

**South Shore Regional School Board
School Review 2015-2016
School Options Committee Meeting at Park View Education Centre
BHS/PVEC Families of Schools
Tuesday, February 25, 2016, 6:30 p.m.**

PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

Geoff Cainen, Superintendent of Schools, introduced himself. He welcomed the public to the second of three public sessions on the School Review Process for the Park View family of schools and the Bridgewater Jr./Sr. High family of schools. He gave a brief background to put a few things into perspective about who we are, what we are doing, who is here and who is not, and why. He also had a letter to read from the Board.

“About two years ago, the Minister of Education approved a new School Review Policy. In that policy, there was an attempt to put decision-making and conversations back in the hands of the residents in the communities in Nova Scotia. The past policy, if you were involved in any of the reviews in the past, often involved school board staff, superintendents, program directors, and others, working, often silently, with the governing board members, giving them lots of information, and then going to public meetings and having the public stand up and try to plead their case without the community and the public having the data. This policy flips that around.

The School Options Committee (SOC) that has been formed for these two families of schools is made up of School Advisory Council (SAC) members and two members of the public. Staff’s role in the work is to provide them with any data they need, in a timely fashion. As Superintendent, I have instructed staff clearly. If we get questions, if we get information, if people are asking for data, we try to have it back to Mr. Walker, the Facilitator, and the SOC in about a 24-36 hour time period, so they can do their work.

This meeting is a meeting of the SOC. It is not a School Board meeting. It is not the governing Board that is running this meeting. It’s actually Mr. Walker, as the facilitator for the SOC.

The SOC is spread among the audience. Their job tonight is to listen to see, when Mr. Walker goes through the scenarios, if they’ve missed points. If you have ideas they have not thought about yet, that is what this second meeting is for. The third meeting, which will be announced later on after we determine its location, (probably not at Park View because the renovations will continue), will be to present the scenarios as the Committee sees fit. I encourage you to listen tonight. I encourage you to ask your questions. But I really encourage you to pay attention to the scenarios and the work the committee has already done and how they’ve gone through that. I think you will find that they are doing due diligence. They have been given lots of information and I believe they will come to some recommendations. Those recommendations, in the end, will

go to the governing Board. The eight members that make up the South Shore Regional School Board will make the final decisions. That is how the provincial policy, as laid out by the Minister, is set to work.”

At the request of the elected Board, Mr. Cainen read the following letter. This letter was in the paper, from the Board to the community.

“The governing school board thought it would be beneficial to explain the role of the elected school board with regards to the school review process.

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's school review process took effect in 2014 through legislation and policy. The School Review policy outlines the process which ensures that communities are engaged and informed. As part of the process, School Options Committees have been selected, meet regularly and have the responsibility of holding public meetings to gather input and feedback from community members on possible scenarios. When the School Options Committee's work is complete, it will then present a report and recommendations to the governing board. This will include information gathered at the public meetings.

The governing board's focus will be on the final information and recommendations received from the School Options Committees when their work is complete. The governing board will make final decisions on schools under review at public board meeting(s) in the spring.

Members of the South Shore Regional School Board”

Mr. Cainen turned the meeting over to Mr. Walker.

Gary Walker, Facilitator for the SOC, introduced the members, who were seated throughout the audience:

- Co-Chairs:
 - Shelley Mann, SAC Co-Chair, Park View Education Centre
 - Heather Mackenzie-Carey, Community Rep, Park View Education Centre

- Members:
 - John Biebesheimer, SAC Chair, Bayview Community School
 - Erica Moore, Parent Rep, Bayview Community School
 - Melissa Risser, SAC Chair, Bluenose Academy
 - Hope Demone, Parent Rep, Bluenose Academy
 - Siobhan Doyle, SAC Chair, Bridgewater Elementary School
 - Stephanie Martin, Parent Rep, Bridgewater Elementary School
 - Palma Champoux, Community Rep, Bridgewater Elementary & Jr./Sr. High Schools
 - Andrea McGinnis, SAC Chair, Bridgewater High School

- Kim Benjamin, Parent Rep, Bridgewater High School
- Mitch Foley, SAC Chair, Hebbville Academy
- Iris Charlton, Parent Rep, Hebbville Academy
- Anne Burgess, SAC Chair, Newcombville Elementary School
- Pam Hebb, Parent Rep, Newcombville Elementary School
- Tina Grace, Parent Rep, Park View Education Centre
- Allen Sullivan, SAC Chair, Pentz Elementary School
- Maja Kelley, Parent Rep, Pentz Elementary School
- Leif Helmer, SAC Chair, Petite Rivière Elementary School
- Sarah Tingley, Parent Rep, Petite Rivière Elementary School

That is the group of 20 people, representing nine schools. Each school has two reps and each family of schools has one community rep. Tonight, we're going to do a process that we call drop downs. The drop downs are the discussions of "what ifs" from each scenario. There are five scenarios the Committee has been working on. The SOC came up with four, and the fifth was brought forward at the first public meeting. Tonight's purpose is to show the public the conversations the SOC has had, based on the five objectives (see Appendix A). If anyone thinks of something that is not listed, please ask or comment at the end of this presentation. Central Office Staff are here to answer any questions, as well as the two co-chairs that will answer any questions regarding the SOC. I (Gary) will facilitate the conversation between the SOC and the public, and Central Office staff and the public.

Mr. Walker reviewed the attached presentation (Appendix A) listing the five scenarios the committee has been working with, the pros and cons of each, and which scenarios are still being reviewed as viable options. He also reminded the public that these drop downs are all items that were discussed among the SOC members during their meetings and working sessions.

