

## **Ministik School Public Meeting**

Ministik School

Feb. 7, 2017

7:30 p.m. to 7:55 p.m.

**Session: 2**

**Topic: Education**

**Recorders: L. Griffin/J. Clark**

**Start Time: 7:36 p.m.**

**Introductions by C. Allen, Principal of Salisbury Composite**

**Tracy Muth, Director of Inclusive Learning**

**Joe Clark, Director of Learning Services**

### **Key Points:**

- Questions noted, answers provided as time permits.

### **Questions Asked:**

- I have a higher needs student with anxiety issues, and I'm from out of district - how will he be accommodated?
- My child is on an IPP - how closely will they follow them? What is the adult to student ratio?
- How many EAs are there per student at FTV? 8 EAs at MIN, FTV has 6?
- Noted by C. Allen - allocation is based on need - you could have family of students with high needs and each would need an EA.
- T. Muth - Comparing one school to another can be deceiving - can't just look at raw numbers.
- What about a child that is not coded? I have two boys that benefit from the fact that there are EAs in their classes - they are not going to have that benefit at FTV.
- What happens to my son (code 53) if there is no EA in that class - worried about the "in between" students, don't want them to fall through the cracks.
- Want to note that my son benefits from 1:1 - who wouldn't benefit from that?
- I have no complaints about the education here - like the smaller class sizes, staff from other parts of the school move around to help if needed - if you move to a bigger school, staff aren't available to move around in the same way.
- It's the overall size of the school (that is so good) - looking at studies of schools under 150 students that show favourable results. Here there are checks and balances, the kids know everybody - the whole school takes care of the kids.
- A lot of us won't be able to volunteer any longer, based on drive time to FTV and not knowing whether their programming allows for the same type of volunteering - might not have spots for us to volunteer. I'm in the school three times per week - I won't be able to do that anymore.

- C. Allen - Looking at the time, see that it might be time to switch sessions soon - is there anything else you wanted us to capture, whether it's education or not?
- We've been asking a lot of questions - lots of routes we could take - we've given you the questions, we want answers - even if you group them into similar themes, we just want answers.
- What should the process look like?
- At the last parent meeting, the parent group did an amazing job of grouping our questions, then created a document - what we came here tonight for was the questions that were left over - those are the questions that everybody came here for tonight - we just want honest answers.
- Why not just come out and say you are closing the school because we don't have the money - it's optics. (Felt that at first it was for one reason, now it's another).
- At the first Board meeting we attended, the issues regarding move to consider closure were health & safety - we answered that as a parent group - the problem is preaching about transparency, first it was about health and safety and now it is about money. It seems pre-meditated, coincidental that FTV is being finished and now they want to close MIN.
- This caught me off-guard - Ministik has wonderful students - it's the people not the building.
- My son was at a brand new school, but it was not fitting what we wanted. We moved to a smaller community so we could get the one on one attention that he needed. (For example), we can email a teacher and say, can you take a peek in on our child, and they do.
- The school community (other parents, staff) will also let us know what is going on with our children, on a daily basis, if needed.
- Money raised by various school events goes to charity - which is lovely.
- I have four boys and I have a teaching background - the oldest boy is gifted and could have gone into New Horizons, but we came here on an IPP - one challenge for him was to come out of his shell - part of his IPP here was about doing public speaking - and he is in gr. 6 - I don't think those IPP outcomes would have been met somewhere else. He even did a solo up on the stage - he wouldn't have that opportunity at FTV. We love the size and community of this school and this is where his friends are.
- We didn't buy our house at the time because of the school, but we haven't sold it yet because of the school. My husband drives one hour each way to work and does that willingly so kids can attend here.
- As it is now, we can partake in activities, but that will change - accessibility will change. Lots of questions for transportation to answer. I have another boy, talking about school size - he has had challenges regarding finding out where he fit, what he wanted to wear. He is accepted here, but if he walked into another school, there would be instant bullying. He could come here and wear whatever he wanted, because he is in a small, safe and caring place.
- PAT results are higher here - Ministik is consistently achieving at higher levels -

this is not just a coincidence. At some point, financially there has got to be some kind of monetary value put on our kids. How much are we really saving?

