



DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD OF NIAGARA
Achieving Success Together

**THE MINUTES OF THE
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD OF NIAGARA**

BOARD ROOM - EDUCATION CENTRE April 28, 2008

APRIL 22, 2008

7:00 - 7:30 p.m (Private Session)

7:30 - 10:00 p.m. (Public Session)

ATTENDANCE:

Board: Kevin Maves (Chair), Gary Atamanyk, Lora Campbell, Lynn Campbell, Dalton Clark, Gregg Dame, Liz Fulford, Marcy Heit, Larry Lemelin, Don Love, Barbara Ness

Student

Trustees: Josh Dayboll, Emilia Ling (not present for Committee of the Whole)

Regrets:

Officials: Warren Hoshizaki (Director of Education), Carol Germyn, Sue Greer, Cam Hathaway, Marilyn Hyatt, Linda Kartasinski, Jim Morgan, Jane Roth, John Stainsby, Ardeth Staz, Bob Crawford, Peter Doan, Doug Durant, Brenda Stokes Verworn, Kim Yielding, Karen Bellamy, Marian Lamb

Recording

Secretary: Irene Foster

Technical

Support: Linda Gonschior

A. CALL TO ORDER AND NOTING OF MEMBERS ABSENT

Kevin Maves, Chair, called the Regular Meeting of the Board to order at 7:39 p.m.

Chair Maves welcomed everyone to the meeting.

B. DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No conflicts of interest were declared.

C. COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Moved by Liz Fulford
Seconded by Don Love

"That the Board do now enter Committee of the Whole."

CARRIED

Moved by Lynn Campbell

"That the Board do now return to open meeting."

CARRIED

D. SINGING OF "O CANADA"

The Board stood and sang "O Canada" accompanied on tape by students from Maywood Public School, St. Catharines.

E. OPENING PRAYER OR REFLECTIVE READING

Trustee, Dalton Clark, opened the meeting with a reflective reading.

F. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Moved by Lora Campbell
Seconded by Larry Lemelin

"That the Agenda be adopted as amended."

CARRIED

G. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Moved by Barb Ness
Seconded by Gregg Dame

"That the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the District School Board of Niagara dated April 8, 2008, be confirmed as submitted."

CARRIED

H. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

No business arising.

I. RATIFICATION OF BUSINESS CONDUCTED IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Moved by Marcy Heit
Seconded by Gary Atamanyk

“That the business transacted in Committee of the Whole be now ratified by the Board.”

Staff Matters - Elementary
Staff Matters - Secondary
Staff Matters - Support Staff
Human Resources
Negotiations
Legal/Property Update

CARRIED

J. EDUCATIONAL SHOWCASING OR PRESENTATIONS

1. Edith Cavell Public School - Tonechimes

Jim Morgan, Superintendent of Schools, introduced the showcase which was presented in the Atrium.

Sheila Welsh, Principal, introduced the Edith Cavell Junior Band and Junior Music Instructor, Janine Sardo.

Under the direction of Junior Music Instructor, Janine Sardo, the students performed a selection of Tonechime instrumental pieces.

Kevin Maves, Chair, thanked the staff and students for their performance.

2. Presentation of Cheque to Edith Cavell Public School by the Education Foundation of Niagara

Kevin Maves, Chair, introduced Bill Mozina, President of the Education Foundation of Niagara. Bill Mozina presented a cheque to Edith Cavell Public School on behalf of the Education Foundation of Niagara to assist the school with the Music program.

K. DELEGATIONS

Prior to introducing the Delegations, Chair Maves stated that, as part of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Accommodation Review, the Board has been permitting requests for Delegations from interested community members. Delegations made presentations at the April 8, 2008, Board meeting and presentations will be made again tonight, and then at the May 13, 2008, Board meeting. In order to provide ample opportunity to gather community input and to accommodate the number of requests for Delegations, pursuant to Board By-Law K-2, Chair Maves called a Special Public Meeting of the Board for Monday, May 26, 2008, commencing at 6:00 p.m., for the purpose of exclusively hearing Delegations on the NOTL Accommodation Review. Delegations will be limited to ten minutes. Delegates who have a similar perspective or a common issue were encouraged to co-operate in appointing spokespersons to address the Board, or to simply express support for an earlier presentation, to ensure the presentations are not too repetitive. No further Delegations will be permitted after May 26, 2008.