Out of the five scenarios, there are two remaining – #1 and #2.

- Scenario #1 - Status Quo
- Scenario #2 - BJSHS Grades 10-12 to PVEC
- Scenario #3 - Move Grade 9s from PVEC feeders to PVEC
- Scenario #4 - Move Grades 9-12 from BJSHS and PVEC feeders (9)
- Scenario #5 - Move BJSHS Grades 10-12 to PVEC; move all of BCS to BES and BJSHS

The SOC has had a lot of information to consider in its work. They now have to make a decision between those, and everything they would like to recommend to the Board to do, as the Board makes the final decision. Central staff and co-chairs are here to answer questions."

The Superintendent noted that these meeting are recorded verbatim to ensure an accurate record.

- You've presented a great deal of information. Is that available to everybody? Can I get a copy of that power point?
 - (Gary Walker) My belief is the minute the SOC approves anything, it goes to Board's website. So they will get a copy of these minutes and go through them. The minute they sign them off, they will go to the website. Everything we do must go to the website.
- Time frame?
 - (Gary Walker) Wednesday, March 2
- In the second option, which is not my favorite, you've indicated that advanced placement will go away. Why does committee favor IB over advanced placement?
 - (Jeff DeWolfe) So, first off, we do not favor advanced placement over IB. We see the value of both programs, certainly. Nova Scotia's EECD, Department of Education, requires every Board to have one IB program and they fund us for IB. AP is an option that boards have for schools as well, not funded.
- AP is more widely recognized and IB has a pretty name. I personally know people that have been denied going to particular universities because they have IB and were advised to change some of their courses to AP courses.
 - (Jeff DeWolfe) I won't comment on which program is better. I am well aware of the research on both programs. So if that's your opinion, thank you. I know there are people that believe that, absolutely. What we are facing now for IB and AP at both sites is declining enrolments in the courses and it is jeopardizing our ability to offer some courses. We are certainly seeing it at Bridgewater – a limited number of AP courses; it is not a full complement of AP courses in every discipline. We are starting to see it at Park View, with numbers reaching single digits. So that is basically the answer. We believe that both programs are valuable and we would like one program to be strong and offer more course options for students.
- OK. But I think my questions was why, in the document, in the scenario, does it say AP programming will go away in favor of IB. That's what it says.
 - (Jeff DeWolfe) AP is in a much more volatile position now. AP has fewer sections offered now. Park View is still viable at this point, although there are concerns around courses with single digits. So the reason that would have been said, it's just the current state of the two programs.
- Scenario 3 indicates that Grade 10-12 programming will stay the same and in the same sentence, it says that it may deprive some programming in grades 10-12. So it can't be both. You can't have programming stay the same and then deprive programming. So which is it?
 - (Heather Mackenzie-Carey) Within the SOC, which programs would stay and which programs would go, that's an operational issue. Although we can look at what could possibly happen, we don't make recommendations as to which

programs will stay and which will go. That's an operational decision, I believe, between the Board and staff. So it's not really part of our mandate.

- I'm just looking for clarification, because in the same sentence, it says both, and it can't be both. It has to be one or the other. It's either going to change or it's going to stay the same; and the sentence said both so I'm just looking for clarification.
 - (Erica Moore) In the discussions we had, I believe that "deprive" was changed to "doesn't improve", because you're not actually adding any more 10-12 to PVEC; you're only adding grade 9s, so it's not doing anything to the programming, as it stands now. But in all reality, because of declining enrolment levels, it could, over time, decrease the amount of existing programs. So it's actually both.
- First of all, I want to thank all of these people who have stepped forward to be on the SOC. I don't know if you realized what task you took on when you agreed to do that and I think you deserve the thanks of the rest of us for doing it. It is very easy for those of us in the audience who have a vested interest in this to become very aggressive with the committee. Please don't take it personally. It's never meant that way. We have parents here who have moved into a certain location because of the school that is there. I moved to Bridgewater because of the school that is there. My son has moved back to the area because of the school that is there. We have a vested interest. I have a vested interest in keeping my property value up and keeping my taxes lower than they could be if people don't want to settle in Bridgewater anymore because there's no high school. One thing that wasn't mentioned – the projected enrolments. We have birth records. I know people move in and out. I think that's something that has to be taken into consideration. Is the population at Park View declining, because it's pulling from rural areas? Is the population at Bridgewater going to go up? Have to look at the elementary school to see how many students are there, to see how many students are going to be in your high school in 3-6 years. I think that's something that needs to be taken into consideration. I think you also need to start thinking outside the box. We have two schools that are within striking distance. There are kids that walk back and forth every day. It's not a huge distance. We need to look at staff utilization. Most of our staff live within a few miles of the town. You hire them for Physics 12 for Park View first semester, you hire them for BHS second semester. Back in the good old days, when I was in school, we had itinerant teachers who moved all over the place, sometimes between three and four schools. And it worked. You provided competent people to do that program. I don't see why that can't work here. I think that's something that has to be considered. I think there is also an opportunity here to do something really creative. We've got great staff at both schools. And even though I was a Bridgewater person, I always respected the PVEC school because I knew they had some great staff, great programming; just as Bridgewater did. But of course we had that rivalry, because of sports; you've got to have some fun there. So I think this is a time when we can look at, should we have a science tech trades school? Should we have an arts French immersion school? That's a scenario that needs to be looked at. Within this

distance, we can do it. If it's not going to cost anything to bus Bridgewater High School kids to Park View, then it certainly shouldn't cost anything to bus them back and forth. I'm not sure why it doesn't cost anything to bus them from Bridgewater to Park View. That really doesn't make any logical sense to me. So we have buses going by the school that are half empty. If that's the case, Bubby, you need to do your job better.

