



# BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

April 22, 2020



## REFLECTION

Chair Klaassen requested that the Board acknowledge all volunteers for National Volunteer Week! A heartfelt thank you to all the volunteers who have contributed to the enhancement of the learning experience for all our students. An additional thank you to all those in our communities who are going above and beyond to do whatever possible to help others in our community navigate the challenging dynamics of these difficult times. Thank you to all!



Sadly, as you may have seen, Black Gold flags have been lowered to half mast in honour of those who lost their lives from the recent tragedy in Nova Scotia. Our hearts go out to everyone impacted: the victims, their families, the first responders, and our own staff, students, and families who have connection to Nova Scotia. A moment of silence in response was acknowledged.

## NEW HUMBLE COMMUNITY GROUP

Jennifer Jakubuv from the New Humble Community Group (NHCG), presented a report from the New Humble Community School (NHCS) Community group documenting the following issues:

- Collaborate and move forward
- Funding – block funding not sufficient to cover operation of NHCS
- Programming - changing program delivery
- Operational and instructional costs – cost reductions in staffing, and no longer have insurance or utilities expenses
- Higher transportation costs
- Capital costs
- Common ground

Ms. Jakubuv thanked the Board for the time to speak and quoted the late Stephen Hawking “Look up to the stars, and not down at your feet, be curious”.





## NEW HUMBLE CENTRE SCHOOL

Chair Klaassen stated that since the Recommendation Report for the closure of New Humble Centre School (NHCS) had been posted, there has been ongoing questions, which have all been answered. The time has now come to make a motion.

Trustee Ofstie stated that as a rural trustee representative and rural advocate, this is a very difficult decision to make. As a Board, we have had the opportunity to visit all 32 of our schools each year, and have heard that all schools are unique and many schools, whether urban or rural, have that 'small town' feeling.

Trustee Ofstie made a motion for the Board to close New Humble Centre School, effective the end of the school day, June 30, 2020.

Trustee Eilander stated that NHCS has been there for 120 years, and the idea to close the school has only been on the table for three months. Right now, we need to see what the world is doing before making a big decision. Trustee Eilander's motion to defer the request to close New Humble Centre School to the next Board meeting on May 27, 2020 was defeated.

Trustee Eilander stated that Black Gold School Division (BGSD) needs to accept the treasure that we have, and it should be valued and supported.

Trustee Eckert stated that wherever students go to school, they will always receive the best programming that BGSD can offer.

Trustee Martinson stated that there needs to be equity for all of our schools, and the students from NHCS will thrive at Calmar Elementary School (CES) and make new friends. We need to treat this as a positive outcome.

Trustee O'Gorman reminded Trustees that at this time, the Board needs to make this difficult decision for all of the students in BGSD.

Trustee Steed stated that all of these rural roots of creativity and passion of the NHCS community group will continue and be with these NHCS students wherever they go to school.

Chair Klaassen stated there are 32 schools in Black Gold, all with a group of staff, parents, and students who are fiercely loyal. We are a growing Division, currently and in the foreseeable future, facing challenging financial times. At what cost can we keep NHCS running? The Board must look at the entire story.

The Board approved to close New Humble Centre School, effective the end of the school day, June 30, 2020. Recorded vote: In favor of: Klaassen, Eckert, Martinson, Ofstie, O'Gorman, Steed / Opposed: Eilander

The Board approved that New Humble Centre School students be designated to Calmar Elementary School.

The Board directed Administration to explore possible uses for the New Humble Centre School building.

The Board directed Administration to work on the completion of Policy 15 and continue the West End Review.

Chair Klaassen stated that the New Humble students will make up almost one quarter of the Calmar Elementary School population, with another one quarter students also being rural kids.

