

**Superintendent's Report - March, 2010**

**Category : Superintendent Report**

**Published by Karen Delaney [[Karen Delaney](#)] on 03/30/2010**

**SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

**MARCH, 2010**

->[Human Resource Services Report](#) ->[Programs and Student Services Report](#)

The primary focus of the educational philosophy of the Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board is academic excellence for all students. This Board has not and will not compromise with mediocrity, no matter what the occasion or excuse. We categorically reject the idea of inadequately funding education to maintain a balanced budget. We have met with our local M.L.A.'s and have emphasized to them that we must maintain the quality of education for the students that are presently in our care as well as to be considerate for students of the future. We have had two years of challenging funding adequacy and we have been alerted to expect the same for the next number of years. While the provincial government maintains that we have a responsibility to come up with answers to advise them how they may create revenues to fulfill our requests, we as a regional board have a greater responsibility to provide services to children in order to fulfill the mandates from the Department of Education in respect to student outcomes. Our responsibility is to effectively use the resources we have to guarantee student success and not to spend precious time and energy on working out revenue-generating strategies for the government of Nova Scotia. Our energy is more appropriately focused on preparing students to be adults in three roles: as educated human beings; knowledgeable and participatory citizens and productive individuals. In summary, the role of board members is to help all students develop to their fullest potential academically, socially, emotionally and physically. The future of this province rests in the quality of the education its youth receives. The partners in education have very clearly stated the purpose of teachers, administrators, parents, guardians and school board members is to guarantee public education as an investment in Nova Scotia's future. We have relied on the "Hogg" formula to ensure the boards that have higher student decline may have some equity and justice dealt to them in order to maintain quality education for the students in their care. Over the next school year, the Department of Education will take a good hard look at this formula which may bring out the worst in the participants who will be more interested in self-revenues than in the more philosophical needs of all students in Nova Scotia. Lastly, I make reference to adequacy. Adequacy is a recognized, common sense method for funding schools that links spending to educational goals and the resources needed to meet them. It seems very simple to understand what resources are needed to achieve these goals. How much do these resources cost? The current system works backwards by looking at the arbitrary amount of money

the government decides to authorize. Then it divides up those dollars using a complicated formula that is based largely on spending levels from the previous year. Unlike adequacy, the current system doesn't link school spending to the real needs of students. We are all in this mission together as a shared passion for our children and for the power of learning and teaching. We are a part of a chain of dedication of students, parents, guardians, classroom teachers, administration and school staff which are held together by links to the school board and finally the Department of Education. My last words on this tonight are that public education is a commitment by the people of Nova Scotia to all of its children. Public education is a provincial responsibility "one that is best discharged through a funding system that recognizes the rights of all Nova Scotia's children for an equitable share of the province's resources in a universally accessible education system. Many resources are used in schools today to teach students. One resource that everyone is familiar with is the classroom textbook. What people might fail to realize, however, is that each textbook must meet certain standards before being adopted for use in a school. To begin with, committees are formed for the purpose of evaluating what is available for each subject area. A textbook selection committee is made up of teachers from various grade levels and course offerings in a subject area, administrators, and parents representing different populations of students. Representatives from a university or a vocational-technical school may also serve on the committee to give advice about expected future trends in a subject area. A committee first evaluates the school's existing curriculum for a subject and gathers information about the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum and about the concerns that parents, teachers, and administrators have. Once the curriculum has been studied and reviewed, committee members develop or update the goals and objectives of the curriculum. Then they begin the process of finding textbooks that meet these goals and objectives. Textbook selection committees use evaluation instruments designed to assist committee members in determining the appropriate textbooks for a curriculum. One of these instruments allows committee members to give weight to categories such as course content, organization of the book, auxiliary materials, readability, physical characteristics and special considerations. By assigning a weight to the categories, committee members place appropriate emphasis on each category. Let's look closer at each of these categories. Course Content: The committee looks to see how well the textbook meets the goals and objectives of the curriculum. Organization of the book: The committee looks for lesson development, type and quality of exercises, and the type of student evaluation program. Auxiliary materials: These assist teachers in presenting lessons. Each textbook is judged on the quality of the supplementary materials as well as the amount and types of materials provided. Readability: The committee looks to see whether directions and explanations are clear and whether the reading level is appropriate. Physical characteristics: Committee members must determine the attractiveness and durability of the book and whether the book is functional. Special considerations: This category involves committee members determining whether the textbook stereotypes any group of people. Once the committee has chosen the textbooks that best meet the requirements of the curriculum, teachers in that subject area evaluate them and choose the one that they feel would be most appropriate. The committee members take all recommendations into consideration when choosing the textbooks that will be used in the teaching of a curriculum. As the textbooks are selected at each grade level, the committee looks for continuity in textbooks from kindergarten through twelfth grade in order to provide a complete program for students. The extent to which a textbook can enrich students' lives and help prepare them for the future is clearly a critical factor in textbook selection. Being able to determine whether a textbook can help students meet the demands of the future requires committee members to carry out research, update their knowledge and stay informed of the recommendations being made at district, state and national levels. Textbook selection is indeed an involved process and one that is taken very seriously by schools. Tonight I direct your attention

to the Board Chair's comments from principals which alert us to the varied successes and celebrations related to our students. Please take some time to read and provide feedback to the schools that have made the effort to contribute these articles. The articles can be viewed on our website: ([www.cbv.ns.ca](http://www.cbv.ns.ca)).