- (Gilbert Jackson) Thank you very much. You're as hard on me now as when I went to your school. We did a review of all the buses coming through the town of Bridgewater going toward Park View school, and what we found out was, in our Board, how our policy works, we have to ensure that every student who goes to our schools and lives outside of the walking distance has the available transportation. What we've also figured out is, as we all know, a lot of high school kids don't use it. So yes, we do have empty buses coming into Bridgewater; but we have to plan for that day, because of the Education Act and our policy, when those kids do in fact want to use the bus. We did a review and found out that we have a ridership of about 15-20. So, what we've decided we could do, is we could utilize those same buses that are going through the town of Bridgewater, by the school, to pick up those kids. We have areas around the town that we could designate for these pick-ups and that's how we would do it.
- Scenario 2 – numbers in schools. Do you have a magic number you would like to see? I know Bridgewater Elementary School is fairly full. I don't know how many kids are there. You start peeling kids out of BES to go elsewhere and you ended up with 395 students. Is that what you want there? Or is there a magic number? I know you want to utilize schools as much as possible.
 - (Gilbert Jackson) I can't actually speak to a magic number that we have. I don't know if the Board has one, but when we did these scenarios, we went through what the utilization percentages could be. They range from 75% to 110%. If it was P-4 and 6-9, it would put it at 77% at both schools.
 - (Geoff Cainen) There isn't a magic number. It really does depend on the make-up of the school. The other piece of the puzzle we have to keep in mind is that the province has class caps, effective September 2016, from grades primary to 6. When we looked at these numbers, they really are just numbers until we can sit down and say how many are grade 1, how many are grade two, what are the numbers, how many classrooms do we have, and can we fit the children into the available classrooms. So, no magic number. It really is a mathematical exercise to see how we can arrange the students based on the new class caps.
- Rivalries between Bridgewater and Park View sports. What is going to happen with the sports programs at the junior/senior high levels at Bridgewater, and as of right now, students are fighting to get on teams at Park View. If you add all those kids here, what's going to happen with all the extra-curricular activities?

- (Geoff Cainen) I think what we're really focused on first is the academic piece. There's no question that the extra-curricular and sports pieces are important. I would be expecting that the administration and the teachers in the school are working to solve those problems, but our very first focus needs to be on the academic piece. I actually had an individual say to me, there's so much emphasis on the competition between Park View and Bridgewater, when, in fact, the students, upon graduation, the competition won't be between Park View and Bridgewater; it will be between the students here, and students from China, Australia, and all around the world. So really, the focus, from our perspective, first needs to be on the curriculum and program delivery.
- That's fine, but then you have the government giving refunds to parents to keep kids active. Kids thrive on high school sports. If there's no team for them, maybe their academics will fail.
 - (Geoff Cainen) Those are things we need to look at. We are not saying there's no activity, there's no sports. What we are saying is there's obviously the varsity teams, there could be junior varsity, there could be extra-curricular activities. There are all sorts of ways to do that. I have yet to come across a school, especially in this Board, that doesn't look at that seriously and try to get all the kids involved.
- So will there be more scholarships for kids, academic-wise, if we join Bridgewater and Park View together? Because right now, Bridgewater has their scholarships and Park View has their scholarships. Are we going to get more because they're combined?
 - (Geoff Cainen) I can't answer that question at this point. I don't deliver the scholarships.
- When this does take place? When will it happen? Will it be the start of the school year next year?
 - (Geoff Cainen) No. We've said right from the start that the one thing we want to do before we think about moving students is to make sure that any renovations in this building are complete.
- So is this why we have to combine them? To pay for the renovations? Because if attendance is down, why are you renovating? I went to this school. It was perfectly fine. But if your attendance is down, why are you renovating this school if your attendance is down, and now you're taking students from a school that was renovated, what, five to ten years ago to make it a more efficient Bridgewater Jr./Sr. High School?
 - (Geoff Cainen) A request went in to government for the renovation about four years ago. The renovation was approved for 13 million dollars, to do a mid-life retrofit for this building.
- OK. Was the numbers looked at then? Because the number really shouldn't have changed in four years.
 - (Geoff Cainen) I'm assuming they were. I wasn't here at the time.