1. **Joanne Hicks, representing NOTL4R Schools**

Joanne Hicks addressed the Board as a representative of NOTL4R Schools. Ms. Hicks noted that she was the parent representative for Niagara District Secondary School in the Niagara-on-the-Lake Accommodation Review. Ms. Hicks indicated that the Ministry of Education's Accommodation Review guidelines contained the phrase, "the value of the school if it is the only school in the community," whereas, the Accommodation Review Committee guidelines provided by the Board did not. Ms. Hicks stated that the Board's process was questioned by some parents and community members, with suggestions being made that the decision to close Niagara District Secondary School was predetermined by the Board, the process was far too hasty, and some aspects of the process were not transparent, and unfair, leaving townspeople frustrated and not trusting of the Board. Ms. Hicks raised concerns about the lack of discussion of grade configurations and reference to research and data, the noticeable absence of Trustees at the ARC meetings, and the membership and configuration of the Accommodation Review Committee. The option to close Niagara District Secondary School was never supported by the Accommodation Review Committee. The option of "in principle the community requires a high school in Niagara-on-the-Lake," was endorsed by all in the very early stages of the process. Ms. Hicks questioned how the Board Administration Report brought a recommendation forward that was never even discussed, and did not give serious consideration to the negative impact on the community that would result from closing the high school. Ms. Hicks suggested that the Board Administration Report is an argument on how to close Niagara District Secondary School which does not require the Board to address years of flawed policy and favouritism.

DELEGATIONS - continued:

2. **Bernie Slepkov, Independent**

Mr. Slepkov, a resident of St. Catharines, addressed the Board and focussed on the societal implications the Board's decision to close Niagara District Secondary School will have on students in Niagara-on-the-Lake in the coming years, and the principles of SMART growth. Mr. Slepkov questioned how the Board can consider sacrificing the students' quality of education and risk the stability of their communities. Mr. Slepkov outlined the emergence of SMART growth principles since and the importance and positive impact the principles have on communities. Mr. Slepkov indicated that these principles, and emerging issues such as economic upheavals and rising oil prices, validate retaining Niagara District Secondary School with some sort of joint-use or co-location of community services as recommended by the Accommodation Review Committee. Mr. Slepkov provided the Board with relevant case studies that support SMART growth and joint-use facilities. Mr. Slepkov stated that school closures undermine a community's cultural spirit and misdirect students' sense of belonging, and stated that bussing students from Niagara-on-the-Lake raises both environmental and socio-educational issues. Mr. Slepkov concluded by saying that the economic considerations the Board uses for closing Niagara District Secondary School are reflective of outdated, isolated thinking, without consideration given to the principles and objectives of SMART growth. Mr. Slepkov suggested that giving consideration to the principles of SMART growth would lead to exploring recommendations to share community resources, instead of pursuing the closure of Niagara District Secondary School.

3. **Gary Zalepa, Niagara-on-the-Lake Resident**

Mr. Zalepa addressed the Board as a resident and business owner in Niagara-on-the-Lake, and as the parent of two young children attending school in the jurisdiction of the District School Board of Niagara. Mr. Zalepa suggested that the solutions identified by the Accommodation Review Committee are not solid solutions for the community and that the creative solution for the long term sustainability of Niagara-on-the-Lake's community schools is in consolidating physical structures into a community, campus environment. Specifically, closing Parliament Oak, Virgil and Col. John Butler Schools, renovate and expand St. David's/Laura Secord, and build a merged elementary school for old Town and Virgil students on the Niagara District Secondary School site with a new high school. Mr. Zalepa clarified that he was not suggesting a super school, rather, a community based school as a focal point for strengthening the community's social fabric. Mr. Zalepa proposed that this model can be achieved through flexible building design and the use of green construction practices and materials to ensure classroom space for children from JK to Grade 12 for years to come. Mr. Zalepa outlined the benefits of a JK-12 facility for students, the community, and the Board. Mr. Zalepa did not support the Board's options of bussing high school students outside the community. In closing, Mr. Zalepa encouraged the Board to partner with the Town in its efforts to maintain schooling for all students in the community.

DELEGATIONS - continued:

4. **Jamie King, Virgil Parent**

Mr. King addressed the Board as a parent and resident, and began by expressing his commitment for strong public education, and community. Mr. King stated that Niagara District Secondary School plays an important role in the community as it remains the social anchor of the Town and provides a constancy and community connection to the Town. Mr. King appealed to the Board to ensure that whatever decision they make, a viable high school will be part of that recommendation. Mr. King expressed his belief that the review process has been administratively driven, fails to generate any truly progressive concepts for partnership to save the school, and fails to address root issues that contributed to the school's demise. Mr. King cited Eden High School as a contributing factor and suggested that the students be repatriated to Niagara-on-the-Lake through the building of a revitalized high school that would attract them and others back to the community. The high school could include a chapel and adopt a uniform policy and would not negatively affect the viability of Eden. Mr. King also cited the deterioration of Niagara District Secondary School as a factor in declining enrolment, with students choosing to attend other schools. Mr. King suggested that the School Board review demographics with Town planners in terms of anticipated population growth. In addition, the community is a relatively affluent area with a healthy tax base. The cost of \$15 million to build a new high school is the most important investment that can be made in the community. Mr. King implored the Board to recognize viable innovative ways to spend more efficiently in the community and to not bus students to other schools. In closing, Mr. King stated that the children, Niagara-on-the-Lake, and the Region deserve better, and that the Board has an opportunity to reject the Board Administration's recommendation and seek made in Niagara solutions to build a future for public high school education in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

5. **Bryan Moncion, on behalf of Save Our Schools, a community group of parents of elementary school children.**

