

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE
BATTLE RIVER REGIONAL DIVISION #31, HELD ON MARCH 28, 2002,
COMMENCING AT 9:37 A.M.**

PRESENT

JUDY FITZMAURICE-JOHNSON (arrived at 9:39 a.m. and left at 3:31 p.m.)
BRENDA HERDER
GERRY OBERG (left the meeting at 5:07 p.m.)
GWENDA POYSER
BILL SEARS
WAYNE THRONDSO (arrived at 9:44 a.m.)
PATRICIA ZENIUK

ABSENT

MICHELE MULDER

ALSO PRESENT

WARREN PHILLIPS, Acting Superintendent of Schools
BILL SCHULTE, Secretary-Treasurer
SYLVIA LAUBER, Recording Secretary

G. POYSER IN THE CHAIR

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

#62/02 G. OBERG – That the following items be added to the agenda:

In-Camera Session

7. Financial Statements
8. Letter from Superintendent of Schools

New Business

8. Request by Edberg School – Day Off In Lieu of Staff Meetings
9. Draft Policy HHBA ‘Classroom Learning Conditions’
10. Edwin Parr Award
11. Provision of Voluntary Services
12. Request from Grande Prairie School District
13. Presentation – C. W. Sears and Tofield School Councils
14. Principal Presentations (CCHS, Charlie Killam, Sifton, PACE Outreach Schools)

CARRIED

POLICY IECB 'ADMISSION OF EXCHANGE STUDENTS'

Dr. Phillips, Acting Superintendent, informed Trustees that at the meeting of the Superintendent's Advisory Council held on March 12, 2002, a concern was brought forward with respect to the number of foreign students attending schools in Battle River Regional Division #31 under the umbrella of policy IECB 'Admission of Exchange Students'. It was noted that very few Battle River Regional Division #31 students reciprocate.

- #63/02 G. OBERG – That policy IECB 'Admission of Exchange Students' be amended to include the following: that a fee be charged for nonreciprocal 'exchange' students and that this fee be 2/3 that of foreign student fees; that this fee be phased in for the 2002-03 school year at 50% of the above-noted fee; and that all foreign students entering Battle River Regional Division #31 schools under this policy shall have their accommodation arranged prior to registering at a school..

CARRIED

REQUEST FROM EDBERG SCHOOL COUNCIL – DAY OFF IN LIEU OF STAFF MEETINGS

The Edberg School Council sent a letter of request to the Board to have the Staff Meeting, which is currently scheduled for every third Tuesday of the month beginning at 11:50 a.m., changed to create one Friday off school per month. In order to do this, the current school day would have to be extended by approximately 15 minutes.

- #64/02 W. THRONDSOEN – That, given the possible concern with busing with respect to staff meeting days, and in order to maintain continuity in the Division, the Board denies the request from the Edberg School Council to change the staff meeting day from the third Tuesday of every month to one Friday every month.
- #65/02 B. SEARS – That motion #64/02 be tabled for the purpose of seeking further information on the ramifications of approving the request of the Edberg School Council.

CARRIED

DELEGATION – C. W. SEARS AND TOFIELD SCHOOL COUNCILS (10:10 a.m.)

At 10:10 a.m., Chairman Poyser welcomed Terry Stauffer, Christy Rude, Joanne North, and a student, to the meeting and invited their presentation. Christy Rude served as spokesperson.

Ms Rude questioned the Trustees with respect to the busing if the proposal by the Round Hill School Council for moving the boundaries is approved. Will the people that want their children to continue to attend C. W. Sears or Tofield Schools be provided busing to those schools? She indicated her preference to have her child continue to attend C. W. Sears School.

Chairman Poyser responded that in the past, when such a motion was made, a 'grandfathering' clause was included which meant that those already attending a school when the boundary change occurred would not be affected.

Trustee Zeniuk noted that when the Round Hill School Council brought this proposal forward, the 'grandfathering' clause was very important, as they did not want students to be forced to attend Round Hill School if that was not their wish.