- So, the other night at BJSHS, we had a meeting about program courses and the O2 course. As it stands right now, I don't know how many kids are in the Bridgewater O2 program, but at the meeting, it was made out to be a very good program from the students and the teachers' point of view. There's kids taking AP courses, pre-calculus, etc. I know a lot of students who take IB (sic) at Park View and there are more dropout students. There are kids that didn't want to take time to go to school, get a good education, so they went and did this O2 program and left school early, and now they're working. Is the O2 program going to be offered for two scenarios or is it just going to be one with 20 kids?
 - (Jeff DeWolfe) O2 is funded by the province. We get a large degree of funding from the province to run that program. The stipulation is one program per site and there's a cap on the students. We've thought about this question and the ratios are slightly lower in O2; therefore, there is a little bit of additional cost, depending on the ratio of the group. It's a 20 student cohort. There is nothing to prevent us from adding a second O2 program; it's just that we would have to do so within our regular staffing. A 20 student ratio is pretty much where we are on average anyway. So, if the interest were there for O2, and we do truly believe in the program, we could add a cohort.
- One scenario was to move the grade 9s from Bayview to 10-12, with the possibility of closing Bayview. If you take the 10-12s out of Bridgewater, you're only leaving 200 kids at Bridgewater Jr./Sr. High School. Wouldn't that be a possibility of closing their junior high school, and making them students go elsewhere? What will happen with those kids in a couple years when you do this again?
 - (Geoff Cainen) I think the scenario looked at the junior high students that would be left at Bridgewater High would be around 200 students. I think the SOC looked at what is the possibility of moving some of the elementary students over to the junior high to create a middle school at the current Bridgewater Jr./Sr. High School. The other piece of the puzzle the SOC has been working on is what are the surrounding boundaries for Bridgewater currently and are there students who, by bus have to go (and I'm going to use two examples – don't take it personally folks), people who live on the boundary close to Bridgewater would have to go all the way down to Bluenose (a long bus ride; much shorter to Bridgewater) or down to Pentz (could be shorter into Bridgewater as well). We could round those boundaries and bring some students into the current Bridgewater Jr./Sr. High.
- In one of the scenarios, you talked about if you were to move the kids from Bridgewater into Park View, a bigger school, it would provide an opportunity for the kids to make lots of new friends. In my situation, I would be looking at having the transition year being my daughter's grade 11 year, which, to me, is probably the single most important year of your education because you're applying to early entrance to university. Those are the marks you're applying with. What if you have a child, such as my own, who struggles socially at school? So they're already struggling in a smaller school environment, and now,

in the most important year of their academic career, you're going to put them into a school with hundreds of children where they are going to potentially get distracted, potentially bullied, and who knows what? So, I just wanted to remind you that the idea of it being nice and, oh, you can make lots of friends? Sure, for some kinds, that's going to work; but there are going to be a lot of children that you are going to be potentially uprooting that are really going to have a challenge with that. I also would like to remind you that, although you may not perceive this as being a direct academic type of issue, Bridgewater Jr./Sr. High School is the only school in any of these scenarios that is a walkable school. Every single child who goes to Bridgewater High School right now gets to walk to school or walk back, and that is not going to be the case for the kids if they have to come to Park View. And we all know that kids who are active and get some exercise perform better in school.

- Sorry about this, but I have a few things to say and I'm going to take some time. I moved to Bridgewater for the school. We have a terrific special needs program, terrific TAs. It's a walkable school. If you make my child come here for 10, 11, and 12, there goes her ability to attend any extra-curricular activities, because I have a job and I can't drive her to these things. Her only chance is to walk. You're also going to lessen the opportunities for these extra clubs and sports teams that we have because there are two schools and I believe it's a very healthy competition. Our kids are friends. They go to each other's dances. There's no issues with that at all, as far as I'm concerned. Now, you don't want the kids to be on buses, because that seems to be a big issue? You're going to have to bus the 10s, 11s, and 12s here from inside of town. So there, you're putting kids on buses. And the grade 9s not functioning in a 10, 11, 12 program? Forest Heights and South Queens seem to be doing it perfectly well. But if you're making this a middle school and going to change the catchment areas, does that not affect all of the other little feeder schools? You're going to take kids away from Pentz and Petite, who only have 120 kids combined? How are you going to keep that open if you can't keep open these big schools? Anybody?
 - (Gilbert Jackson) What I can address in those two questions that came up with the students walking to school. There will be a walking school, because PVEC is in the town and town has the infrastructure to allow that for kids who live within 3.6 kilometers of the school. We would have to look at the infrastructure to make sure that is was updated and have the proper safety considerations in place. We would work with the town of Bridgewater in that aspect. There would be students who would have the option, outside of that, to take a bus. We're not saying they have to, but we would provide that option for them, if they wanted to take the bus to school as opposed to walk. But certainly, the infrastructure is in place in the town of Bridgewater.
- This question may have been addressed at the first meeting. I do apologize. I was not able to be there. I'm just curious as to how you poor souls are going to make a decision,

because I don't envy you your job, because it is such an emotional issue. So I'm curious as to what parameters you have in place and what criteria you are going to use to make that decision. And I'm curious as to how much weight of what we have said here tonight will have on that decision-making. We have come here and put our hearts out on the table and I want to know that all of the comments, even though I didn't agree with all of them, will have some weight when that decision is made.

- (Heather Mackenzie-Carey) So, the question of do we listen here? Absolutely. After the first public meeting, we actually added another scenario because we heard another scenario. So, we do take that. We'll take the minutes and go back and if we've heard something here that will change one of the scenarios, or add another one, we'll do that. As far as the process, we're hoping to be able to come to a consensus, to be able to vote on the scenarios that we have left. If we can't come to a consensus, it will come down to a vote within the SOC.
- Just to add to these comments, their decision going from consensus to vote comes right out of the provincial policy, so they're following the directive of the policy.
- Mr. Jackson, I'm not great at visualizing distances. Can you tell me what is 3.6 km from Park View? I'm not sure there are there a lot of students in that area.
 - (Gilbert Jackson) We have a program called Bus Planner. It's a new piece of software the Board has. What it does, is it takes every student in our entire Board and inputs their address. It can take all of the students who live 3.6 kilometers from any school (it can use any distance, but our Board uses 3.6). 3.6 kilometers from Park View goes all the way to the corner of Dufferin and King Streets. It's based on a road network, not how the crow flies; so it might be different in some places, but that's about how far it would go.
- I'm just wondering if you could explain to me how exactly it would be more efficient for class sizes. I went to Bridgewater and I also went to university with large and small class sizes. I can honestly say I had much better experiences in smaller classrooms. I was wondering if someone could explain that.
 - (Jeff DeWolfe) The class size issue. Our role is, when the SOC asks a question, to give them information. This document has every class at Park View and Bridgewater, and the size of the class. So, the question was, smaller classes are good. Sometimes when classes get too small, you have to combine and teach two classes in one. The numbers are small and with a grade split teacher, that is certainly feasible and it works. The bottom line is we receive funding based on a class size that is about 20 or so and in high school, when you factor in prep time, it's hard to put an exact figure on it, but it's about an average of 22 or 23. I think officially it is 25, but the fact that students don't take a full load factors into that. We just can't carry a large number of small classes as a system. That's a reality. As an example, what we've done in the analysis, at Bridgewater, out of 68 courses, there are 14 that are below 12, and a couple of those are combined. At Park View,

