

At the Annual Meeting of Electors of the Board of Education of the Regina School Division No. 4 of Saskatchewan, held at 1600 4th Avenue.

Members Present	Mrs. Cindy Anderson Ms. Carla Beck Dr. Jane Ekong Mrs. Katherine Gagne	Dr. Kathleen O'Reilly Mr. Dale West Miss Aleana Young
Administration Present	Ms. Julie MacRae, Director of Education Ms. Debra Burnett, Deputy Director, Division Services, & Secretary-Treasurer Mr. Greg Enion, Deputy Director, Student Achievement Mr. Mike Walter, Deputy Director, School Services	
Opening Remarks	Mrs. K. Gagne, Chairperson of the Board of Education of the Regina School Division No. 4 of Saskatchewan, called the meeting to order, welcomed all in attendance, and introduced a performance by the Seven Stones Steppers jigging team, led by Ms. Alison Kimbley. She then introduced Ms. Joan McDonald and her junior choir, who performed two musical numbers—"Count on Me" and "Children of the World." Grade 5 student, Shariden Cote, then led in the singing of <i>O Canada</i> in Cree.	

Mrs. K. Gagne then introduced the Board members and senior administration.

Election of Chairperson for the Meeting	Ms. Debra Burnett, Deputy Director, Division Services, and Secretary-Treasurer of the Board of Education of the Regina School Division No. 4 of Saskatchewan, invited nominations for the election of a Chairperson for the Annual Meeting of Electors. Mr. D. West was nominated by Ms. Juanita Redekopp-McKeown.
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Motion by Ms. Sarah Longman:

That nominations cease.

Motion Carried.

Mr. D. West was declared elected by acclamation to serve as Chairperson of the Annual Meeting of Electors.

Election of Secretary for the Meeting	Mr. D. West, Chairperson of the meeting, then called for nominations for the appointment of a Secretary for the Annual Meeting of Electors. Ms. Debra Burnett was nominated by Mr. Dave Bryanton.
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Motion by Mr. Bruce Lipinski:

That nominations cease.

Motion Carried.

Ms. Debra Burnett was declared elected by acclamation to serve as Secretary of the Annual Meeting of Electors.

Chair	S/T

Adoption of Agenda The Chairperson then asked for a motion to adopt the agenda that was prepared for the meeting.

Motion by Ms. Lois Herridge:

That the agenda for the meeting be adopted as prepared.

Motion Carried.

Approving of Minutes The next item of business was the reading of the minutes of the 2014 Annual Meeting of Electors.

Motion by Ms. Laurie Gatzke:

That we dispense with the reading of the minutes of the 2014 Annual Meeting of Electors and that they be approved as circulated.

Motion Carried.

Chairperson’s Report Mrs. K. Gagne delivered the Chairperson’s Report. She welcomed all in attendance, including School Community Council members, parents/guardians, and ratepayers, and thanked them for their genuine ongoing commitment to public education. She noted that the meeting was being held at Seven Stones Community School to reach out to parents and the community and to also showcase the Division’s newest elementary school and how educational and environmental practices are being supported by design and architecture. She thanked the teachers and students from Seven Stones Community School for their preparation for the evening’s program. In considering the Division’s new facilities and new programs, she quoted Swiss psychologist and philosopher Jean Piaget, “The principal goal of education in the schools should be creating men and women who are capable of doing new things, not simply repeating what other generations have done; men and women who are creative, inventive and discoverers.” She advised that the Annual Report reflects the work of the Division for the 2013-2014 year and that her fellow Trustees would each present a section of the report. Mrs. Gagne highlighted the following accomplishments: the opening of Seven Stones Community School in North Central Regina; the relocation of École Connaught Community School to the former Wascana School facility on 4th Avenue and the securing of Ministry of Education funding to proceed with the rebuild of a new École Connaught Community School; the continued work with the Ministry of Education, SaskBuilds and the Regina Catholic School Division regarding the ongoing planning for three new joint schools; the continued planning with the City of Regina and other partners on the North Central Shared Facility; the program expansion at Campus Regina Public; the improved outcomes for elementary students; and the increased graduation rates and increased credit attainment for First Nations, Métis and Inuit high school students.