Mr. Moncion addressed the Board on behalf of "Save Our Schools" – Parents for Neighbourhood Based Schooling. Mr. Moncion stated that "Save Our Schools" actively participated in the Accommodation Review process, and supports the recommendations made by the ARC Committee for JK-8 neighbourhood based elementary schools. Mr. Moncion indicated the group believes that Niagara-on-the-Lake needs a sustainable, high quality high school but not at the expense of the education of all the elementary school children. Saving the existing high school and supporting local elementary schools are two separate and distinct issues. The group recognizes that throughout the ARC process operational efficiencies must be found and to that end they accept that reducing the five elementary schools in Niagara-on-the-Lake to three in the name of good educational practices is a necessary reality to be fiscally responsible. Mr. Moncion addressed the suggestion that in order to save the high school, elementary schools should be Grades JK-6. Mr. Moncion stated that the group believes elementary schools should consist of Grades JK-8 based upon peer reviewed research and discussions with experts at The Ontario Institute for

DELEGATIONS - continued:

Educational Studies at the University of Toronto, which indicate that the optimal learning environment for elementary school children is not in a school that houses all 900 elementary children in a Grades JK-12 setting, or a Grades 7-12 configuration. Research shows that continuing in the same school from JK to Grade 8 enhances the academic and social psychological development of elementary school children. Mr. Moncion also commented on the suggestion of a super school (Grades JK-12) that was not recommended by the ARC Committee or by Senior Board staff. Mr. Moncion stated that the group strongly believes this is not in the children's best educational interest and does not follow the latest research on best educational practice. Mr. Moncion cited a number of situations where School Boards examined grade span configuration and the impact of school size on academic performance. Mr. Moncion questioned how consolidating all the children in one school would benefit children educationally. Mr. Moncion concluded by saying the future of the high school and supporting the existing elementary schools are two separate issues and he urged the Board to keep the issues separate and to not dilute the integrity of the entire system to come up with solutions for a sustainable high school.

6. **Janice Thomson, Executive Director - Niagara-on-the-Lake Chamber of Commerce**

Ms. Thomson expressed confidence that the Board will take the correct action to carry out their duties and fulfill their civic responsibilities, and applauded the Trustees for the care and attention they devoted to their role. Ms. Thomson proceeded to express support for maintaining Niagara District Secondary School by first discussing the importance of community on the development of children and the importance of having community supports in the same town. Ms. Thomson's presentation referenced the practice of allowing Niagara-on-the-Lake students, who elected, to attend other schools out of the community for religious and programming reasons and she noted that having the only secondary school in town operating below capacity is the price the system pays to accommodate the needs of other students. The taxpayers of Niagara-on-the-Lake fund the education system and should be entitled to retain their high school. Ms. Thomson submitted that a full demographic study should be undertaken that takes into consideration the marked growth in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Ms. Thomson referenced the Board's reason to not support Niagara District Secondary School that, while improved programming at Niagara District Secondary School may increase enrolment, this would negatively impact enrolment in St. Catharines and Niagara Falls, and questioned why alternately it is acceptable to drain students from Niagara-on-the-Lake. Ms. Thomson also addressed the impact of bussing students out of the community. Ms. Thomson asked the Board to find ways to keep the school open, not ways to close it, including consideration of offering a Specialist High Skills Major for Agriculture. Ms. Thomson also noted the Fraser Institute's favourable rating of the school for the past five years. In closing, Ms. Thomson suggested that the Board follow best practices, not past practices, to allow students in Niagara-on-the-Lake to continue to benefit from a local high school.

DELEGATIONS - continued:

7. **Jim Walker, on behalf of “Save Our Schools”, a community group of parents of elementary school children**

Mr. Walker addressed the Board on behalf of “Save Our Schools”, a community group of parents of elementary school children that supports the ARC recommendation that the three elementary schools remain open as Grades JK-8. Mr. Walker focussed his discussion on the proposed Grades 7-8 option, which was not supported by the Board Administration Report. Mr. Walker cited research that proves that middle school configurations are not in the best interests of adolescent children and he urged Trustees to review the research. Mr. Walker stated that the Town needs a local high school, however, reconfiguring the elementary schools is not the solution to retain Niagara District Secondary School. The community overwhelmingly supports local JK-8 schools. The group does not support a middle school or a super school.