Ms Rude noted that they live on the north edge of the proposed boundary change and considered sending their children to Round Hill School. They chose, however to send their children to Tofield as that is their social and trade community. Ms Rude indicated that their children can walk from school to the various community activities and also that they have family support in Tofield. Ms Rude mentioned the concerns expressed to her by another parent of high school students having to attend a different school if they would be directed to attend Round Hill School for elementary and junior high school. They would want to ensure the continuance of bus gate service for students attending Tofield High School. Ms Rude noted that the delegation was representing C. W. Sears and Tofield School Councils as well as presenting their own personal preferences. There would be 8 students in ECS – grade four, and 14 students from grades 5-12 that would be affected by the boundary change. This means a declining enrolment for the two schools in Tofield. For all the reasons Round Hill School Council wants these students, the Tofield School Councils do not want to lose these students.

In response to the question of whether they could say the current boundary line is fair, the delegation agreed that the boundary north of the Round Hill School does not seem fair. People in the first two or three miles would likely agree to the change, but since they are on the more northern end of the boundary, they would prefer Tofield as that is their community, Round Hill is not.

Trustee Zeniuk noted that when the Round Hill School Council started working with the proposal, the main concern they had is that the boundary is not geographically fair. This is an old county line and Round Hill is the only school in the region that has such a close boundary line. The proposal does suggest 'grandfathering' and that the Tofield students should return to Tofield school for high school.

In response to a question of how the Tofield School Councils would respond if, in that area, the buses ran so that students could go to either Round Hill School or Tofield Schools at parental choice. Ms Rude indicated that she believed that the School Councils would want to be fair and that might possibly be a fair way to go, however she was not sure how transportation would work.

A delegation member questioned Trustees with respect to 'grandfathering', wanting to know if that would include only the current family, or if a son or daughter should wish to remain on the family farm, would they also be 'grandfathered'? The response was that this usually

applies only to the current family. The delegation suggested that the Board should permit any family to move in and have choice.

Chairman Poyser expressed her appreciation for the views presented.

The delegation left the meeting at 10:32 a.m.

MEETING RECESS (10:32 a.m.)

The regular meeting recessed at 10:32 a.m. and reconvened at 10:45 a.m.

ROUND HILL SCHOOL COUNCIL REQUEST – TRANSPORTATION/ATTENDANCE BOUNDARIES

#66/02 P. ZENIUK – That, effective with the start of the 2002-03 school year, the Board moves the Round Hill School attendance/transportation area boundary to the North Miquelon Lake Road making the boundary between Round Hill and Tofield approximately half way geographically; that the children of families in this area who wish to continue attending C. W. Sears and Tofield Schools be ‘grandfathered’; and further that students in this area be directed to Tofield School for their high school.

#67/02 W. THRONDSO – That motion #66/02 be tabled until 1:15 p.m.

CARRIED

DRAFT POLICY HHBA ‘CLASSROOM LEARNING CONDITIONS’

#68/02 P. ZENIUK – That the Board approves, in principle, draft policy HHBA ‘Classroom Learning Conditions’; that this draft be sent out to school staffs and councils for input, and further that the responses to returned to the Superintendent by May 3, 2002.

CARRIED

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES – ESTABLISHMENT OF AN “INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM ENHANCEMENT FUND”

#69/02 W. THRONDSO – That the Board accepts for distribution the *Administrative Procedures* related to the Establishment of an “Instructional Program Enhancement Fund”.

CARRIED

MEETING RECESS (12:05 p.m.)

The regular meeting recessed at 12:05 p.m. and reconvened at 1:19 p.m.

At 1:19 p.m., Stephen Smith, Deputy Superintendent, joined the meeting.

Brenda Johnson, Director of Transportation, joined the meeting at 1:19 p.m. and left the meeting at 1:22 p.m.