there are 19 sections below 12. It is hard to sustain those sections. I would say that all of those sections are in jeopardy under our direct funding model. We are trying hard to provide extra support around small schools for equity so they can maintain those courses. Sustaining very small courses, I would argue that a course of 20-22 in high school is optimal. I'm not sure that a single-digit course is optimal.

- Could you speak to the opposite of that, about how big classes could get by combining schools?
 - (Jeff DeWolfe) By combining the schools, you should get class sizes that are more towards the middle than highs and lows. Currently, we do have some large classes in both schools; there's one at Park View that is 42, but that's a music class outside of the regular schedule. We have a 36, 33, 32, 29, and another 29 at Bridgewater, for instance, and the 36 is a Math 11 course. And the reason that 36 is there in Math 11, a very important course, is likely because there are a lot of smaller courses. You can see the push and pull. By combining them, you just gain efficiencies to level off the sections. The other factor is, when you have a school that has a cluttered time table, if you have multiple offerings of the course, there are fewer conflicts for students. So when they choose that course, the numbers become more balanced. So what you see now, in both schools, is, for example, three sections of history 11, you may see one at 29 or 33, one at 29, and one at 8. There is an inefficiency with that. Just from a pure numbers perspective, when you have more students, the time table, the options, the conflicts, there's just an efficiency with that.
- Which ones are they? Are they core courses? I'm assuming that if they're going to be cutting some of their courses in Bridgewater, they will be ones that aren't necessarily required. Will core classes increase? I imagine those would be some pretty big class sizes, right?
 - (Jeff DeWolfe) Biology 11 Advanced – 3 students; Biology 12 AP – 4 students; Yoga 11 – 5; Drama 10 – 7; Music 10 – 9; Drama 10 – 9
 - (Jeff DeWolfe) These are not core courses. Remember, in high school, there are several course options. Drama could be a required course, although it could be Drama or Music. You have clusters of courses that are put into specific categories and you have to have so many from each category, with the exception of Mathematics, English, and you have to have a Phys Ed credit. So all of those, in some ways, are compulsory courses. You have Phys Ed 10 and 11, Philosophy 12, Phys Ed Leadership 11, Physics 12 and Physics Advanced 12 combined class – 13; English 12 AP – 12; Biology 11 – 13. There are a number of courses that are required or one of the options in the cluster that are very small. Those are courses that are difficult to maintain. I'll give you a couple from Park View – French 12 Immersion and IB 12 combined course – 6 students; IB History 12 Higher Level – 7; IB Visual Arts 12 – 7; Music 12 – 8; IB Visual Arts 11 – 9; Physics 11 – 10;

Philosophy 12 – 10; IB French 11 – 10; IB Theory of Knowledge 11 – 11; IB Theory of Knowledge 12 – 11; IB English 11 – 11; Science 10 – 12, and that would be an example of getting to the point where there are time table conflicts, which would mean that there would be other Science 10 sections, probably six or seven, and one ends up with 12 students because of time table conflicts. Those are examples of courses that are difficult to maintain with the numbers we have, in both schools.

- (Geoff Cainen) This is an example – and this is not to say Bridgewater or Park View; this is the way it's happening now – when you're in a smaller school and you're offering a course like Math 12, if the numbers are really small, the potential is there that you may only be able to offer it once a year. So that may go in first semester, depending on the selections that students have made and what other courses they need. If a student is not successful in that course in first semester, and it's not offered in second semester, something has to happen right away. What are we going to do? In a larger school or one with more students, the opportunity to offer a course like that in both first and second semesters exists. That's just another point. I'm not for one second saying that's the case in Bridgewater or Park View at this point, but it is a reality that is possible.
- I'm just wondering about facts and figures that go behind some of the assumptions that are made up here. So for example, there's a statement that Bayview is \$500,000 extra for buses, but that doesn't consider the savings from not operating an entire school. It just says more efficient class sizes but no changes in permanent staffing. With the numbers you just listed and the number of people in a class, I can't imagine you need the same number of teachers to teach these more efficient classes. How many students are now on a bus that weren't on a bus before? How many are on for an hour, when they didn't go an hour before? What is the actual impact on some of the extra-curricular activities? These are all different factors and there is lots of information here. It's a mixture of comments that were made and statements that aren't really supported, at least by what we see. I know you're looking at a lot of information, but it would be good to see at the end of scenario 1 or scenario 2, what is the utilization of a school, what is the expected class size, what is the effect on busing, the cost, the people, how far they're going, how many are now walking that weren't? With all of those different factors, it would be nice to see the results of those laid out; not just the money, but the impact on things like the class sizes, teachers, and those sorts of things. And related to that, it would be nice if we could consider different combinations of options. For example, option 1 was keep things as they are and no changes to the catchment areas. Now I have no idea if this is true or not, but maybe if you considered option 1 as it is, but change the catchment areas, you could improve utilization or address some of the other issues you have. It would be nice to see what the effects of those are, because they're kind of all mixed in together, and it could be done in other combinations.

