

Highlights of the Regular Board Meeting, March 25, 2013

Category : Board Highlights

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**HIGHLIGHTS OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING
HELD AT John Bernard Croak V.C. Memorial School
March 25, 2013**

On March 25, 2013 the Board met for their Regular monthly meeting.

The meeting began with a correspondence report presented by Mr. George Boudreau, Director of Financial Services and Board Secretary. He noted the correspondence received was from the Office of the Minister with regards to two amendments to the Education Act which was passed during the fall 2012.

The Board was pleased to have in attendance Joey Kennedy, Jesse McLean, Chloe Young, Kolby Campbell and Bethany Snow; a former student who just recently received the Queen's Diamond Jubilee for outstanding service. Woodrow McGrath was in attendance on behalf of the John Bernard Croak Legion. The choir also performed some songs. The students provided a history of the school name. They were proud to demonstrate the heritage of the school name.

Mr. Ambrose White, Superintendent of Schools provided his report. The Cape Breton Victoria Regional School Board is facing a 1.5% reduction in funding for 2013-14 fiscal year. This amounts to \$2,000,600 plus cost pressures which we estimate at another \$2 million for a total of \$4 million. Although the reduction was capped at 1.5%, which we appreciate, the challenges of a \$4 million reduction after the severe cuts of the past two years will be especially difficult for our Board.

Funding Reductions:

2011-12	\$3,374,100
2012-13	\$2,860,000

Non-Funded Cost Pressures	\$3,000,000
TOTAL	\$9,234,000

We have reduced 113.7 teaching positions through attrition and 105.5 non-teaching positions during the past two years to accommodate these reductions. We also reduced non-salaried cost centres in excess of \$850,000.

Our challenge for 2013-14 of approximately \$4,000,000 will be to search every budget line to find savings. We are just starting the budget process and will keep our schools and communities updated as we move through the process.

(the full report of the Superintendent can be found on the Board website)

The Board Chair, Lorne Green followed with an oral report. The report is as follows:

April reminds us to turn our thoughts from the darkness of winter to the brightness of spring. It is time again for all of us to start thinking of the budget for 2013 - 2014. The new budget for the Government of Nova Scotia will soon find the light of day. There are many who forecast a tight budget. Dollars are important to the task of maintaining quality services to our schools and subsequently to our students. We must ensure increased funding to maintain a quality education for our children. It seemed to be the major focus for all of our stakeholders in the Province of Nova Scotia.

A couple of items have transpired since our last meeting that are of significant importance to the Regional Board. He took the opportunity to discuss with the Board and the public the direction the Board is taking in relation to these items.

The Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board has identified the following schools under its jurisdiction for review this year: ->Florence Elementary, Florence ->MacLennan Jr High, Westmount ->Mount Carmel Elementary, New Waterford ->St. Agnes Elementary (including F.J. Angot building), New Waterford

The review of these schools will be undertaken in accordance with the Ministerial Education Act regulations respecting the Public School Review process. Identification reports will be available at the School Board office, at the above mentioned schools and on the board website on April 1, 2013. Along with this identification report we will also be releasing our Looking Inward documents as well.

Lastly: he highlighted the meeting the board had with the Minister of Education. This was an opportunity for board members to hear from her first hand and how we can work together to solve some of the problems the board may be facing this year in light of this year's budget announcement.

Commissioner Parsons presented the NSSBA report on behalf of Commissioner Mercer. . He advised that the NSSBA prepared a report re: the MOU Agreement/Guiding Principles entered into by the Department of Education and the NSSBA in 2007 was discussed by the NSSBA President and the Deputy Minister of Education on February 6, 2013. A session to begin the process of updating the goals, strategies and actions of the NSSBA Strategic Plan took place on March 7, 2012. Input from schools boards related to the NSSBA Governance Structure Proposal of August 2012 was discussed. Resolutions will be further deliberated and voted upon by the delegates at the AGM in May, 2013.