



Race Relations, Cross Cultural Understanding and Human Rights Committee

Bridgetown Regional Community School 1:30 p.m. September 25, 2017

I N D E X

RC17:009	Approval of Agenda as Amended	[Approved]
RC17:010	Approval of Minutes of April 24, 2017	[Approved]
RC17:011	Adjournment	[Approved]



Race Relations, Cross Cultural Understanding and Human Rights Committee

Bridgetown Regional Community School 1:30 p.m. September 25, 2017

MINUTES

Present: Peter Cromwell, Chair; Jackie Foster, Vice Chair; Gerry Burrell, Tassa Kennedy, Pat Parker, Lavinia Parrish Zwicker, Roberta Kubik, Superintendent; Krishinda McBride, Coordinator of RCH; Stephen Amirault, Regional Education Officer; Kim Grimard, Board Secretary

Regrets: Sue Ritchie

Peter Cromwell, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:33 p.m. He welcomed everyone to the meeting in the new Bridgetown Regional Community School where earlier in the day the school held its official opening ceremony with The Honourable Stephen McNeil, Premier of the Province of Nova Scotia. The opening ceremony was made even more poignant as the street on which the school is situated was named Cromwell Court in honour of Peter Cromwell's mother, the late Dr. Edith Hope Cromwell, O.N.S., LL.D., for her tremendous contributions to public education and race relations in Nova Scotia and across Canada.

The following is quoted from the official opening program:

Bridgetown Regional Community School is situated on Cromwell Court, named in honour of Dr. Edith Hope Cromwell, O.N.S., LL.D. Dr. Cromwell is influential in the area's history. The Delmore "Buddy" Daye Learning Institute's *The Times of African Nova Scotians* explains "In an era where rural isolation and racial segregation often made attending school almost impossible, Dr. Cromwell became the first member of her community in Upper Granville to graduate from high school in 1934. She was one of the first African Nova Scotians to graduate from the Nova Scotia Teachers College. Dr. Cromwell paved the way for race-equity in education when she successfully lobbied for her students in Inglewood to be bused to Bridgetown where they could reap the benefits of its better-funded education system."

Dr. Cromwell taught in our region's schools for 20 years. After retiring, she was elected to and served on the Annapolis County District School Board for eight years. In recognition of her lifelong dedication to education and racial harmony, Dr. Cromwell received many honours including The Order of Nova Scotia (2002), the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' *Race Relations Award* (1997), and an Honorary Doctor of Civil Laws degree from Acadia University (2009).

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AS AMENDED

► RC17:009

Approval of Agenda

[Approved]

On motion of Lavinia Parrish Zwicker, seconded by Pat Parker, it was moved to approve the agenda with the addition of the RCH Secretary/Analyst position under New Business.

Motion Carried

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

► RC17:010

Approval of Minutes of April 24, 2017

[Approved]

On motion of Jackie Foster, seconded by Pat Parker, it was moved to approve the minutes of April 24, 2017.

Motion Carried

BUSINESS ARISING

There was no business arising from the minutes.

RCH COORDINATOR'S REPORT

Krishinda McBride, Coordinator of RCH, presented her Report. (A copy is attached to the original minutes and forms part of this document). Ms. McBride noted the Board's RCH priorities for the 2017-2018 school year in accordance with the AVRSB's 2017-2018 Education Business Plan are to:

- a) increase the percentage of students who self-identify in PowerSchool;
- b) work collaboratively with Program Consultants to apply the Nova Scotia Bias Evaluation Instrument to learning resources;
- c) continue to enhance culturally-responsive instruction and assessment across the Board.

She highlighted some of the achievements to date that included a half-day in-service in August with 20 teachers from the New Teacher Support Program learning various facets of the RCH Division and how to foster culturally-responsive instruction for all learners; and a full-day in-service in September with 15 AVRSB Programs and Services Department staff (coordinators, mentors and consultants) learning aspects of culturally-responsive education and the Nova Scotia Bias Evaluation Instrument.

The Nova Scotia Bias Evaluation Instrument is applied to learning resources in our schools. Applying the Instrument guides staff in critical literacy skills around bias and teaches there is more than one perspective. Culturally-responsive instruction and assessment as well as applying the Nova Scotia Bias Evaluation Instrument will continue. It was noted that Treaty Education is also a part of culturally-responsive education.

While self-identifying one's aboriginal identity and ancestry is voluntary, it is important information that informs the Board of its student demographics and diversity. Knowing one's aboriginal identity and ethnic or cultural ancestry provides a sense of place and a sense of self. The more staff can connect with their students, the more students will be engaged. It was noted that increasing the number of students and staff who self-identify is a work in progress. More education on the relevance of self-identification may help to increase the numbers of those who self-identify. The more people self-identify, the more we will know ourselves and what is needed to provide opportunities for increased student success.

INCIDENTS REPORT

The confidential *RCH Incidents Report* for September 6-15, 2017 was circulated, reviewed and discussed. The RCH incidents information, logged in PowerSchool, was provided in a new visual format that was comprehensive and easy to understand. On question, it was noted that an educational component is a part of the process of addressing all RCH incidents.

NEW BUSINESS

RCH DIVISION PRIORITIES

The Division's priorities were discussed during the RCH Coordinator's Report above.

EMPLOYMENT EQUITY HIRES

Ms. McBride noted there were seven employment equity hires in the Nova Scotia Teachers Union employee group comprised of four African Nova Scotian teachers and three First Nation teachers. Employment equity hires in other employee groups will be reported at a future RCH Committee meeting.

CURRENT EVENT: ORANGE SHIRT DAY

Members watched a video entitled *St. Joseph's Residential School Stories* featuring Phyllis Webstad, a residential school survivor, who shares her story which created the foundation for the Orange Shirt Day initiative. Phyllis Webstad's story took place in Williams Lake, B.C. and provides an opportunity to learn more about what residential school survivors went through. The video may be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Il1pUrK29MM>. The official date of Orange Shirt Day is September 30th, which is a Saturday; therefore, AVRSB will recognize Orange Shirt Day on September 28th. Two other resources to learn more about residential school survivors are the book *Out of the Depths: The experiences of Mi'kmaw children at the Indian Residential School at Shubenacadie, Nova Scotia* by Isabelle Knockwood and the website <http://witnessblanket.ca> which is a project that stands as a national monument to recognize the atrocities of the Indian Residential School era.

PRESENTATION: CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE PEDAGOGY

Members watched a video entitled *Culturally Responsive Teaching – Listen to the Silence* which emphasizes the significance of knowing ourselves in order to be responsive to all cultures in our daily lives. The video may be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XYTtcLUWyCU>.

RCH SECRETARY/ANALYST POSITION

Roberta Kubik, Superintendent, advised that an RCH Secretary/Analyst term position has been posted. She noted that the Board Secretary will be the recording secretary for the RCH Committee.

NEXT MEETING DATE: November 27, 2017 at 1:30 p.m. in the Education Room

ADJOURNMENT

► RC17:011
Adjournment
[Approved]

On motion of Jackie Foster, seconded by Gerry Burrell, it was moved the meeting adjourn at 2:35 p.m.
Motion Carried

Kim Grimard, Board Secretary

Peter Cromwell, Committee Chair