- In an article I saw tonight it was between 400 - 450k savings.
- C. Allen - not sure if session announcement will be coming - we can continue on with this session if the group would like to. (group agrees).
- I would like to point out that two of my high school teachers are here - they are supporting this school - there are a lot of things my kids get here that they won't get elsewhere - (for example) the Kindergarten kids go on school ski trips and other activities - it's not just our PAT scores - it's rare to see this anywhere else.
- I have four boys and I can't imagine them going anywhere else.
- There is heart in this community - when we first arrived and met the Principal, we were told our daughter couldn't attend here, as my daughter has mobility issues and couldn't navigate the facility. We did research, and EIPS purchased equipment so she could access the school. - Her friendships have continued, she is in MacEwan now - the community aspect of this school is so valuable
- There is also the split grade piece that is beneficial - older students help younger ones.
- Our son was in a wheelchair due to a broken leg - teachers would take him to the washroom when we could not be there. There are also bullying issues - in other schools, the kids that are different are the ones are being picked on.
- I agree - at our other school, my son was considered aggressive - but it was because he was being picked on - he's not constantly in trouble now, so obviously he wasn't really aggressive.
- My son is high functioning ADHD - they look at him here and see he's very smart - here he has jobs to do when he is not focused - never have that opportunity elsewhere - we need more representation of that kind - have lived it through Ardrossan - Ministik is a diamond.
- And it is growing (in population).
- I heard questions about lead in the water here, but also have heard that other schools had the same issue - we have some other cheap remedies - not one person at EIPS said that we have other schools with lead in the water and it is being looked after.
- This amazing parent group worked and fundraised to get laptops and projectors - and so I want a clear answer about why are we doing this - over 400k - is it actual savings? In the last 5 years they have spent 10k on maintenance (doorknobs?) - was this inevitable - we were at 59% capacity now we are at 90%
- Things have changed, population has changed - 60 more kids here now - more pressure within Sh Park and outer acreages - they will fill up FTV and Ardrossan - will be driving 25 minutes just so my kids will be in a portable in FTV instead of a classroom
- C. Allen asks group what other sessions they have been in
- C. Allen - for next Wednesday's session, the questions will all be going in to Dennis and people who are knowledgeable - there will be answers to questions

by Monday - what would be meaningful for you for next Wednesday?  
What would you suggest for next week? The people who are making the decisions are the Board of Trustees. The people who are the experts in their areas will answer the questions posed.

- Do the people who make the decisions get to see the questions and concerns?  
C. Allen - yes, they have seen the letters and questions.
- Then they should have come here tonight with answers.
- (T. Boymook indicated she is in the room).
- That is another point - there is a binder from 2002 regarding closure issue at this school. This is the fourth time we have gone into the school closure process.
- Starting the process before Christmas didn't give us enough time - we lost a month of fact finding time, parent council submitted questions that were not answered tonight.
- We have a parent group who compiled the questions - the people here want straight up answers - everyone in the gym is frustrated because they aren't being heard - want clear precise answers. Came here for some answers and aren't getting them - asking the same questions over and over again.
- Seems left hand isn't talking to the right - have article on economy growing - what happens when oil boom comes back and people move back?
- This is a changing area - people are getting older, starting to move out - what is buying in here is younger families - you have a whole change and it's already showing - prices are affordable here and that is attractive to young families.
- That will change if the school closes.
- Our first question to our realtor was about the school - we bought here because of the school.
- All realtors I spoke to said it's detrimental to remove services from a community.
- If we would have known we wouldn't have sold on RR 225 to move here.
- Parent feedback about being divided into groups tonight - felt like it was "divide and conquer" - understand the reasoning in some ways, but a lot of people were upset.
- We should address our concerns to parent council.
- When our school is threatened, how do you think people are going to feel?
- The tactics they are using are the ones I use as a project manager.
- What they said at first was not about money, now it is.
- We are getting lip service - as Canadians we should be getting the right to a straight answer - I build modulars, I know what is involved. This is part of doing business, because it is provincial money, federal money, they are adding to it. I could replace what is needed for probably 200k. I know how this works.
- C. Allen - for tonight - this information goes into Central office. Board Chair Boymook is here - she has listened and heard. Laura McNabb our Communications Director has also been in here, so you have been heard.
- One more quick thing - in the form of finances, they said we aren't having events that are bringing in money - (i.e. school rentals) - just because we aren't

**charging doesn't mean the facility isn't being utilized.**

**Session ended at 8:25 p.m.**

Notes taken by J. Clark:

