

## NEWS RELEASE

June 11, 2019

### **Risk Management, School System Reviews, and Policy Development Dominate Discussion at Board of Trustees Meeting**

The Newfoundland and Labrador English School Board received an update on fraud risk management efforts; directed school system reviews necessitated by enrolment pressures and programming needs, and approved a number of new and updated policies when trustees met June 8-9 in Happy Valley-Goose Bay. It was the first time the province-wide Board had met in the Labrador region since the English School Board was constituted in 2013.

In a working session, trustees were updated on District efforts to mitigate the risk of fraudulent behaviour in response to a recommendation in the September 2018 Auditor General's Report on the Management of the Procurement of Goods and Services.

“The District has undertaken a thorough assessment of fraud risk within its various divisions to help ensure appropriate financial oversight and accountability,” said Board Chair Goronwy Price. “While the Board continues to address these issues in a systematic manner, we are also working with the Provincial Government on accessing appropriate financial management systems and software to enable tighter system controls within the organization.”

#### **School Reviews**

Trustees also directed staff to review school systems where enrolment pressures or programming needs may require change to the catchment areas or grade level configuration of schools. There are no school closures contemplated in these reviews. School systems approved for review are:

- **Holy Trinity High School System (Avalon):** Includes Cape St. Francis Elementary (K-4), Holy Trinity Elementary (K-4), Juniper Ridge Intermediate (5-7) and Holy Trinity High School (8-12). This review is necessary due to enrolment pressures at Holy Trinity High.
- **Waterford Valley High School System (Avalon):** Includes St. John Bosco (K-9), St. Mary's Elementary (K-6), Hazelwood Elementary (K-6), Cowan Heights Elementary (K-6), St. Matthew's Elementary (K-6), Beaconsfield Junior High (7-9) and Waterford Valley High (10-12). This review is necessary due to enrolment pressures at St. Mary's Elementary.
- **Basque Memorial (Labrador):** Basque Memorial is a K-12 school in Red Bay, Labrador with eight (8) students currently registered. The school community has written the District about the possibility of reconfiguring the K-12 school to K-6, with intermediate and high school students to be reassigned to Labrador Straits Academy (K-12) in L'anse au Loup. The review will consider the programming needs of students at the intermediate and high school levels.

Chair Price noted no decisions have been made; consultation will be held with any school community impacted by proposed changes, and other than at Basque Memorial (if approved), no changes would occur prior to the September 2020 school year. The Board also directed staff to generate a list of other potential school system reviews for the Board to consider and prioritize.

### School Bus Safety

In recognition of the importance of student safety, the Board has directed District staff to consult with the Provincial Government and community partners on the development and implementation of a school bus safety campaign to be implemented in the fall of 2019.

“Trustees recognize that while Board policies and procedures can address safety matters of an internal nature, it cannot control the many external factors which impact school bus safety,” said Chair Price. “This includes drivers who are unaware, or deliberately ignore, Highway Traffic Act provisions which require traffic in both directions to stop when a school bus has its red lights flashing and stop arm extended. It is also important that we enforce this legislation, which is designed to ensure the safety of students - particularly when they are boarding and disembarking the bus. All relevant parties must work together to increase public awareness of the laws designed to keep our children safe.”

### In Other Business

The Board has approved new policies related to Vehicle Idling (FIN-503) on Board properties, including schools and regional offices; Vehicle Usage (FIN-504), and updated policies related to District Travel for Employees (FIN-401), Community Use of Schools (OPER-602), and Performance Accountability and Professional Growth and Appraisal for Teachers, Teaching and Learning Assistants, and School Administrators (PROG-801). All policies can be viewed at: <https://www.nlesd.ca/about/policies.jsp>.



On Sunday, June 9, trustees also had the opportunity to experience virtual reality technology being introduced to schools which is providing students with new opportunities for experiential education and deep learning. The use of the technology at Amos Comenius Memorial School in Hopedale was recognized nationally earlier this year with an honourable mention in the Ken Spencer Awards for innovative K-12 programming, offered through the national EDCan Network.

The Newfoundland and Labrador English School District represents approximately 65,000 students, more than 8,200 employees, over 250 schools, and 5 alternate sites throughout the province.

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