

NRCS SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL

Minutes September 22, 2015

ATTENDANCE:

TIME: 2:30pm

Principal: Lindsay Willow

Teachers: Sarah Gates, Jerylyn Handley

Support Staff:

Community rep: Diane Webber

H&S Rep: Wendy Harvey (Chairperson)

Parent reps: Jennifer Burgess, Sheena Isenor (Secretary)

Student reps: none

Invited Guest: Teresa Griffin (SSRSB Board member for District 6)

REGRETS: Valerie Lenihan

MINUTES: For September 22, 2015

Moved by: Diane

Seconded by: Jennifer

To accept minutes; Motion carried.

Introductions & Welcome to our Invited Guest

CORRESPONDENCE:

None

BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES:

1. **School Catchment Area Policy**– Diane, Wendy & Ms Willow attended this meeting held September 30, 2015. All who attended had good feedback about the discussion that ensued. An email correspondence was received Oct 26, 2015, regarding some questions that arose at the meeting-submitted by Ms Willow and attached. There was a feeling that some questions were not fully answered, and some further clarification was provided by Ms Griffin, who stated the catchment area policy was put in place to prevent arbitrary decisions being made regarding school review, and to facilitate long range planning. The question was raised: If it is not connected to the school review policy then the catchment area policy is passing the onus onto the parent group with no financial or administrative support given to the group. Ms Griffin stated to the group that if technical or financial expertise is needed, this will be provided from the SSRSB. The SSRSB wants planning to be initiated from a schools and communities perspective and they do not want communities to feel railroaded. There was discussion surrounding what is happening within the current family of schools, ie. Parkview and Bridgewater review, and that catchment area review has not happened in quite some time and was based on municipal boundaries when there were 21 school boards and defined by municipal districts. Since much amalgamation has taken place, it needs to be looked at again. As we are now ever more centered on our family of schools and supporting one another, Diane suggested we have further dialogue on usage of NRCS as a supportive outlet for the increasing demands that is being put on in our area. Since losing access to the Gold River school, and shortage of gym space at Forest Heights, New Ross Consolidated would be a good alternative to any groups requiring access to gym facilities/meeting space/classroom use, and further partnerships will be explored.

2. **Small School Summit** – feedback from meeting-deferred to next meeting

3. **SSRSB Long Range Outlook** – Ms Griffin stated this is a dynamic report that will be continuously updated as events arise. Ms Willow noted, we have received confirmation that changes to the document have been made regarding New Ross Consolidated being classified as a “school by necessity” and that our statistics will be changed to reflect the current population trends not what was once based on a one time low enrollment of grade primary students. It will also be made clear, we have a designated Plug Into Music Room now being well utilized and that our preschool program now resides at New Ross Consolidated. Discussion ensued regarding next steps to embed “school by necessity” into legislature, and embedding into the Education Act support for community schools. There was also mention that there is a huge discrepancy to how elementary schools are staffed vs. how high schools are staffed, and the need to collectively review this process to make it more equal.

PRINCIPAL’S REPORT:

- Update from Lindsay accompanies these minutes, highlighted at the meeting:
- **Visit to Ross Farm** –our P-8 students engaged with the Ross Farm staff, learning about their heritage through lessons on food and nutrition, which continued into the classroom, and nutritional meal planning. Thank you to Diane Webber, Ross Farm staff and Leanne Webb for all their work in making this a huge success.

- **Otesha Project** – bike group visited our students educating them about the importance of sustainable environmental practices.
- **Embedded Time** – Teachers have been using this time to extremely good use, working very hard to find new ways students can reinforce their math skills at home, and ways to increase student understanding of informational text
- **Grade 3-6 Provincial Assessments**– our students worked hard this month to prepare & take these assessments and we will be awaiting the results
- **Utilization of BINGO funds**- half the money raised went to the cafeteria fund and half the money raised will be used this year to refurbish jerseys. First, will be the elementary teams, the following year will be jr high basketball and softball. Along with jerseys, shorts and socks will also be purchased. The school will be offering a cleat recycling group-to donate your old cleats.
- **Dress Code**- Even though the dress code was not able to be implemented, students were empowered by the process and Ms Willow has reviewed the results from this with them.
- **Tell Them From Me Survey**-NRCS ranked very high in some areas ie. safety/feeling received at the school, but ranked low on engagement in the classroom. Ms Willow has taken the opportunity to ask the gr 5-8's questions around this, to find how we can improve on this area in the future.

STUDENT REPORT – From Student Rep:

None

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **The Big Disconnect**-was suggested by Ms Griffin as a must read book for parents on how to deal with and introduce technology to our children. Ms Willow highlighted the school's involvement with digital citizenship over the last 2 years, and the success it's been.
2. **SAC Suggestions to the SSRSB:** Ms Griffin felt they should be embedded in a formal letter directed to the board & chairperson to be read/discussed & received at the board meeting. These include, the need for orientation of the SAC's and their roles/responsibilities, on a regional level at the start of the school year, school board minutes should be published in a timely manner on their website, etc. To review at the next SAC meeting.

Next SAC Meeting: November 17, 2015 @ 2:30pm **ADJOURNED:** 3:50pm