- Higher needs students with anxiety...out of boundary, students, what is the transition going to be like, 400 is a lot of students, the small school works for this student.
- IPP plans, how are they followed, are the mental and emotional needs being met,
- what will the adult to student ratio be, what is EA ratio going to be, two students per EA?
- MIN has 8, FTV has 6 EAs, how is that decided? How does that happen?
- How does the inclusive funding get allocated? It follows the student, what about the middle students, it depends on the particular student, can't use just the raw numbers.
- For a child that is not coded, there is an EA in each class..but the EA benefits my child, you can see that ,...would not happen in the bigger school, if the 53 code student does not get the time, you do get money for a coded student, does the money go with the student..the inbetween student will slip through the cracks.
- ADHD child, more adults, a one and one is going to be better.
- No complaints about the education here, not sure about the place, smaller class size is going to benefit, bigger school, community can't help as much (volunteering).
- Under 150 is an ideal school size, this is the best school size.
- Everyone knows everyone here so everyone helps, every one takes care of each other.
- If in fultonvale, commute for FTV will limit volunteerism, based on drive time.
- How can we help..we need the board to answer, alternate routes are given by the population, on building, transport, cost, health and safety, have had time to prepare, where are the answers, group questions together, find that theme and give us some answers.
- So compilation has happened...funding for portables..questions are left over...answers for the OTHER question left answered by the last meeting, be honest with us.
- The reason: Is it Ardrossan or FTV not making budget...does Ministik have to pay for those schools' deficits?
- Lead and pipes and mold in the room, host a dinner..raise money.
- Mark preaches about transparency...said it was not about money, now it's about money, it's lying blatantly, one has been retracted, seems premeditated.
- FTV finished, now close ministik, seems more than coincidental.
- It' the people that makes a great school, moving the kids will not make the next school work or better than this one.
- Some schools can having everything, and moving the smaller community makes the students more easily followed, better communication, eating habits, teachers notice and talk to parents about the child to the parent, teachers learn about the students, you don't get that at a big school.

- ADR does not do the monthly munchies program.
- 4 boys - I also have a teaching background, oldest boy could go to new horizons, needs challenges, needs to adjust to new things, IPP helps my son do better, this IPP may not have been put into place in a larger school. FTV would not give him those opportunities. it is because of Ministik's size, community, location, friends stayed here, bought here for the school here.
- We can't leave MIN, can partake in activities here.
- Accessibility for our parents - can't do it from the lake.
- PAT results are better here, with the small numbers it's different here, it's better due to the size of the classrooms.
- Financially, how much money will be saved if this school is closed, how much is saved by closing this school..the number said was 400-450,000, in an article tonight, this needs to be front and center we need/deserve to know.
- Education and school size, where son fits in, what to wear, son is accepted here, dresses how he wants to..and is accepted with no bullying. If he was in another school, he would be bullied. He is just accepted here, small safe and caring school.
- There are two of my old high school teachers in the room supporting this school.
- Tofield is being compared, kindergartens go on many trips, skiing one of the physical activities, also have better recess, all inclusive education.
- I am from out of boundary, and Ardrossan is not taking students - what will I have to do?
- There is heart in the community, youngest was denied access to the school, not an accessible school, student in a wheelchair, purchased the lift for this chair to do the stairs, strongly support the schools, we built the playground, the community.
- You won't find this community anywhere else.
- Student broke leg, teachers would take him to the washroom when needed.
- Some kids look at the 'obvious target' to bully, we have to protect those students.
- My son was called an aggressive student, these are often the bullied students...they are reacting to being bullied. is not aggressive here.
- My son has ADHD, is a smart student, above grade level...in a regular school they are sent to the office if misbehaving, in MIN he has 'jobs' to keep him on task or allow him to stay in the class.
- We need more of this we have lived through this ..we don't want the school to lose.
- 75 to 109 enrollment, numbers are predicted to stay steady, why would they change this?
- Don't understand...school at 90% capacity
- Told there was lead in the water, other schools have the lead, how do we fix this, trying to move kids to school with lead in the water.
- Money to fix the portable, technology in school purchased by the parent council, want a clear answer, the why, what is the \$ figure, 400,000, costs are still in this building or in the next?
- only \$10,000 spent on maintenance on doorknobs.
- FTV modernization, 5 years ago, 60 more kids, more growth, WYE school will increase, FTV will fill, then what happens if this school closes? FTV will be full, then my kids end up in a portable at FTV instead of a school classroom.

- Are the people hearing the answers to these questions, are they reading the answers, they need to see the concerns.
- Board has seen...so there should be some more answers, seems like it is being pushed, summer is coming, process started in october.
- Process, same year as Chipman, starting the week before Christmas means we lost a month of fact finding, timeline is short, questions sent early in the week , not answered.
- We have a very organized parent council, will or can resend those questions, we want straight up answers, we have frustrated people, need to be acknowledged, clear and precise answers.
- Alberta economy is growing, and we are shutting down schools? Oil (industry) will come back..what's going to happen when people come back, there will be change in populations, young populations are moving in...so more kids...older people are moving out younger coming, if school closes, this will change.
- People ask to live here because of this school.
- If you take out a school/services the area dies.
- The divide into groups was difficult, was some understanding about this, but still angry.
- Comes down to money, didn't start that way.
- Now it seems like lip service. Are we accomplishing anything? We want a straight answer.
- The cost of replacing a lead pipe, cost of the portable is actually higher.
- To build it would be 20, to refurb 40 million.
- Offer to rebuild? Volunteers to do work?
- Financial, extracurricular activities...not bringing money into the schools, [rental]
- We have lots of community events, not an income but we can 'run a pizza place' out of the basement