

# ANGLOPHONE WEST SCHOOL DISTRICT

## DISTRICT EDUCATION COUNCIL

### Bath Elementary School and Bath Middle School Sustainability Study #2 Notes Thursday, April 13, 2015

<p><b>Council Members Present:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sheila Gallagher – SD 01</li><li>• Norma Shaw – SD 02</li><li>• John Slipp – SD 03</li><li>• Miriam Grant – SD 04</li><li>• Terry Pond – SD 07</li><li>• Ron Buck – SD 08</li><li>• Jane Buckley – SD 09</li><li>• Kimberley Douglas – SD 10 – Vice Chair</li><li>• Donald Gould – SD 11</li><li>• Elizabeth Nason – SD 12</li><li>• Mark Noël – SD 13 - Chair</li><li>• Tim Nicholas – First Nations</li></ul> <p><b>Council Member Regrets:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Andrew Corey – SD 05</li><li>• David Bowen – SD 06</li></ul>	<p><b>ASD-W Staff Present:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• David McTimoney, Superintendent</li><li>• Carol Clark-Caterini, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent and DEC Secretary</li></ul> <p><b>Guests:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Community members</li></ul>
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- Mark Noël welcomed everyone to the Bath Sustainability Meeting #2. David greeted the crowd and asked presenters to provide him with a copy of their presentations if they would like to share their information for the final report. If there are pictures with students, we need to take into account privacy regulations.
- An Agriculture presentation was provided by Sean Kilfoil. Mr. Kilfoil felt that consideration should be given to the importance of Agriculture in the area and to date this point had not been discussed. A power point presentation was shown outlining various farms in the community. Mr. Kilfoil spoke about the economy that these farms bring to the Village of Bath and employment opportunities with an average of 5 employees per farm for a total of 145 employees. Included in this number is local high school students and former Bath Elementary and Middle School students. Agriculture is a very important part of the history of Bath. Families have moved to this rural area for agricultural employment and to raise their families. Bath has always provided good schools where families could feel safe with sending their children to school.
- Bath Elementary School PSSC members; Scott Oakes, Sean Kilfoil and Karen Guest provided a presentation about the Quality of Education provided in their community from Kindergarten to Grade 8. “To have a learning environment that is equal to or better than all the children of Bath currently have” is the school’s mission statement. Ms. Guest felt that the proposed renovations at Bath Middle School as not acceptable to meet the needs of students from infant ages (Early Childhood Program) to middle level. Safety concerns were outlined in this presentation with the Elementary students being located at the Bath Middle School, ranging from hand washing to playground supervision. Mr. Oakes reviewed the finances proposed by the District and felt that they were not accurate. A recommendation was made to build an addition to the Bath Middle School facility to house enfant to middle school students with a revised floor plan proposal. Estimates were provided by three local contracting business and three quotes were also provided from local business to move the electrical. Mr. Oakes felt that the district quotes were considerably high and the community could renovate the Bath Middle School at a much lesser cost. To have all their wish list items met would cost \$265,000.00 to \$330,000.00 and a cost of \$45,000.00 to move the electrical rather than the \$80,000.00 district estimate. Assessment scores and sections of Policy 409 were reviewed outlining the Department of Education and Childhood Development statements to offer the best facility and education for children of New Brunswick. Closing comments

requesting the Councilors to consider the impact and the future of approximately 230 students from the Bath Schools.