LIFTING OF MOTION #66/02 FROM THE TABLE

#70/02 W. THRONDSOON – That motion #66/02 be lifted from the table. CARRIED

#66/02 P. ZENIUK - That, effective with the start of the 2002-03 school year, the Board moves the Round Hill School attendance/transportation area boundary to the North Miquelon Lake Road making the boundary between Round Hill and Tofield approximately half way geographically; that the children of families in this area who wish to continue attending C. W. Sears and Tofield Schools be 'grandfathered'; and further that students in this area be directed to Tofield School for their high school. CARRIED

ACADEMIC CORE TEAM

#71/02 G. OBERG – That, effective with the 2002-03 school year, the Board approves the transfer \$152,000 of AISI (Alberta School Improvement Initiative) funds from the Staff Development fund to the Academic Core Team (ACT) fund. CARRIED

EDWIN PARR AWARD

Dr. Phillips noted that four first-year teachers in Battle River Regional Division #31 have been identified as possible candidates for the Edwin Parr Award. A recommendation for nomination of one teacher will be brought to the April 10, 2002 Board meeting.

PRESENTATIONS – PRINCIPALS

Chairman Poyser welcomed Max Lindstrand, Principal at CCHS; Jim Kuchera, Principal at Charlie Killam School; Kerry LaBerge, Principal at the PACE Outreach School; and Richard Payne, Principal at Sifton School, to the meeting and invited their presentations. Each principal was invited by the Acting Superintendent to bring to the Board their views on the impact the various re-configuration scenarios would have on their school.

Dr. Phillips noted that the Board is facing a major decision with the possible closure of the junior high program at Sifton School. Associated with this decision are a number of other decisions with respect to the configurations of other schools in Camrose.

Richard Payne, Principal at the Sifton School, expressed his appreciation for being invited to speak on this issue. Mr. Payne's presentation notes are attached to, and form a part of, these minutes.

Jim Kuchera, Principal of Charlie Killam School, also thanked the Board for the opportunity to present information. Mr. Kuchera presented information outlining the positives and negatives of various scenarios. Mr. Kuchera's presentation notes are attached to, and form a part of, these minutes.

Max Lindstrand, Principal at CCHS, noted that the issues the Board is dealing with are not easy issues. Mr. Lindstrand noted that the grade nine program has been at CCHS for over 20 years with the original decision based on space needs, not pedagogy. In the initial stages of having the grade nine students at CCHS, there were problems that needed to be worked on – the younger students being looked down upon by the grade twelve students, perhaps some physical intimidation, and the attitude of some teachers who were reluctant to teacher the “little guys”.

Mr. Lindstrand noted that he is pleased that CCHS can offer the grade nine students an outstanding education opportunity and offer students a complete range of complementary courses as well as extra-curricular activities. Mr. Lindstrand assured Trustees that the grade nine students like to be at the high school. This was reinforced last spring when he did a survey of grade eight students who attend CCHS for CTS courses, as well as the grade nine students at the School. Over 80% of the grade nine students said they were glad they had the opportunity to come to CCHS, and over 80% of the grade eight students indicated that they would come to CCHS to grade nine. Mr. Lindstrand referenced a letter (attached to, and forms a part of, these minutes) he sent to the Trustees in which he recommended that the Charlie Killam School be expanded in order to offer grade nine instruction and that the grade nine program at CCHS continue to be offered as an option for parents and students to chose.

Mr. Lindstrand outlined the impact on CCHS of losing the grade nine students noting:

- Space at CCHS – currently there is limited available classroom space. One or two out of 48 instructional spaces are available at any one time. If there were no grade nine students (7 classes) at CCHS, there would be eight or nine out of 48 rooms available. The loss of Catholic high school students could have a further impact on the available spaces by increasing it to 12 or 14 available rooms.
- Teacher Intent Forms – no teacher at CCHS indicated on the Teacher Intent Forms that they wish to transfer to a different school. Mr. Lindstrand is proud that the teachers like working at CCHS. If the grade nine students were no longer at CCHS, likely 8-10 teachers would forcibly be transferred. This could do harm to morale and could be problematic for the receiving principal. As well, the remaining staff would likely be long-time teachers as the forced transfer would likely be younger staff. The transfer could also affect the specialist teachers who teach grade nine students as well as high school students. Some of these teachers could become itinerant or asked to teach outside their areas of specialization. Also a reduction of that nature would reduce availability of other services such as counseling, administration, secretarial, librarian, etc.