8. **Mary Towndrow, on behalf of “Save Our Schools,” a community group of parents of elementary school children**

Mary Towndrow addressed the Board on behalf of “Save Our Schools.” Ms. Towndrow stated that the committee’s decision to support community based schooling through the recommendation of maintaining three local elementary schools ensures the type of schooling which attracts the diverse population necessary to sustain a viable, thriving community with all generations as valued members of the Niagara region. Ms. Towndrow also stated that the issue of a viable local high school is equally important, however, the proposed “super school” model is not a viable option. It is necessary to address the issues underlying the declining enrolment and financial viability of Niagara District Secondary School and to give consideration to the rural demographics, the religious composition of the population, and the current academic programs provided at Niagara District Secondary School. Ms. Towndrow stated that failure to provide an academic curriculum which would give all students a solid, broad-based educational foundation ensures that students will not meet basic standards for entrance to post secondary institutions, or that parents will elect to send their children elsewhere. Ms. Towndrow encouraged everyone to work toward creating and sustaining a viable local high school that appeals to the broadest potential population and provides all students with the widest of possibilities for post secondary opportunities. Ms. Towndrow suggested that consideration be given to providing specialty programs, appropriately sizing the facilities, creating a fundamental growth plan, providing strong leadership, and gaining the unified support of both parents and the community.

DELEGATIONS - continued:

9. **Lord Mayor Gary Burroughs, Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake**

Lord Mayor Gary Burroughs addressed the Board. Lord Mayor Burroughs expressed his understanding and appreciation of the dilemma faced by the School Board regarding Niagara District Secondary School and he respectfully submitted that it appears to be a difficult decision mainly because of the lack of sufficient and available funding. Lord Mayor Burroughs continued by saying that having a high school in Niagara-on-the-Lake is an essential and necessary part of providing a sense of community and the more difficult decision is how to fund it. Although staff did what they were asked to do, the report recommending the closure of Niagara District Secondary School is a clinical document with no sense of vision that takes into account what the high school means to the growth, character and development of Niagara-on-the-Lake. The population of Niagara-on-the-Lake is expected to grow to 25,000. With respect to reference in the report regarding the population of the Town and enrolment at Niagara District Secondary School, Lord Mayor Burroughs asked if the demographics have shifted away from school age population, or has bussing and Board policies resulted in the recommendation to close the high school, and, what is the actual cost to bus students out of Niagara-on-the-Lake. Lord Mayor Burroughs also asked if it is reasonable to conclude that the best interests of the students have been subverted by financial and other considerations, given the mandates of the two different committees (Accommodation Review Committee and Board Staff) and processes. Lord Mayor Burroughs noted that the staff recommendation seemed to focus on how the cost to build a new high school would deplete the Board's capital reserves. However, the report did not indicate if the capital reserves can be replenished by considering various available options, and, the report did not consider annual operating funds that would become available by revisiting the current practice of bussing students out of Niagara-on-the-Lake. Lord Mayor Burroughs requested a capital reserve analysis for the past ten years to understand where funds are coming from and where they are allocated. Lord Mayor Burroughs noted the residents' contribution to education through property taxes and income taxes. Lord Mayor Burroughs respectfully submitted that the high school is in the condition it is because policies and decisions made over the years have created an environment leading to the demise of the high school. Lord Mayor Burroughs reported that Council for the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake feels strongly about ensuring the continued viability of a local high school and have passed a motion that the Lord Mayor and CEO of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake meet with Kim Craitor, MPP, representatives from the Ministry of Education, and the Chair, Vice-Chair, and CEO of the District School Board of Niagara to further discuss why it is essential to maintain a viable high school in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Lord Mayor Burroughs concluded by respectfully requesting the Board to instruct senior staff to develop options for a viable and sustainable high school in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

DELEGATIONS - continued:

10. **Alan Teichman, Parent - Queen Mary/St. Catharines Collegiate "School Within A School" proposal**

Mr. Teichman addressed the Board with respect to the Queen Mary/St. Catharines Collegiate "School Within A School" proposal. Mr. Teichman summarized his family's involvement with the Gifted Program at Queen Mary Public School and expressed his enormous appreciation for the program. Mr. Teichman thanked St. Catharines Collegiate Principal, Tracy Sacco, for giving of her time to discuss the proposal with him. Mr. Teichman noted that the general consensus of research is that there is little, if any, definitive primary research on the relative merits of grade span configurations. However, what does emerge from the research is universal agreement on the disadvantages of transition, in that certain academic and social setback is inevitable. Mr. Teichman expressed his concern about the impact of the transition on the children, and asked what will the Board provide, require and promise to ensure the students' Grade 8 year in the Gifted Program will be the peak of their Gifted experience, and not diminished through all of the transitions.

L. BOARD RECESS

The Board recessed from 9:40 p.m. - 9:55 p.m..

M. OLD BUSINESS

1. ACCOUNTS

Moved by Dalton Clark
Seconded by Gregg Dame

"That the summary of accounts paid in batch numbers 0534 to 0537 for the month of March 2008 totalling \$15,223,845.32 be received."

CARRIED

2. REPORT OF THE PROGRAM AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

Moved by Marcy Heit
Seconded by Liz Fulford

"That the report of the Program and Planning Committee dated April 1, 2008, be received and the recommendations adopted."

OLD BUSINESS - continued:

REPORT OF THE PROGRAM AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

School Year Calendar

“That the Program and Planning Committee recommend to the Board that the 2008-2009 School Year Calendar be approved.”

Queen Mary Public School

“That the Board approve the Board staff recommendation of a “School Within A School,” for the Queen Mary Public School population and that necessary renovations be completed at St. Catharines Collegiate, with an anticipated relocation date of September 2009.”