- (Geoff Cainen) Your points are good points, and I think, I don't want to speak for the SOC, but I can guarantee you that by the amount of data we have been getting for them, most of that type of information has been given to the SOC to make their work easier and make those recommendations. Catchment areas is something the group will eventually get to. They've gone from these scenarios and the background work that they are doing, and I think, in the end, they will be able to sit down and see what is left on the table and what is left as viable options to bring forward out of those scenarios. There could be blending, there could be only doing one thing and leave everything else off the table. I have no idea what they'll come forward with. I just know that the SOC is relentless with wanting information and trying to make a really sound decision. That work is going on, for sure.
- I appreciate that you have to think about academics, and efficiency of bringing courses. But as a parent and a grandparent, I want my children and grandchildren to be looked at as human beings, not as a number, not as a seat, not as a body, in Physics 12 or in an AP or IB class. I want them to be looked as a human being and I want them all to have the opportunity to be on sports teams, to be on student council, to create all kinds of different groups they have available to them, in each school. When you have 1100 kids, 900 kids, 800 kids, those opportunities are lessened. And for some kids, this is what makes the difference in a school being a place they want to go to and a place they want to stay at. When you have three kids in a class and you can interact with those three kids, those 10 kids, those eight kids, this is going to make a difference in some child's life. And if we make that difference in some child's life, what we've done is worth doing. I would be very worried about what the future will hold.
 - (Shelley Mann) Thank you very much for your comments. I would just like to respond that we are definitely considering that. We are all parents on the SOC; so we all have children in the school system and we realize all of those affects. I would just ask you to, we are trying to consider all those things, extra-curricular or not. Looking at all of the scenarios, sometimes there are increased opportunities for students. We are trying to be open-minded about all of that and we're certainly considering students' needs. We're also considering how we can best prepare these students, when they move onto whatever they are going to move onto, whether it be employment or Community College. We are considering all of those factors.
- I guess I'm losing track of what the actual mandate is for the committee. Trying to keep focus on where we are and what is the direction? Is it to fill Park View? Because it seems like that's where we're headed, to make sure that the number is here for full utilization. And I understand that you need those numbers for added space; we're renovating here to do that. But I also understand that the student is more than academics. Academics, arts, athletics – there's many things in a well-rounded student that needs to be taken into

consideration. You've eliminated scenario 3 because it would lead to closure of Bayview, correct?

- (Heather Mackenzie-Carey) No.
- For what reason?
 - (Heather Mackenzie-Carey) There were a lot of reasons for eliminating scenario 3.
- I'm looking at that. And I'm looking at even if Bayview didn't come with the grade 9s to Park View, did you look at the scenario with Bluenose and Hebbville grade 9s (but not Bayview) coming into Park View? Is that an option? Does that scenario work?
 - (Heather Mackenzie-Carey) We didn't look at that. We'll write it down.
- I'm trying to look at all the options and I understand that if I had a child and I lived in Blockhouse or in that area, yes, I would like to have an elementary school close by that my child could go to. I graduated from Park View. My kids went through Park View. I know there's a lot of people here that went through the Bridgewater feeder system. Yes, we were rivals by times, but we all live together and we all get along. I think that we need to definitely – and I know you guys are doing a lot of work, the hours that you're putting into this is phenomenal – but I think that I'm not sure if all the scenarios are totally being looked at. If you bring Bridgewater High school to Park View, the parking scenario won't – these guys aren't walking three and a half kilometers when they have their driver's license. And they only have enough parking here now to deal with the students that are here. That's one of the things. Grade 9s don't drive. 11s and 12s are driving. So is that not a viable option to do this? Is there some reason why that can't happen? I know that if you're in the Bridgewater catchment area, or if you're in the Park View catchment area right now, you're not allowed to change schools unless you want to take IB. Would the movement help put more students in Bridgewater if it was allowed?
 - (Heather Mackenzie-Carey) It sounds like there might be another scenario in there. I'm not too sure, but we'll take a look at that. But as far as our mandate, we are not to look at operational concerns. We need to step away from that. These are the five things in our mandate – one is the programming; we still haven't really addressed catchments yet, so that's still coming up; the utilization and operating costs; the grade configurations; and we also have to look at whether or not Bayview should continue. That's our mandate. That's only our mandate.
- One of the things I'm having a hard time understanding is, if I'm understanding the scenarios correctly, there's a lot of talk about how moving the kids from Bridgewater to Park View will be optimizing their opportunities because they can potentially take IB, which they already have that potential option to do anyway, and they might have better scheduling scenarios. But it's also saying that it appears the decision has been made that AP is automatically off the table. Whereas in the first one it says that AP may come off the table, it doesn't say necessarily that it will. So I guess I'm having a hard time understanding how this is optimizing. I kind of just want to remind the committee as well, I don't think I really need to remind the committee, I want to remind the School Board that Bridgewater,

in the last five years, has produced two graduates who have gone to Harvard. I'm not sure how many of Park View's IB students have gone to Harvard. So I guess I just want to remind you that, when you're looking at kids' long-term future, even though you sort of want to underplay the value of sports, we're not looking at sports, we're looking at program options. Again, when you're applying for scholarships, being on a sports team and committees helps you get into university as well as your marks. I don't think our students would have gotten into Harvard if they wouldn't have had those opportunities from being in a small school. I also want to make a comment from a few comments back about scheduling, where in a small school, there would only be one option for maybe Math, and if you fail that Math course, well you're kind of done for the year. Whereas if you were at Park View, you would have more options; if you failed Math, well you could just do it again. I think the difference between a small and big school is that in our small school, our teachers would be paying a heck of a lot of attention to ensure that our students aren't failing Math. Just a reminder of that.