Director’s Report Ms. Julie MacRae, Director of Education, advised that her comments would be brief. Ms. MacRae emphasized improvements to communication across the Division and changes to the Division’s planning process implemented by the Ministry of Education. She noted the new online school fees payment system, additional professional training opportunities for staff, enhanced Synervoice capabilities, the realignment of superintendent duties and responsibilities to

Chair	S/T

increase time spent supporting schools, and the development of the new provincial Education Sector Strategic Plan. She further highlighted student and program achievement detail at both the elementary and high school level. Ms. MacRae concluded by expressing appreciation to the Board, the Principals, Vice-Principals, teachers and support staff, and Division Office staff for their leadership, their professionalism, and their commitment to Regina Public Schools.

Trustees then provided an overview of the Annual Report. Ms. C. Beck outlined the Division’s Strategic Plan. Miss A. Young highlighted the role of the School Division in the community. Dr. J. Ekong detailed the Division’s demographics. Dr. K. O’Reilly reviewed the student achievement indicators for the 2013-14 school year. Mrs. C. Anderson reported on facilities and transportation. Mr. D. West concluded by summarizing the financial statements for the 2013-14 school year.

Sign-up sheets for addressing the Board during the Comments/Questions period were provided.

Comments
and/or
Questions from
Regina
Ratepayers and
from Others

Ms. Florence Stratton arose and submitted a resolution relative to military training in Regina high schools, noting that said resolution is being made on lands in Treaty 4 Territory.

Motion by Ms. Florence Stratton; seconded by Ms. Evangeline Godron:

Whereas the military training program about to be introduced in Regina high schools includes instruction in weapons handling, thus raising ethical questions about what we want young people to learn in our schools;

And whereas Col. Ross Ermel has publicly stated that the program is meant to “revitalize the reserves” in Regina, thus raising ethical questions about the program’s link to military recruitment;

And whereas students who take the program will be paid \$2,000, thus raising ethical questions about who the program is targeting;

And whereas the military training program is not compatible with the United Nations’ view of education as enabling “individuals to learn to live together in a world characterized by diversity and pluralism”;

And whereas war is a catastrophe for everyone who experiences it;

Therefore be it resolved that the Regina Board of Education reverse its decision to introduce a military training program in Regina high schools and instead implement a course for credit in Peace Studies.

Motion Defeated.

In discussion, Mr. Victor Lau stated that the Green Party stands against war initiatives and found it disconcerting that the Board would support such a program. Ms. Godron questioned why there is not a course in Peaceful Trades. Ms. C. Beck stated that she shares many of the concerns raised but noted that the program was not instated by Board motion but rather was a program promoted by the Ministry of Education.

Mr. Bob Ivanochko arose and submitted a resolution relative to military training in Regina high schools.

Chair	S/T

Motion by Mr. Bob Ivanochko; seconded by Mr. Victor Lau:

Whereas the decision to introduce a military training program in Regina high schools was taken without any public discussion;

And whereas School Board trustees were not allowed to vote on the matter;

And whereas over 2,000 people have signed a petition calling for this decision to be reversed;

Therefore be it resolved that the Director of Education call a public meeting to discuss the introduction of a military training program in Regina high schools and that School Board trustees be allowed to vote on the matter.

Motion Defeated.

In discussion, Ms. Rhonda Parisian requested clarification regarding whether the program was offered at the direction of the Ministry of Education. Mrs. K. Gagne advised that the program was brought forward by the Ministry of Education and that all decisions regarding curriculum are subject to Ministry approval. Ms. Michelle Stewart encouraged support for the motion, commenting that the money spent on this program could be better spent teaching a subject other than warfare. Mr. D. West noted that the \$2,000 being paid to students is not being paid by the boards of education. Mr. Lau advised that he is not against our soldiers, stating that one of his best friends is a soldier, but suggested the need for further discussion about the program.

Mr. René Dumont arose and submitted a resolution relative to Treaty 4 Flags, emphasizing that said resolution is being made on lands within Treaty 4 Territory. He first thanked Dr. K. O'Reilly for making a similar motion a year ago.

Motion by Mr. René Dumont; seconded by Ms. Michelle Stewart:

Whereas Regina's public schools are located on Treaty 4 Territory;

And whereas requests from school communities to fly the Treaty 4 flags outside their schools have not been accommodated thus far;

And whereas we are all Treaty people;

Be it resolved that the Treaty 4 flag be flown outside all Regina public schools.

Motion Carried.

Mr. Jim Holmes questioned the rules of order relative to the motions being made, noting that, at City Council meetings, the mover closes debate.