CARRIED

Trustee, Marcy Heit, reported that the proposed 2008-2009 School Year Calendar was presented, and, if approved by the Board, will go to the Ministry of Education for approval.

Trustee Heit reported that the Committee considered the recommendation for a “School Within A School” at St. Catharines Collegiate for the Queen Mary Public School population. Trustee Heit reminded the Board that Queen Mary Public School was listed as prohibitive to repair, however, the Ministry of Education indicated that monies are available if that population is relocated within a designated radius. Trustee Heit commended staff for the report and acknowledged Principals Tracy Sacco and Tom Nicholls for providing information to parents, School Councils and the feeder schools. Trustee Heit outlined the steps taken in the review process, which included providing parents with an opportunity to comment and provide input. Trustee Heit emphasized that a transition team will be vital to address issues that will arise during the relocation process. Trustee Heit expressed confidence that the transition team will ensure the relocation is as positive as it can be for students and parents. Implementation is anticipated for September 2009.

3. REPORT OF THE SUPERVISED ALTERNATIVE LEARNING FOR EXCUSED PUPILS (SALEP) COMMITTEE

Moved by Larry Lemelin

Seconded by Don Love

“That the report of the Supervised Alternative Learning for Excused Pupils (SALEP) Committee dated April 7, 2008, be received.”

CARRIED

Trustee, Larry Lemelin, reported that two cases were reviewed by the Committee with recommendations and plans developed that will benefit the students.

OLD BUSINESS - continued:

4. REPORT OF THE SCHOOL COUNCIL LIAISON COMMITTEE

Moved by Barb Ness

Seconded by Lynn Campbell

“That the report of the School Council Liaison Committee dated April 10, 2008, be received.”

CARRIED

Trustee, Barb Ness, reported that the Committee enjoyed a presentation by Leslie Andrew entitled “Against All Odds.” Trustee Ness also reported that members of the Education Foundation of Niagara (EFN) made a presentation on the fundraising initiatives of the EFN. Discussion took place on planning for the 2008 parent conference. It was agreed that the conference will be scheduled for the evening of November 5th or 6th, 2008, and the St. Catharines Collegiate will be asked to host the event.

5. REPORT OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SEAC)

**Moved by Don Love
Seconded by Liz Fulford**

“That the report of the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) dated April 10, 2008, be received.”

CARRIED

Trustee, Don Love, reported that the Committee joined the School Council Liaison Committee in enjoying the presentation by Leslie Andrew. Trustee Love reported that the Committee reviewed and discussed the draft Special Education Budget presented by Superintendent, Marilyn Hyatt. Discussion also took place on the Ministry of Education’s review. Trustee Love commended the community members on the Committee for their input and participating in discussions with the Ministry. Further discussion will take place with the Educational Assistants’ focus group and the Ministry will prepare a report thereafter.

6. REPORT OF THE POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

**Moved by Gary Atamanyk
Seconded by Gregg Dame**

“That the report of the Policy Advisory Committee dated April 15, 2008, be received and the recommendations adopted.”

OLD BUSINESS - continued:

REPORT OF THE POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Policy J-1: Transportation Eligibility and Service

“That Policy J-1: Transportation Eligibility and Service, be approved with no revision by the Policy Advisory Committee.”

Policy G-16: Administering Emergency Health Services to Students

“That Policy G-16: Administering Emergency Health Services to Students, be approved with revisions by the Policy Advisory Committee.”

Policy G-17: Provision of Health Support Services to Students

“That Policy G-17: Provision of Health Support Services to Students, be approved with revisions by the Policy Advisory Committee.”

Policy G-18: Anaphylaxis (Severe Allergies)

“That Policy G-18: Anaphylaxis (Severe Allergies), be approved with revisions by the Policy Advisory Committee.”

Policy F-6: Security Surveillance: Progress Update

“That the Policy Advisory Committee investigate the financial implication of installing video security surveillance in some or all DSBN schools.”

CARRIED

Trustee, Gary Atamanyk, provided the following verbal report:

- Policy J-1: Transportation Eligibility and Service, which sets out eligibility for transportation for day schools students is recommended for approval.
- Policy G-16: Administering Emergency Health Services to Students, which deals with severe allergic reactions is recommended for approval with revisions. The Policy will require that system transportation providers must now also know emergency plan procedures.
- Policy G-17: Provision of Health Support Services to Students, is recommended for approval with revisions. The revised Policy permits the use by staff of epinephrine autoinjectors, to avoid the possibility of endorsing any specific brand name.
- Policy G-18: Anaphylaxis (Severe Allergies), is recommended for approval with revisions. The revisions include a preamble statement to reflect compliance with Sabrina’s Law, 2005, and the requirement that system transportation providers are made aware of students’ Emergency Action Plans.
- Policy F-6: Security Surveillance: Progress Update - it is recommended that the Policy Advisory Committee investigate the financial implication of installing video security surveillance in some or all DSBN schools.

