

Monday, May 31, 2010 Regular Meeting of the Board

DISCUSSION/DECISION

LINC Ratification

Trustees voted to ratify this agreement with teachers, which covers local issues like preparation time and leave provisions, which are not included in the teachers' provincial collective agreement. The contract covers three and a half years, from Aug. 31, 2009 to December 31, 2010.

The agreement includes an increase in non-student contact time, which will require that the division hire additional teachers. These provisions make the school division's provision for preparation time comparable with what's available in Saskatchewan's other large, urban school divisions.

When trustees inquired about whether funding was in place for the agreement, Director of Education Bev Hanson told them that the agreement had been negotiated in good faith after the Ministry of Education said the cost of the agreement would be covered outside of the school division's annual grant from the ministry. However, after the agreement was reached, the ministry indicated funding would not be forthcoming at this time but said it may be available in November if cabinet approves a mid-year spending allocation.

Members of the Board of Education expressed frustration that it was necessary to cover the approximately \$2-million cost of the agreement in the division's operating budget when this expense had not been planned for.

Operating Budget 2010 – 2011

Board members reviewed the division's \$136,555,510 operating budget for 2010-2011 but decided to suspend its approval in light of the Ministry of Education's indication that there would not be additional funding for the LINC agreement.

Trustee Ron Boechler requested that administration bring information to the June 21 Board meeting comparing the cost of LINC agreements among large urban school divisions.

Early Learning and Childcare: New Prekindergarten Program Designations

Supt. Joanne Weninger presented trustees with information about what she described as a good news story for the division. In April 2010 administration learned the Ministry of Education was providing funding for two additional prekindergarten programs in the division.

After reviewing school communities (including demographics, potential future enrolment growth and social/economic indicators) St. Mark and Bishop Klein community schools were identified as the locations for the two new programs. The Board learned that the Ministry will also provide St. Mark with a specialized prekindergarten modular designed in consultation with the Ministry's Early Learning and Care branch.

Academic School Year 2010-2011

The Board of Education approved the academic school year calendars for the division's schools located in Humboldt, Biggar and Viscount. These calendars are determined in consultation with the public school divisions in each location.

All staff will begin the 2010-2011 school year on August 25, except for those in Viscount, who will begin Aug. 26.

Request from Martensville Roman Catholic Separate School Division #221 for Amalgamation

Trustees reviewed the letter sent from Marion Laroque, chair of the Martensville Board, requesting that Greater Saskatoon consider amalgamating with the new board in Martensville.

Trustees reviewed the boundaries for the Martensville division, which include the city of Martensville and the immediate area surrounding it. They also inquired whether Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools would receive additional funding for students who attend from Martensville. They learned that because these students would be included in the Sept. 30 enrolment figures for the division, GSCS would receive funding for them.

Trustees also learned that GSCS will now be responsible for transporting students from Martensville to Saskatoon. Information on transportation plans will be released as it is finalized.

Martensville Board members have indicated that their primary goal is to have a Catholic school in Martensville. The Greater Saskatoon Board indicated it would support this lobby.

Trustees then voted unanimously in favour of amalgamating with Martensville. The Ministry of Education must give final approval.

Board Priorities and Goals 2010- 2012

Trustees voted to pass this item. They reviewed and updated their priorities and goals while on their faith formation and planning retreat in March.