

**ANGLOPHONE WEST SCHOOL DISTRICT
SUSTAINABILITY STUDY - Meeting #2
MILLVILLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Tuesday, December 1, 2015 at 6:30 p.m.**

<p>Council Members Present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sheila Gallagher – SD 01 • Miriam Grant – SD 04 • Andrew Corey – SD 05 • David Bowen – SD 06 • Terry Pond – SD 07 • Ron Buck – SD 08 • Kimberley Douglas – SD 10 – Vice Chair • Donald Gould – SD 11 • Elizabeth Nason – SD 12 • Mark Noël – SD 13 - Chair • Tim Nicholas – First Nations <p>Council Member Regrets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Norma Shaw – SD 02 • John Slipp – SD 03 • Jane Buckley – SD 09 • 	<p>ASD-W Staff Present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • David McTimoney, Superintendent • Jay Colpitts, Director of Schools • Shawn Tracey, Director of Finance and Administration • Daniel Wishart, Transportation Manager • Philip Cliff, Facilities Manager • Gina Dunnett, Supervisor of Data and Accountability • Carol Clark-Caterini, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent and DEC Secretary <p>Guests: Approximately 50 Community Members</p>
--	--

- Mark Noël welcomed everyone to the second Public Meeting on the Sustainability Study for Millville Elementary School and he introduced the first group of presenters.
- **Millville Kids Have A Voice**
 - Students of the Millville Elementary School expressed their love for their school in letters that they had written to the Premier of New Brunswick. These letters were read by students to the Community and Counselors. In addition to this, a power point presentation was shown of several Millville Elementary students working and participating in school activities. Each child in the presentation gave a reason as to why the Millville Elementary School should remain open.
- **Jane Brewer, Millville Elementary School, PSSC Chair and Sharon Connor, Community Member**
 - Jane provided a presentation outlining the various activities students are involved in at the Millville Elementary School. Data was show from Statistics Canada of the Millville population and surrounding area. Sixteen students that are in the Millville Elementary School catchment had been granted to attend other neighboring schools by Anglophone West School District. If these approvals were reversed, Millville Elementary School would have a population of 49 students enrolled for the 2015-2016 school year. The constant threat of the school closing and the French Immersion Program not offered at the Millville Elementary School has allowed for these transfer requests to be approved. Jane emphasized the desperate need for French Immersion to be offered at the Millville Elementary School in order to maintain enrollment.
 - The Millville Elementary School has overcome many adversities, such as when they lost their hot lunch program with the closing of their kitchen. The school then offered an affordable pre-packaged food and fruit as an alternative. Their hopes are that the Department of Health and Wellness will soon be re-instating their kitchen as an area to serve hot lunches.
 - Assessment data has shown that the students of Millville Elementary School had scored higher than the Nackawic Elementary School; small class sizes and one on one interaction of student and teacher have proven to be an asset. A letter was read from Elizabeth Copeland, a visiting author who encouraged the continuation of literacy involvement at Millville Elementary School. Ms. Copeland was in attendance to support the Millville Elementary School as she made mention in her letter of this small school’s impact on the children of Millville. Long-term statistics were shown of outcomes for school aged children that attended a rural school (with small classrooms settings) in comparison to an urban school. Less bullying, drug and alcohol abuse, teen sex and pregnancy, and drop-out rates were some of the many benefits mentioned.
 - Technology upgrades have been done at the Millville Elementary School and students have access to various technology equipment. Hopes of I-pads are in the near future.
 - Sharon spoke of the advantage the Millville students have compared to other schools with their impressive new playground. This playground had been provided from donations of local fundraising. The community is very proud of their playground where the surrounding beauty of nature and accessible sliding hills are available for the students of Millville Elementary School. Plans for Phase II of the playground were halted as a result of the notification of the Millville Elementary School Sustainability Study.

