



REPORT

Business Arising From Minutes

- Letter from Education Minister Liz Sandals, in response to the Board's request that the Ministry, in consultation with Indigenous communities, continue and expand the process of developing Early Years to Grade 12 curriculum and learning resources on Indigenous peoples in Canadian history, and the history and legacy of residential schools, as per Calls to Action 62 i) and 63 i) of the Truth and Reconciliation Report.

- Letter from Confederation College in support of the consolidation of the Rainy River High School and Riverview School into a new K-12 school.

- Letter from Seven Generations Education Institute in support of the consolidation of the Rainy River High School and Riverview School into a new K-12 school.

- Letter of response from The Northwest Catholic District School Board regarding the invitation to explore the opportunity of shared school space within a new consolidated K-12 school to be located on existing Rainy River District School Board property in Rainy River.

Ministry of Education

Minister

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January 26, 2016

Ms. Dianne McCormack
Chair
Rainy River District School Board
Education Centre
522 Second St. E.
Fort Frances ON P9A 1N4

Dear Ms. McCormack,

Thank you for your letter of December 17, 2015, about your plans to expand Ojibwe language programming across Rainy River District School Board. I appreciate the opportunity to respond.

First, I would like to thank you for expressing your support for the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. I commend you for your exemplary initiative to partner with Couchiching First Nation and Seven Generations Educational Institute last fall to explore best ways to implement the recommendations. It is inspiring to learn how with respect, knowledge and vision, you are building solid and meaningful community partnerships that will help immeasurably to increase awareness and understanding of Aboriginal Canadian history among our students.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission made an important recommendation to include age-appropriate learning about residential schools, treaties and Aboriginal peoples' historical and contemporary contributions to Canada. Under the leadership of the Council of Ministers of Education Canada (CMEC), ministers across the country have been working to ensure students over the course of their education gain an understanding of how residential schools have affected Aboriginal peoples and Canada as a whole. One of CMEC's commitments was to advance Aboriginal education and ensure all students gain an understanding of residential schools and their impact.

To support this initiative, our ministry is developing a comprehensive plan with First Nations, Métis and Inuit groups, as well as education stakeholders and other partners to enhance this learning in an age- and grade-appropriate way. As part of our comprehensive plan, we recognize the importance of professional learning and curriculum-linked resources, in addition to building and sustaining positive relationships with our First Nations, Métis and Inuit partners and their communities.

My ministry is also committed to supporting school boards with funding for native language programming. As I am sure you know, the Rainy River DSB has seen an increase in funding of almost 19 per cent through the Native Languages Allocation of the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Supplement since the grant was introduced in 2007-08, while overall board enrolment has declined by more than 10 per cent. I understand that for the 2015-16 school year, your board is projected to generate over \$682,000 through the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Supplement to support programs designed for Aboriginal students, as outlined in the *Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework*. This increased funding allows for additional resources and programming to support Native language learning.

The Ministry of Education values the contributions and feedback of your board. Thank you again for writing and for the important work you are doing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Liz Sandals". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the left.

Liz Sandals
Minister



COLLEGE SERVICES

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February 5, 2016

Heather Campbell
Director of Education
Rainy River District School Board
522 Second Street East
Fort Frances, ON P9A 1N4

Re: Support for the consolidation of the Rainy River High School and Riverview School into a new K-12 school

Dear Ms. Campbell,

As your partner in education, Confederation College is pleased to support the consolidation of the Rainy River High School and Riverview School into a new K-12 school. We recognize the Rainy River District School Board as a vital partner in providing programming to secondary students, such as the Student College Work Initiative (SCWI), which allows high school students to work concurrently towards their high school and college educations through a variety of dual credit programs.

It is partnerships such as this that has helped meet the needs of our students, provided support for individuals in completing high school and encouraged continued success in postsecondary education. Evidence has shown that success in dual credit programs has provided greater likelihood of graduation success. In 2014-15, the "School Within A College" program saw 5 graduates, 32 secondary dual credits earned, 32 college courses earned and 25 secondary compulsory earned.

At this present time, the Rainy River High School has 3 courses offered through the SCWI program: TWJ4E Custom Woodworking, PAD40 Outdoor Ed, and HFC3E/4E Food and Culture. A new K-12 consolidated school provides the exciting potential for the expansion of the courses offered in the new facility. As well, this opportunity can allow for shared space and an educational hub for students, their parents, and the community.

We look forward to supporting the Rainy River District School Board, specifically in looking at ways to grow our partnership and expanding the programs collaboratively should you be successful in your 2016 School Consolidation Capital Projects submission.

Sincerely,


for D. James Madder
President



Feb 10, 2016

Heather Campbell
Director of Education
Rainy River District School Board
522 Second Street East
Fort Frances, ON P9A 1N4

Re: Support for the consolidation of the Rainy River High School and Riverview School into a new K-12 school

Dear Ms. Campbell,

Seven Generations Education Institute is pleased to express its support for the consolidation of the Rainy River High School and Riverview School into a new K-12 school. The Rainy River District School Board is recognized as a valuable partner in providing services and programming, which supports student success at both the elementary and secondary levels and increases the student achievement of Indigenous students.

Through our unique partnership, we provide the Rainy River High School with a First Nation Education Counsellor, who supports the increased credit accumulation and graduation rate of First Nation students, and access to the Indigenous Education Leader, who provides system leadership in the development of resources and supports for students and staff throughout the District. In addition to these vital resources, we are partners in the continued development of the Ojibwe language initiative, the MERL (Modernize, Expand, Revitalize, Localize) Project, which provides resources to support Ojibwe language learning for students and their families. The Rainy River District School Board has also been a great supporter of our Aboriginal Teacher Education Program, by providing placements within your schools for the student teachers and employment opportunities for many of our graduates.

The supports for Indigenous students, and all students of the Riverview School and Rainy River High School, has great potential to grow through the further development of our programming and services offered at a new K-12 consolidated school. The new K-12 school will also allow for shared facilities and act as an educational centre for the students, their parents, and members of the surrounding communities.

Seven Generations Education Institute looks forward to supporting the Rainy River District School Board by exploring ways to grow our partnership and program/service offerings should you be successful in your application to the 2016 School Consolidation Capital Projects.

Sincerely,


Brent Tookenay
CEO, Seven Generations Education Institute



The Northwest Catholic District School Board

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Cathy Bowen, Chair

February 18, 2016

Dianne McCormack, Chair
Rainy River District School Board
522 Second Street East
Fort Frances, ON P9A 1N4

Dear Chair McCormack:

RE: Invite to Explore the Opportunity of Shared School Space

This is to acknowledge receipt of your invite to explore the opportunity of shared school space within a new consolidated school to be located on existing RRDSB property in Rainy River.

Our Board considered your request and this is to inform you that our Board is not interested in exploring the opportunity of shared school space within a new consolidated K-12 school to be located on RRDSB property in Rainy River. We do value the positive working relationship that we share and appreciate your invitation to consider this partnership.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Cathy Bowen, Chair
The Northwest Catholic DSB

CB/cw

pc: Trustees
S. Van Haesendonck, Superintendent of Business
H. Campbell, Director of Education, Rainy River DSB