- Outreach Program – if the grade nine students were moved, CCHS could perhaps recapture some of the students who are currently in the outreach school, or perhaps a program could be provided such that these students would not be referred to an outreach school. Mr. Lindstrand is cognizant of the fact that there are many “at risk” students in the province and in Camrose. CCHS administrators are working to restrict referrals to those students who are truly at risk for dropping out of school. Possible interventions at CCHS may capture these students before they get to the point of needing referral to an outreach school. This may, in the end, involve only a small number of students.
- Impact of Catholic high school – this could affect another 100-120 students, which would then mean a loss of approximately 1/3 of the population at CCHS and this is drastic.

Kerry LaBerge, Principal at the PACE Outreach School, noted that he was invited to speak to the Trustees with respect to the possibility of capping the enrolment at the PACE School. Mr. LaBerge began by outlining the problems experienced by students at the school and indicated the support provided to these students in addition to providing academic programming. Mr. LaBerge’s presentation is attached to, and forms a part of, these minutes.

In response to a question from a Trustee, Mr. LaBerge noted that it is difficult to determine the number of FTE (full-time equivalent) students because they are given the opportunity to be full-time students, part-time students, or take correspondence courses. Dr. Phillips noted that if the CEU’s are divided by 35, it is approximately 135 FTE, however there are a significant number of students with special needs.

Mr. LaBerge was questioned on how the students enter the PACE program. He noted that 92% of the students are referred from traditional schools, some from correctional centers and some from social services. In-district students are there by referral only, while out-of-district students can register following an interview with the principal.

Administrators responded to questions by the Trustees and the following is noted:

- Mr. Lindstrand noted that he is a product of a small school. Larger schools provide an opportunity for each student to find their own niche and each classroom is its own community. There would certainly be some benefits to a smaller school situation where everyone is well known.
- Mr. Kuchera noted that it is his personal feeling that schools should be 500 students or less. A larger environment can create greater opportunities for students, however smaller numbers can make for greater associations/relationships, particularly with ‘at risk’ students. He feels that a school can do its most effective work with 500 or less students.
- Mr. Payne agreed with the above two comments and noted that different students thrive in different environments. Very fine individuals have been produced from small and large schools. If a

students doesn't fit a mold in a smaller school, a larger school might offer a better fit. Choice is important. Students and student expectations are different now than what schools were dealing with in earlier years and old molds do not necessarily work.

- Mr. LaBerge noted that the type of school culture that is created is important whether the school is small or large and a willingness of staff to involve themselves in the lives of students accessing the program. It is important to look not a how successful a school is, but how many students are being lost or 'falling between the cracks'.

In response to the questions of what is the best junior high program that the Board can provide for students in the City of Camrose and how is that to be accomplished, and how each administrator feels with respect to having three junior high school programs in Camrose, the following was noted:

- Mr. Lindstrand questioned the financial implication of having three junior high school programs in the City of Camrose, however if there were sufficient numbers of students, this would be fine.
- Mr. Payne noted that his personal feeling is "why not"? Sifton junior high school program is financially viable with space to maintain it. If demographics change, choices change.
- Mr. Kuchera noted that the school creates the best program it can with the staff, resources and students at the school. It is important to make it work for all the students.

Dr. Phillips noted that he enjoyed and appreciated the discussion. Pride in their schools was demonstrated by each principal in attendance and it was evident in their comments and questions that everyone wants to provide the best education opportunities for students. Dr. Phillips thanked the administrators present for their willingness to be there and share their thoughts with the Board.

Chairman Poyser indicated that she appreciated the forthrightness and loyalty demonstrated by the administrators today, and thanked each of them for coming to the meeting.

Trustee Thronson left the meeting at 3:10 p.m.

The delegation of administrators left the meeting at 3:17 p.m.

MEETING RECESS (3:23 p.m.)

The regular meeting recessed at 3:23 p.m. and reconvened at 3:31 p.m.

Trustee Fitzmaurice-Johnson left the meeting at 3:31 p.m.

Director of Transportation, Brenda Johnson, joined the meeting at 3:31 p.m. to respond to a question posed earlier in the meeting by a Trustee with respect to designated bus routes.

