schools if the community is being revitalized?

The J. B. Croak to St. Anne's proposal is a doable proposal from the perspective of St. Anne's being able to accommodate the J. B. Croak student population if it becomes a P-5 school.

No decisions have been made. The Student Accommodation Study Group has the opportunity to identify the strengths and weakness of this proposal and upon analysis of the data determine what should be recommended – with a viable rationale.

If the revitalization of the community is an initiative in progress the information surrounding this initiative could form part of the rationale for retaining a facility.