- (Jeff DeWolfe) Thank you. Very quickly – the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development requires each Board to have an IB program and they fund us for that. The only school that has a population big enough to run an IB program is Park View; that's why the program is here. As I said earlier, I'm not saying IB is better than AP or vice versa. I certainly respect AP. That's the only reason the IB program is here. And secondly, I would expect all of our teachers to have that same care for students and to be concerned about their education.
- I have a question of clarification. Although I live in Bridgewater and I've had children and grandchildren in the school, I work in Chester, so I've been interested and watching what's been happening with Tancook school. I have a question for clarification for Mr. Cainen. Looking at their minutes, there was a question about the designation of the school. In their approved minutes, it says "there was a meeting that took place at Forest Heights in June where it was noted that there were mistakes in the Long Range Outlook for the Board and the whole document needed to be reviewed again". You're attributed to saying "it was decided that the Board would wait until after the two reviews were complete before revising it". So I guess my question is, how does one effect the other, to go through a 116 page document and make changes, what does that do to the school review process? Are we at it again, or what?
 - (Geoff Cainen) The typo in the Long Range Outlook that I think you're referring to, was around the designation of Schools by Necessity. I think we forgot to list it for New Ross Consolidated. That's a living document and, as we talked about, it needs to be updated. That's the whole idea of that document. No, we would not be going back through this process again for these schools.
- So the Long Range Outlook doesn't affect the School Review Process?

- (Geoff Cainen) The Long Range Outlook is where the Board actually makes their decision about the schools that would be going through the School Review Process.
- So then my question is, what are they going to be changing?
 - (Geoff Cainen) The Long Range Outlook is a living document full of data. So when we do work on buildings, if we get reno money and we put a roof on a building, we go into the Long Range Outlook and update it on a regular basis. It's our working document and the Board's living document in terms of where we are with our schools.
- You or Mr. Walker said, at the beginning, that staff are available to this committee to find out information. I'm assuming you're talking about Central Office staff?
 - (Geoff Cainen) Yes. What we've done is, I say Central Office staff, but we wait to see what the questions are and we go get the answers, whether it's from our PowerSchool database, whether it's our HR Director, our Ops Director – whoever needs to get the answers for the group.
- So I guess my question is, were the administration and students of the two schools involved consulted in any of these scenarios and if not, why not?
 - (Geoff Cainen) What we've tried to do, and this goes back to the way the old school review policy used to read, you would often have the superintendent, directors, principals, or staff, or anyone else, sitting in on the group, influencing the group, with their opinions. What we've tried to do is take the opinion factor out of it and stick with the facts. Everybody has an opinion. Sometimes they're based on facts and sometimes they're not. What we've tried to do is give the 20 individuals that have been charged with this responsibility all the facts they need as they feel they need. Mr Walker, as part of his role, he went to both schools and sat down and asked the principals very specific questions around the information we wanted to gather. He asked them the same questions. They were data questions, not opinion questions. That information was shared with group. But really, we've kept staff out of this process as much as we can. Central staff are only there when needed.
- Now I have a question in relation to your comment on that radio that moving the grade 10-12 out of Bridgewater was not closing Bridgewater High School. It would be then called Bridgewater Junior School. Is there some kind of new Math or something, because I would say if you move the 10s, 11s, and 12s out of that building, it is no longer delivering high school programming?
 - (Geoff Cainen) You are correct. It is not delivering high school. I absolutely agree with you.
- So therefore the high school will be closing then.
 - (Geoff Cainen) My comment was around the word "closure", because the word closure has a definitive meaning. It's almost like a lightning rod word and I didn't

want anyone in the community to think that the actual building itself, – because that’s what we go by for a school closure, you’re actually closing the building up, putting boards on windows and putting a lock on it and that’s it. That would be the case, for example, with the potential for the school review going on in Big Tancook Island. I didn’t want anyone to hear or think that the governing Board had made some decision to actually physically close that entire building. That’s never been the discussion.