- Sharon spoke of the economic impact the closing of the Millville Elementary School would have on the various surrounding businesses. Young families would decline to locate to the rural area and businesses most likely would need to close. The children from the Millville community would not feel like they belong in their neighboring school as indicated in an article called “The consequences of children not being connected to their school”. After school activities would no longer be possible due to a lengthy bus ride and family time will be jeopardized. Currently the volunteers brought into the school have ranged from young mothers to seniors that teach the students life skills such as sewing and cooking. The community is involved in our small school and exciting activities have been offered to students as a result of their involvement. Sharon requested that consideration be given to the Sisson Mine Project which promises the creation of 300 jobs in the area that most likely will be young families.
- Jane reviewed a list of recent renovations completed on the school that amount to \$77,790.00 over the past 5 years. Upcoming projects listed on the Capital Improvement Lists they would consider as a low priority including the intercom system that was identified as a high priority. A system is in place and the students know what to do when a bell sounds. As well a door buzzer had been installed for safety. Priority II items identified (wheelchair lift, roof shingling, window replacement, backflow prevention, electrical upgrade, and ventilation system) were not considered to be needed as they have managed without them. As well, some of these items had been addressed and repaired. Priority III items of a low priority such as the relocation of the office, floor replacement (staff room and library areas remaining to be replaced), siding replacement (original siding that is showing signs of wear) and paving are not necessary. These Capital Investment are not pressing or necessary at this time. Jane included the Transportation costs for buses to travel to Nackawic would not be a great savings as they currently travel through the community of Millville every day for the morning run. The return transportation would be approximately \$13,000.00 a year in savings, about a cost of a cup of coffee per student. The AIMS Atlantic Institute showed 81 additional buses being added from 2009-2014 with a loss of 10,945 students. Additional estimated travel times were shown for the Millville students to travel to a nearby school and the kilometers travelled. Report of students from Grades K-5 would be on a bus for over half a year or 54.9% of their time.
- Recommendations were made to the District Education Council to consider the quality of a student’s education, the impact a decision to close the school would have on the Community, the academic achievement of Millville students, the time a student would need to spend on a bus, and overall what is right for the children.
- A request was made for a proficiency test to be given to the Millville students that will be entering Grade 6, Student Transfer Requests be re-evaluated by the District, offer the French Immersion program at Millville Elementary School and for the District to consider ways to sustain the school rather than finding ways to close the school.
- **Lorinda Crouse on behalf of Glen & Bertha Morgan**
- Lorinda spoke of the previous school history and the past 66 years of Millville Elementary School in the community. The various successful people that graduated from the Millville School would include; Lawyers, Principals, Teachers, Missionaries and Grandparents of current Millville Elementary School students. The school was originally a K-12 school where graduations were held. Then the students in Senior High were moved into Nackawic High and the school became a K-9 school. Since then, the school became a K-5 school. A reminder was given that our students represent future successful people in various professions and the individualized attention that each student receives is not something found in a larger school.
- **Sharon Connor, Community Member**
- Sharon had attended the Millville School for Grades K-8. Sharon’s husband and children also attended the Millville school and their family decided to remain in the community to farm as they loved the community and rural school. During this time, the school had been reviewed on several occasions for closure. Children need to feel a sense of security and a school close to home is essential. “Children are the heart of the community” and a vacant building in the community is not needed. Paving the driveway or a new gymnasium is not needed as we have a beautiful facility. A school cafeteria is not needed as we managed with packaged foods when the kitchen was closed. A letter was read from a former student that is currently residing in China. This student was later employed at the Millville Elementary School where she experienced this jewel of a school. She had reported that this school stood out amongst other schools with their professional teachers, happy children and very clean facility. Sharon continued to report that with the recent developments of the Sisson Mines, and AV Nackawic Mill (senior employees that will soon need younger men to work with families), and Refugees from Syria, that it would not be wise to make a decision to close the school at this time. Therefore, a request was made that the decision of the Millville Elementary School be deferred until the development of these industries.
- **Nathalie Larsen, Community Member**
- Nathalie provided a presentation that showed the effects of closing the school would have on the children, families, and community. Nathalie emphasized that the school is the heart of a community and Millville Elementary School was their heartbeat.
- **Mayor Bev Forbes**
- Mayor Forbes spoke of the close intimate setting at the Millville Elementary School and the positive outcomes a small school has with personal relationships, lower drop-out rates and discipline problems. Mayor Forbes praised the Principal

and staff for their hard work and dedication to their school and as a result of their dedication, children are provided with the best education and attention possible.

- **Carl Urquhart, MLA**

- Mr. Urquhart thanked the Millville Elementary School staff, community and District Education Council for their attendance tonight. Mr. Urquhart expressed his concerns for the rural New Brunswick communities and the constant threat of losing their schools, which is the heart of a community. It is known that District Education Councilors have been given a job by our Provincial Government to do, but Councilors need to work for the rural communities and take a stand on school closures.

- **Questions and Review**

- David McTimoney reviewed the presentations provided tonight and asked that if they would like the presentation to be included in the Sustainability Study and posted on the website, to provide him with a copy.
- Councilor Donald Gould asked if the lists of activities mentioned tonight were the same activities as listed in the School Improvement Plan.
- Mr. Noël thanked the community for their attendance and he acknowledged the presentations as being very well done and appreciated. The presentations will be posted to the Sustainability Study website for Millville Elementary School.
- The meeting was adjourned at **8:33 p.m.**