- Bath Middle School PSSC Chair, Rachel Smith spoke about her positive experience of when she attended the Bath Schools and now her three children attend these schools. The quality of education offered at these schools is exceptional. Teachers and staff know each student by name and they know their needs. Staff have gone over and beyond to assist students of Bath from coaching sports to assisting students up and down the stairs when injured. Local organizations have financially assisted students to attend WE Day in Halifax and the positive impact this event had on students is immeasurable. One option discussed is to close the Bath Middle School and send students to Florenceville Middle School. This option will devastate this community with the loss of the school gymnasium. Many sporting events are held in this gymnasium and the banners show the hard work and pride of our children and community. In addition, the loss of the Early Childhood Program would be devastating to this community.
- High School Student MacKenzie Smith from Grade 9, Carleton North High School credited the Bath Schools for helping her with academics and confidence. The foundation from the Bath Schools has allowed her to flourish at her current high school. MacKenzie attended the WE Day Conference in Halifax where she was taught compassion for other people. Students from this community had raised \$18,000.00 for those less fortunate in Nicaragua. A video was shown of former Bath students expressing their appreciation to their community schools. Whereas the video had many students within, it has not been posted publically.
- Village Council, PSSC, Coach and Parent, Jodi O'Neil reminded the District Education Council to keep the kids in mind tonight as this is what this meeting should be about. Soccer fields were revamped in 2008 by local contractors and substantial donations from local businesses. Many sporting events were mentioned that currently use the Bath Middle School gymnasium. Those from Bath are referred to as Monquarters, and this is such an important part of this community history. A request was made for consideration to be given to the impact on the community, the financial support and hard work that has been contributed by the community and, most importantly, the kids that would be losing this facility if Bath Middle School should close.
- The Bath Lions Club, represented by Terri Kinney, made the Councilors aware of this organization being established 27 years ago in the Village of Bath by a former Bath Middle School Administrator. Ms. Kinney requested consideration be given to the community impact and the demoralizing effects that such a decision would have on those less fortunate that live in Bath. In addition, students have raised \$18,000.00 for children in another country to attend school and now they have to fight to keep their school opened. Ms. Kinney requested that the District Education Councilors reflect once again on Policy 409, Section 5.3 of the Education Act.
- Early Childhood Initiatives for the Upper River Valley was represented by Ann Turner, Susan McLaughlin and Patricia Harding Chase. The history, stakeholders involved and the many services provided by the Early Childhood Program was shared.
- Julie Craig from the Step Ahead Board spoke about the hard work and dedication displayed by Rebecca Derrah and the seven employees of the Step Ahead Program in Bath. The positive outcomes for families in this community is evident. The Bath Learning Centre has been a very important part of the integration of early childhood children to kindergarten and school grades. Studies have shown that this program has been overwhelmingly positive with boosting a child's confidence and academic levels. Substantial contributions have been made to this flagship program and more can be learned by visiting <http://mwmccain.ca>
- Rebecca Derrah spoke on behalf of the Step Ahead-Bath Family Learning Centre and binders were provided to Councilors with the evening's presentations. Rebecca spoke extensively on the benefits of this program and the impact on the Bath community. Councilors acknowledged her well prepared presentation and her hard work with this program.
- The Upper Kent LSD representative was absent from this meeting.
- Mayor Troy Stone spoke on infrastructure upgrades that are needed on all Provincial buildings. The local Municipalities support maintaining buildings in their communities. Mayor Stone spoke of the financial impact to the community and the loss of the gymnasium facility at the Bath Middle School. The Step Ahead Program loss will also be significant to this community with job loss. Tax revenue would be affected by the loss of a school. Mayor Stone referenced the recent Government budget constraints and the impact this will have on the Anglophone West School System. Consideration was requested to think about the big picture and the implications this will also have on the community of Bath. The village of Bath contracted a consultant to prepare a Community Impact Analysis and it is included in this package. It will go in the final report.

- Andrew Harvey, MLA thanked the District Education Council, District Staff, Step Ahead Staff, School Staff and the Community for the displayed hard work, dedication and involvement in learning more about this study. Mr. Harvey summarized the reason for a Sustainability Study on the Bath Schools and offered choices to the District Education Council for consideration. Choices included; (1) Close Bath Middle School and transport kids to Florenceville Middle School – (*which is not the recommended choice*), (2) Maintain status quo for another year with its continued annual operating costs (3) Build an expansion on the Bath Middle School to house Newborn to Grade 8 students, (4) Provide renovations at Bath Middle School to house students from newborn age to Grade 8 in the Village of Bath. Mr. Harvey reviewed how Bath had been hit hard with the recent loss of the local hospital. However, future hopes of development in the area is encouraging and by keeping the approximate 240 students and their families in the Bath Community would be the most suggested choice.
- Mark Noël thanked everyone for coming to Public Meeting #2 and for the hard work, well prepared presentations, and support of the Bath Schools that was shown tonight.
- The meeting was adjourned at **9:23 p.m.**