Ms Johnson left the meeting at 3:35 p.m.

Trustee Thronson returned to the meeting at 3:38 p.m.

PROVISION OF VOLUNTARY SERVICES

Dr. Phillips reviewed a draft paper with respect to the provision of voluntary services at schools.

#72/02 W. THRONSON – That the ‘Provision of Voluntary Services’ document be accepted as the position of the Board.

CARRIED

Ranch Camps

A number of schools in Battle River Regional Division #31 provide ranch camp experiences to their students. Because of the withdrawal of voluntary services by teachers, some of these field trips may not proceed. Trustees discussed the possibility of parent volunteers supervising these types of field trips.

Trustees agreed that, if on a field trip, e.g. ranch camps, teachers are needed to carry out some instruction, then the field trip cannot proceed if the teacher withdraws his/her services. If not, then parents can supervise and take the students on the field trip. There must be, however, clear guidelines for the parents as supervisors, and other parents of the students on the field trip must be made aware that the field trip will be supervised by parents.

REQUEST FROM GRANDE PRAIRIE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Trustees received a letter from the Grande Prairie School District requesting support to enlist the ASBA to seek a compromise in the current labor dispute and call for the provincial government, the ATA and the local boards (represented by the ASBA) to seek a compromise. Chairman Poyser will contact the Grande Prairie Board chairman to inform him/her that the Battle River Regional Division #31 Board will support this initiative.

#73/02 B. HERDER – That the Board of Trustees of Battle River Regional Division #31 forward a letter to ASBA, ATA, and the Government of Alberta requesting that the groups come together immediately to discuss improving the current educational climate in Alberta.

CARRIED

IN-CAMERA SESSION (4:46 p.m.)

#74/02 W. THRONDSO – That the regular meeting recess to allow the Trustees to meet in-camera, and that all persons except Trustees, Acting Superintendent Phillips, Secretary-Treasurer Schulte, and Recording Secretary Lauber.

CARRIED

The in-camera session recessed at 4:53 p.m. and the regular meeting reconvened at 4:53 p.m.

FACILITIES COMMITTEE REPORT

Demolition of “Old” Pool Site at Forestburg School

Trustee Oberg will be meeting with the Village Council at Forestburg to discuss the demolition and cleaning up of the “old” pool site prior to the start of the school renovations, and the purchasing of this area by the school division.

Forestburg School Modernization

Trustees were informed that, even though final approval has not been received from Alberta Infrastructure, the Forestburg School modernization project is going to tender.

#75/02 W. THRONDSO – That the Board approves the installation of the radiant heating panels as part of the Forestburg School modernization, to a maximum of \$50,000 from the capital budget, and further that the architect be directed to make an addendum to include this in the tender package.

CARRIED

PACE Outreach School

Trustees were informed that the work at the PACE Outreach School is progressing and that the Facilities Committee recently toured the site.

#76/02 B. SEARS – That the Board approves the expenditure, to a maximum of \$65,000 from the instruction budget, to install the local area network at the PACE Outreach School.

CARRIED

#77/02 B. SEARS – That the Board approves \$60,000 from the Maintenance and Operations reserve to the City of Camrose, to increase the Board’s share of the cost of the construction of the PACE Outreach School.

CARRIED

Charlie Killam School Modernization

The Facilities Committee informed the Trustees that the cost to cover the court yard at the Charlie Killam School would be \$600,000.

Trustee Oberg left the meeting at 5:07 p.m.

IN-CAMERA SESSION (5:08 p.m.)

#78/02 B. HERDER – That the regular meeting recess to allow the Trustees to meet in-camera, and that all persons except Trustees, Acting Superintendent Phillips, Secretary-Treasurer Schulte, and Recording Secretary Lauber be excluded.

CARRIED

The in-camera session recessed at 5:30 p.m. and the regular meeting reconvened at 5:30 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

All items of business being complete and there being no dissent, Chairman Poyser declared the meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

GWENDA POYSER, CHAIRMAN

WILLIAM SCHULTE, SECRETARY-TREASURER

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