

NRCS SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes-January 5, 2016

TIME: 2:30pm

ATTENDANCE:

Principal: Ms. Willow

Teachers: Ms. Gates, Ms. Handley

Support Staff: Valerie Lenihan

Community Rep: Diane Webber

H &S Rep: Wendy Harvey

Parent Reps: Sheena Isenor, Jennifer Burgess

Student Reps: _____

MINUTES: Oct.29, 2015

Moved by: Ms Gates

Seconded by: Valerie

To accept minutes as read.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Notice for the SAC Education Session being held Feb.02, 2016, at Hebbville Academy 7-9pm.

BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES:

1. **SSRSB Long Range Outlook Report** – updating of this report takes place annually and therefore likely to see changes in Spring 2016. These changes include: Plug into Music room, Preschool room, changes to our stats to reflect factual student registration/birth rate.

2. **Small School Summit** – (further summation attached)

There were 6 speakers for the day:

1. **Mark Austin**-involved in writing the Ivany Report and part of the Nova Scotia Commission on Building our Economy-shared a lot of insight into why rural is not synonymous with “death”
2. & 3. **Wentworth & River John Schools**-both schools were under review sharing their difficulty and direction with the school review process
4. **Paul Bennett**-Director of Schoolhouse consulting-provides research on critical issues in education
5. **Dr. Michael Corbett**-Professor/researcher/author on small schools and communities involvement in rural education
6. **Jody Conrad**-discussed community schools and how it works at FHCS.

All 6 speakers had similar **take home messages**: we have great choices not hard choices to make in N.S. and with school boards, let's figure out ways to generate more without having to cut. Be prepared. Be proactive.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT: attached

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **School Use Agreement** – Memorandum of Understanding between NRCS and NRFRC, was sent via Ms Willow to Brian Smith, have not received feedback from SSRSB. A group in the community would like to explore the option of a community school at NRCS, with pros= the municipality is “on board”, it would open the school to more programs, easier for insurance coverage, yet you would have to make sure there is a community coordinator, and front gate keeper. The current availability of the school is working well with the NRFRC and NRCS partnering, and if no disruption in this, we may be able to explore an “extension/expansion” agreement with FHCS, wherein, if FHCS has an overflow of their programs NRCS absorbs this usage, and designates this as part of the Community Use Agreement of the Chester Family of Schools. The principal is in support of this, and the SAC would like to see the municipality advocate for an extension program.
2. **School by Necessity** – Suggested we approach our government representative (MLA) to advocate for small schools, with incorporating school by necessity into legislature as an example, but exploring other options.

3. **Staffing** – advocating for equality in elementary school vs high school staffing. Suggested we approach our school board representative, Teresa Griffin, to ask for the DOE funding formula and staffing formula for schools. The staffing formula should address inequalities in ie.-prep time/ number of courses taught/student to teacher ratio.
4. **SAC Education Session** – Feb 2, 2016, Hebbville Academy 7-9pm; survey open until January 6, 2015 for feedback from SAC members.

STUDENT REPORT: (from student rep)-deferred

NEW BUISNESS ARISING:

1. Safety Issue- Ms Willow stated there is a huge safety factor with our open stage area, especially for meal times and functions, and feels a removable railing (to the cost of approx \$800) would help with student and public safety. Wendy will draft a letter to send to the SSRSB in support of our principal's request.

2. New Curtains- it has been quite some time since the curtains in the stage area have been replaced, and are now in major disrepair. Options were discussed. Ms Willow & Diane offered to take down the curtains to see how much material would be needed and Wendy will approach community members to assess interest in making these and ask Home & School for funding for new black curtains. The tracking system may also have to be addressed.

3. Equity Grant- through our equity grant, our student athletic fees will be covered for January-June, and leftover funds will help subsidize our Breakfast Program.

NEXT MEETING: **Feb. 16/16 @ 2:30pm**

ADJOURNED: **4:00pm**