In discussion relative to the motion, Mr. Holmes commented that the land on which we live was the subject of a bargain made with the indigenous people, and that it would be important for us to recognize this by the flying of the Treaty 4 flag, noting that he understood the School Board flies the Treaty 4 flag at its Division Office. Miss A. Young advised that it was her understanding that flags had been distributed to all Regina public schools and that some are flying the flag, while some are displaying them inside their schools.

Mr. René Dumont arose and submitted a resolution relative to public transparency and accountability, noting that he has been attending meetings for 15 years and that information appears to be becoming less accessible. He

Chair	S/T

further noted that he had attended the Annual Meeting of Electors of the Regina Catholic School Board last year and found the meeting welcoming and accommodating.

Motion by Mr. Rene Dumont; seconded by Ms. Evangeline Godron:

Whereas the use of closed session at school board meetings has noticeably expanded in scope in the past five years;

And whereas the level of information recorded in board minutes on discussion items in closed session has been markedly reduced from past practice;

And whereas electors can no longer gain information from their trustees on many items of public interest, due to the increased use of closed-door sessions and the accompanying requirement of absolute secrecy;

Be it resolved that, in the interests of public transparency and accountability, the board of trustees commit to curtailing the use of closed session primarily to legal items, land sales, and personnel matters, and that reasons for discussing any item in closed session be publicly stated and open to debate, and that meeting minutes contain a clear account of what specific items were under discussion in closed session.

Motion Defeated.

In discussion, Ms. C. Beck noted that ratepayers attend this meeting and put forward motions, but that there is no requirement for the Board to carry through with those motions. She pointed to the number of people who care about public education and agreed with the need for transparency and accountability, but expressed a level of frustration with the process, asserting a need for a mechanism to have discussions about matters instead of the Board having to defend itself. Mrs. K. Gagne advised that the Board uses closed session to discussion labour, legal and land matters, and any other matters involving privacy considerations. She further advised that, from her perspective, there has not been an overall marked increase in closed session discussions.

Mr. Jim Holmes arose and submitted a resolution relative to the evaluation of public private partnerships.

Motion by Mr. Jim Holmes; seconded by Ms. Michelle Stewart:

Whereas Ontario Auditor General Bonnie Lysyk (formerly Auditor General of Saskatchewan), after reviewing all 74 Ontario Public Private Partnerships (P3), found P3 public infrastructure is consistently more expensive due to higher borrowing costs;

And whereas the Ontario Auditor General found no empirical evidence in any of the “Value for Money Audits” for the claimed savings and efficiencies of P3 projects;

And where she found the claims of savings were often the result of inflated construction estimates for P3 projects;

And whereas the construction costs of the Regina Wastewater Treatment plant (WWTP) were inflated by \$44 million dollars after the decision to proceed as a P3 project;

And where the \$180 million P3 WWTP construction cost (the high end of the original non P3 estimate) is now claimed as a \$42 million savings;

And whereas excessive debt incurred now, reduces the funding available for education in the future;

Chair	S/T

Therefore be it resolved that the Regina School Board strongly request that the Saskatchewan Auditor General review the P3 school proposal to determine their financial viability.

Motion Carried.

In discussion, Mr. Holmes provided additional information on the Ontario Auditor General’s findings, and provided detail relative to the City of Regina’s Waste Water Treatment Plant. He suggested that a review by the Provincial Auditor is the best option for the public to get an independent, neutral opinion on the financial aspects of the project. Mr. Victor Lau pointed to the public private partnerships for Alberta schools collapsing and stated that such projects should involve an open process.

Ms. Evangeline Godron noted that the Treaty 4 flag motion had passed and asked that Treaty 4 organizations be consulted regarding same.

Mr. René Dumont advised that he is the Chairperson of the Campbell Collegiate School Community Council, and asked if and when the football field at Campbell was going to be repaired. Ms. Debra Burnett, Deputy Director, Division Services, advised that, pursuant to warranty discussions, the contractor has committed to repair the field this coming Spring.

Mr. Victor Lau asked, by regulation, what the number of students to be safely transported on a bus at any given time is and whether the number is determined by the company contracted to provide transportation services. Mr. Bruce Lipinski, Superintendent, Business Affairs, advised that seating capacity calculation is based on size/weight of the students and, therefore, varies based on the age-range of students. Mr. Lau expressed concern regarding the number of students on school buses and how disciplinary matters arising on buses are handled.

Adjournment Mr. D. West thanked everyone for attending and then called for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Motion by Mr. Justin Arendt:

That the meeting adjourn.

Motion Carried.

Time of meeting: 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

Chairperson

Secretary-Treasurer