OLD BUSINESS - continued:

REPORT OF THE POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Trustee, Marcy Heit, suggested that the statement “would” close the gap in the Committee report on Policy J-1: Transportation Eligibility and Service, read “should”

close the gap. Trustee Atamanyk replied that it is speculation at this time that Efficiency Effectiveness Review would close the gap.

Trustee, Marcy Heit, asked whose responsibility it is to make system transportation providers aware of students' Emergency Action Plans, and how will it be implemented? Superintendent, Cam Hathaway, replied that the transportation providers have asked that schools provide them with a list of anaphylactic students and elementary school Principals have been informing individual bus drivers. Brenda Stokes Verworn added that the Freedom of Information legislation provides for an exception that enables the sharing of medical information with bus transportation providers.

Trustee, Marcy Heit, recalled that the issue of surveillance was previously discussed by the Board, however, at that time it was reported the costs associated with vandalism were not exorbitant compared to the cost of installing surveillance equipment. Trustee Atamanyk replied that as costs associated with vandalism increase, the installation costs of surveillance equipment becomes practical. Trustee, Liz Fulford, added that the discussion at Committee was in reference to safety, not vandalism.

Trustee, Don Love, suggested that consideration be given to alternative security measures, such as a buzzer system to allow controlled entry into a school.

7. REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Moved by Dalton Clark

Seconded by Lora Campbell

“That the report of the Finance Committee dated April 16, 2008, be received and the recommendations adopted.”

Tender Results - Renovations to Simcoe Street School

“That the low tender received from Merit Contractors of Niagara, in the amount of \$391,500 (plus GST), be accepted and a contract awarded for the Renovations to Simcoe Street School project.”

Tender Results - New Front Entrance to Port Colborne High School

“That the low tender received from Bromac Construction & Engineering, in the amount of \$600,000 (plus GST), be accepted and a contract awarded for the New Front Entrance to Port Colborne High School project.”

OLD BUSINESS - continued:

REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Tender Results - Accessibility Improvements to Kernahan Park Secondary School

“That the low tender received from Brouwer Construction Ltd., in the amount of \$335,900 (plus GST), be accepted and a contract awarded for the Accessibility Improvements to Kernahan Park Secondary School project.”

Finance Committee Meeting Dates

“That the Finance Committee meeting date be revised to take place on the third Wednesday of the month.”

CARRIED

Trustee, Dalton Clark, provided a verbal summary of the Committee’s review of tenders submitted for renovations and improvements at Simcoe Street Public School, Port Colborne High School, and Kernahan Park Secondary School.

Trustee Clark reported that Superintendent, Jane Roth, gave an update on the 2008-2009 Grants for Student Needs as recently announced by the Ministry of Education. Trustee Clark noted that a number of initiatives will now be funded in the Grants for Student Needs ensuring funding on an ongoing basis. Increased funding will be made available for First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education, as well as an increase in non-salary bench marks and transportation. Trustee Clark added that there will be challenges in balancing the budget and it is hoped there will be a favourable response from the Ministry on Special Education funding.

Trustee, Dalton Clark, reported that the Committee revised its meeting date to the third Wednesday of the month, noting that it is difficult to get reports prepared in a timely manner for inclusion in the Board agenda package following a Thursday meeting. Following discussion by the Committee, it was determined that Wednesday was the best alternative. Trustee, Lora Campbell, confirmed for Trustee Fulford that the meeting date of the Finance Committee is not a By-Law issue.

Trustee Clark noted that adjusting the travel allowance due to increased fuel costs will be determined in September.

Trustee, Marcy Heit, asked if the Board is considering the use of an Outreach Coordinator to enhance community use of schools. Trustee, Dalton Clark, replied that any funding for community use of schools may be used to reduce rental costs. Superintendent, Jane Roth, clarified that the Ministry has not provided any specific direction with respect to community use of schools funding and that the Board will not make a decision on allocating that funding until guidelines are received from the Ministry and reviewed.

N. QUESTIONS ASKED OF AND BY BOARD MEMBERS

1. Chair, Kevin Maves, stated that a response to the question raised by Mr. Alan Teichman in his presentation regarding the Board’s Queen Mary/St. Catharines Collegiate “School Within A School” proposal will be provided through the Director’s Office.

2. Trustee, Dalton Clark, commented on the Delegations' reference to the Fraser Institute's rating. Trustee Clark explained that the ratings are based on the number of students at a particular school who are taking university bound courses, therefore, a school with a larger number of students enrolled in school to work level courses would be rated lower. The result is that very fine schools receive low ratings under the Fraser Institute rating scale. Trustee Clark explained that the methods used for rating a school do not factor in the quality of education, but rather where the education is leading in terms of post secondary opportunities.

Chair Maves agreed that too much reliance should not be put on the Fraser Institute rating scale.

In response to Trustee Lemelin's request for information on the criteria used by the Fraser Institute in rating a school, Chair Maves indicated that information will be provided through the Program and Planning Committee.

