

December 3, 2015

To Members of NB District Education Council:

Re: Sustainability Study of Millville Elementary School

I am writing to express my opinion and show support for the continued operation of the Millville Elementary School. The small community of Millville was once a vibrant area with various businesses and retailers operating in the village. The economy and a demographic shift have led to a smaller population at the school in more recent years. While this alone may point to a need for deeper analysis, I believe that several factors support the fact that the children, as well as the community at large, will benefit greatly from having the school remain open.

Economic factors, including the development of a mine nearby, will undoubtedly attract people to the community as well as help to maintain the current numbers. AV Nackawic employs hundreds of staff, and along with all other employers, will experience the loss of several baby boomers as they enter retirement over the next several years. There will be younger families relocating to the area, with some of those likely to settle in the Millville area in order to enjoy the rural lifestyle it offers.

While the entire community would experience a harsh loss should the school be closed, more importantly the school children would be at a huge disadvantage. Elementary school-aged children are already challenged to engage themselves from early morning until mid-afternoon without suffering from overstimulation or fatigue on a daily basis. Should these children be required to take longer bus rides and attend classes further from home, there is most certainly a price to be paid. It is in their best interests to have a school in their own village, where they are able to benefit from smaller class sizes, more one-on-one time with the teachers, and in this case, a lovely playground that offers several activities for them to enjoy.

Personally, I attended this school as a child and while the class sizes were larger than they are now, the school was small enough and personal enough to greatly enhance my experience, and was able to offer many enrichment opportunities and extracurricular activities, as it does in the current day. I cannot stress enough the benefits that can be bestowed on a child through a small, tightly-knit school family.

Thank you for taking the time to review my letter and I look forward to hearing the District's position on this matter as we all seek to improve the lives of those in our community, especially the little ones who will be the driving force of our familial and economic infrastructures in the decades to come.

Regards,



Arlene Dore