Trustee, Lynn Campbell, asked when the Delegations can expect a response to their questions. Chair Maves replied that responses to questions posed to staff can be accessed from a number of sources, including the Accommodation Review Committee Report, the Accommodation Review Board Administration Report, and the parking lot on the Board's website. Chair Maves acknowledged staff for the considerable amount of time dedicated to providing a response to the questions posed and making the resources available. Director Hoshizaki added that questions raised at the April 8, 2008, Board meeting are addressed in Superintendent Kartasinski's update tonight. More specific questions can be submitted to the Director's office.

3. In response to Lord Mayor Burroughs' presentation, Trustee, Liz Fulford, asked if there will be a review of cost sharing. Director, Warren Hoshizaki, replied that a meeting has been scheduled with the Town Council as requested by the Town.

O. NEW BUSINESS

1. Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA)

Trustee, Don Love, read a letter dated April 8, 2008, to The Honourable Kathleen Wynne, Minister of Education, from OPSBA, with respect to the issue of mercury contamination in high schools. Trustee Love acknowledged Trustee, Gary Atamanyk, for being instrumental in bringing this issue to the attention of OPSBA.

NEW BUSINESS - continued:

Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA)

Trustee Love reported that a Central West Regional Council Meeting was held on Saturday, April 19, 2008, in Hamilton, where a presentation was made on child poverty. Discussion also took place on a satisfaction survey of Trustees, which is currently in the planning stages. A question was raised at the Council Meeting

about the source of funding for this initiative. Trustee Love added that the Director's meeting will be held in Toronto on April 25/26, 2008.

Trustee Love reported that he has contacted Bob Rippey, former Chair of the District School Board of Niagara's predecessor Board, to extend an invitation to attend OPSBA's 20 year anniversary Annual General Meeting in June. Mr. Rippey was instrumental in bringing all three school associations together to form OPSBA. Chair Maves added that he discussed Mr. Rippey's contributions to OPSBA and the Planning Committee has indicated that OPSBA will be pleased to recognize Mr. Rippey at the AGM. OPSBA will be informed of Mr. Rippey's willingness to attend.

Trustee, Barb Ness, reported that at OPSBA's recent Regional Council meeting, the DSNB was commended for its role in planning and hosting the AGM. Chair Maves credited Karen Bellamy and Marian Lamb of the Director's Office, for doing most of the work.

**Moved by Lora Campbell
Seconded by Marcy Heit**

"That Trustee, Donald Love, be appointed as the District School Board of Niagara's Director on the OPSBA Board of Directors, and that Trustee, Gregg Dame, be appointed as Alternate Director, for the period June 2008 to June 2009."

and

"That Trustee, Donald Love, be appointed as the District School Board of Niagara's OPSBA Voting Delegate, and that Trustee, Gregg Dame, be appointed as Alternate Delegate, for the OPSBA Annual General Meeting and at Regional Council Meetings and at meetings in Toronto."

CARRIED

Trustee Love commended Trustee, Larry Lemelin, for serving the interests of the Board at OPSBA this past year.

MOTION TO EXTEND THE BOARD MEETING

Chair Maves stated that the Board meeting will run past 11:00 p.m. and, in accordance with the Board's By-Laws, it is necessary for the Board to pass a motion to conduct the business of the Board after 11:00 p.m.

**Moved by Barb Ness
Seconded by Lynn Campbell**

“That the meeting of the Board extend beyond 11:00 p.m.”

CARRIED

P. INFORMATION AND PROPOSALS

1. Trustee Information Sessions

Trustees participated in a Trustee Information Session prior to the Board meeting, entitled “Math Proposal.” Trustees were provided with information on S.U.M. (Supporting Understanding in Mathematics), a Kindergarten to Grade 6 initiative, which has impacted student achievement in our Board and attracted international attention.

Trustees were asked to forward suggestions for future information sessions to the Director’s Office.

2. Staff Reports

Niagara-on-the-Lake Accommodation Review Follow-Up Report on the Niagara-on-the-Lake Accommodation Review Board Administration Report

Superintendent, Linda Kartasinski, provided an update on the Niagara-on-the-Lake Accommodation Review Board Administration Report. Superintendent Kartasinski reported that, as requested by the Trustees, answers are provided to questions related to the staff report on the NOTL Accommodation Review. Additional information was provided on feedback from parents who sent their children to a school other than Niagara District Secondary School, and on transportation. Superintendent Kartasinski noted that 68% of the respondents were dissatisfied with the school’s limitations in course selection, with only 3 of 44 responses mentioning the facility. Superintendent Kartasinski reminded the Board that transportation is provided to other schools for specific system-wide programs only and some students are provided with courtesy transportation if there is space on the bus. Students making alternate requests are responsible for providing their own transportation.

INFORMATION AND PROPOSALS - continued:

Staff Reports

Superintendent Kartasinski noted that the total estimated education property taxes to be received from the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake (2007-2008 school budget year) is \$7.861 million, and the cost to educate students residing in Niagara-on-the-Lake is \$12.566 million. Trustee, Dalton Clark, noted that a Delegation made reference to monies received from the government from income taxes and he stated that the figures provided suggest it costs more to

educate the students from Niagara-on-the-Lake than the Board receives from the community. Superintendent, Jane Roth, replied that the information addresses the question that was put forward, "What is the total assessment based revenue received by the Board?" Superintendent Roth added that staff can only provide information on property education taxes as it has no knowledge of the source of funding allocated to the Board by the province from other taxation sources.

Trustee, Lynn Campbell, asked for clarification on the 65% graduate rate from Niagara District Secondary School. Superintendent Kartasinski replied that the 65% represents the number of students that graduate from the school in the four year period, and not the percentage of graduating students that attend post secondary education.

Trustee, Lynn Campbell, asked for a costing on the two-school campus option that was reviewed but did not come forward as a recommendation. Trustee, Lynn Campbell, clarified that she was responding to the public's enquiry of the cost of alternative options that were raised during the review process, not proposing a new recommendation. Superintendent Kartasinski indicated that an option similar to the option proposed by the Delegations was reviewed but did not come forward because it was not considered to be viable. Director, Warren Hoshizaki, indicated that information compiled by staff on similar options that were considered when bringing the staff report forward will be provided to Trustees at the direction of the Board.

Trustee, Marcy Heit, asked for clarification on who she should direct individual questions to. Director Hoshizaki replied that responses to individual questions can be provided through Superintendent Kartasinski's office, however, questions that the Board requests responses to are to be submitted to the Director's office.

Chair Maves clarified for Trustee, Larry Lemelin, that the information to be provided by senior staff is information that was previously completed as part of developing the staff report.

3. Correspondence and Communications

- (a) Superior-Greenstone District School Board - letter in support of DSBN request for amendments to Special Education Funding.

INFORMATION AND PROPOSALS - continued:

4. Trustee Communications

- (a) Amendment to DSBN Board By-Law J-1: Inaugural Meeting of the Board

Chair Maves reminded the Board that notice was given at the April 8, 2008, Board meeting that the following recommended motion will be made at the April 22, 2008, Board meeting.

Moved by Marcy Heit

Seconded by Larry Lemelin

“That in accordance with By-Law Q-2, the following recommended amendment to the By-Laws of the District School Board of Niagara be approved, with such amendment to take effect April 23, 2008.”

J-1 In each municipal election year, the Inaugural Meeting of the Board shall be held on the first Board meeting in December following the Organization Meeting, at the hour of 7:00 p.m. for Committee of the Whole and 7:30 p.m. for the regular Board meeting, public session, unless otherwise determined by Board motion.

CARRIED

Brenda Stokes Verworn, Board Lawyer, clarified for Trustees, Barb Ness and Liz Fulford, that the Organization Meeting is held on the first Tuesday in December and the amendment does not preclude the annual election for Chair and Vice-Chair.

Chair Maves confirmed for Trustee, Gary Atamanyk, that an Inaugural Meeting will only be held in a municipal election year.

- (b) Trustee, Larry Lemelin, extended an invitation to attend Welland Centennial Secondary School's upcoming musical production, "Anything Goes" on May 1-3 and May 8/9, 2008. Trustee Lemelin commended the staff and students for all their hard work both on stage and behind the scenes. Trustee Lemelin noted that a dinner theatre package is available for opening night, May 1st.
- (c) Trustee, Marcy Heit, extended congratulations to Governor Simcoe Secondary School's Simbotics team on winning the World Championship at the recent annual FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) Championship in Atlanta, Georgia. Director, Warren Hoshizaki, noted the event was a tremendous experience for everyone involved. Director Hoshizaki acknowledged the outstanding partnership with General Motors Canada.

INFORMATION AND PROPOSALS - continued:

Trustee Communications

- (d) Student Trustee, Emilia Ling, noted that Sir Winston Churchill Secondary School is presenting a musical production of "The Wizard of Oz" on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, April 24, 25, 26, 2008.
- (e) Trustee, Larry Lemelin, reported that he attended the recent "Search for Great Kids of South Niagara Gala" which recognizes children for their community contributions. Students from the District School Board of Niagara were well represented as semifinalists.

Q. FUTURE MEETINGS

Schedule of May 2008 Meetings

Trustee Ness reminded the Board of the May 7th School Council Liaison Committee meeting at Fort Erie Secondary School. Trustees were invited to attend the school's Pomegrante Restaurant and interested Trustees were asked to confirm their attendance with Superintendent Ardeth Staz's office.

Brenda Stokes Verworn gave a reminder of the Special Board Meeting on Monday, May 26th commencing at 6:00 p.m.

R. ADJOURNMENT

**Moved by Barb Ness
Seconded by Lynn Campbell**

"That this meeting of the District School Board of Niagara be now adjourned."

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 11:25 p.m.

KEVIN MAVES
Chair

WARREN HOSHIZAKI
Director of Education and Secretary