- But the high school component of that building at 130 York Street will be closed, under that scenario.
 - (Geoff Cainen) Those children would move, if that’s the scenario that is accepted, would be going to Park View.
- So we would no longer have a high school in the town of Bridgewater. Correct?
 - (Geoff Cainen) I believe Park View is in the town of Bridgewater.
- The main town of Bridgewater; in that main part of Bridgewater, in that school lot.
 - (Geoff Cainen) I’m not going to argue over the main part. It’s within the town limits.
- Just a comment with respect to the next public meeting you’re proposing. That proposed meeting is during holy week services, the Thursday before Good Friday. Maybe some people might want to go to services or more importantly, staff may want to have a long weekend. Is there any change of reconsidering that?
 - (Geoff Cainen) I think the SOC has already done that. They are adjusting that.
- Thanks to the staff from Central Office for coming out. We asked that at the last meeting and you turned up this meeting. You’ve built trust in the process, so thank you. I understand that there’s a policy around the decision-making of the SOC. What I’m not clear on is whether there is a policy that demands that the Board itself integrates the recommendation of the SOC into their decision-making. If there is no policy, is there a precedent? Does the School Board have to integrate the outcomes of this public meeting and of the SOC?
 - (Geoff Cainen) I’ll attempt this. I think I have your questions. The policy is new, only two years old. The Cape Breton Board, this Board, and perhaps one other, are the first ones through this review. The policy states that the SOC comes forward with their recommendations to the governing Board at an open public meeting. I would suggest this is complicated enough that it’s not going to be in one meeting; that indeed the Board is going to want to look at it, review it, have questions, go away, come back again, so it will probably take a few meetings. In the end, the governing Board has the right to accept the recommendations, to reject the recommendations, or to modify the recommendations. Did I answer that?
- Yes. The dodgy part of that, so to speak, is it could lead the entire public consultation process and the work of the committee for naught, it a group of folks who are being lobbied by whatever groups happens to be lobbying them in their decision-making make

another decision entirely. It throws a political level into what is essentially a fundamentally a public citizen process.

- (Geoff Cainen) So, I agree with you. I think it's a very fair question. I was the co-chair of this new provincial policy and it's my sincere hope that, in the writing of the policy, that it actually eliminates that piece. Before, I don't know if you've been to public school closures in Nova Scotia before, but often, at the front of the room, we would have eight or ten Board Members. I can tell you, maybe not in the South Shore because they're far more polite, but the board I came from, there would be yelling and screaming and hollering and going on and pounding the tables and tears being shed. And that's enormous pressure placed on eight or ten individuals. Not that these 20 are free from that pressure, because I know they're not. But they are taking all of the data, free from opinions of staff, and they're actually working through it. You really can hear that from the SOC, and not from me as the Superintendent. But that's truly the belief behind that policy. When they come forward to the governing Board, the governing Board has their opportunity to ask questions, seek clarification, and then make a decision. And it should be without all of the political pressure that you speak of, or the community pressure. It is solely based on what the SOC is bringing forward.
- So that's the intent of the policy, but it's not embedded in the instruction of it.
 - (Geoff Cainen) Yes. That's the idea.
- The only other thing is it seems like this is largely being driven by population decline and enrolment decline.
 - (Geoff Cainen) I think it's the starting point for the discussion around making sure that students have every opportunity to get the courses, the best opportunity for course selections. This is not about the quality of the teaching. It's not about the quality of the principals in the buildings or anything else. It's truly about can we give every student the best opportunities of course selections possible. And I'm going to be honest with you. We are a Board that's facing decreased revenue, yet again, this coming year. And it's difficult to continue to staff our schools at the same rate every year when you're finding \$700,000 and \$900,000 every single year. So you need to look at where can you make logical decisions that would say we haven't, and I'll say this and people will boo almost, we haven't affected students to the extent that perhaps we would if we had made other decisions. So if we can combine schools, if that's the option, and allow kids to still get those courses, with numbers that aren't crazy over the top (at Park View with 35 and 45 kids in a class, but reasonable numbers), try to make sure they've got a soft landing if indeed they are not successful in a course, in second semester. Those are good discussions that the SOC is trying to look at.
- The only other point is we need more kids so we should be all making babies. It seems like we could begin to turn around the population decline in this region. That would

actually complete the chain of discussion we're in at the table. There's a bigger discussion we all need to be in in our communities if we're worried about our school or health services. We actually need to start thinking about how to make this an attractive place to live. And, of course, closing schools doesn't make it attractive; but, you're being driven by, I understand the factors that you're being driven by. The last point for me is that Mahone Bay is a community that is getting younger and bigger, so the idea of closing down the school in one of the community's that's bucking the population trend from the decline, seems to be like the opposite of what we should be doing. That's just what we need to be keeping open because that scenario is attracting people and the more people we attract here to this area, actually the better it's going to be for the school system as a whole. I think there's something about the whole review process that demands we all look at the area as a region, rather than dig in and have turbulence. My kids go to Bayview, so I'm standing here doing it. We've got to look at what's attracting people here and if you've got a school in a community that's attracting people and it's growing, then we need to invest in that so it attracts more people and continues to grow. There are decisions here that aren't just about education. They're actually about our communities and our region. The decisions that you and the Board and the SOC makes are bigger than just the education system.

- I have a daughter at school with a disability and when she moved into Bridgewater High, we were informed that there was no time in the junior/senior high school schedule for remediation. So as a result, my daughter will graduate illiterate, which to me, is unacceptable. That's the absolute failure. I'm a little bit intrigued by option #2. It sounds like a larger school offers a little bit more in flexibility in scheduling and I'm wondering if that flexibility in scheduling will extend to what can be offered to students with challenging disabilities.
 - (Jeff DeWolfe) Great question. I'm not sure where to start here. My former position was in Student Services. I know our LD numbers; I know where they are and I know the support that those students deserve and need. I think that in a larger school, there is the potential that we can bring some services together for groups of students and concentrate that service. We actually have a pretty good strategy for learning disabled students and support structure. It shouldn't really look different from school to school. The issue we have is, you mentioned the one-to-one intervention, I think is one of the points you made at the beginning.
- Yes – remediation. She doesn't read and write, so there's no time to go back and teach her to do that now that we know that she has a learning disability.
 - (Jeff DeWolfe) We can talk a little bit more about your daughter's case. I would say that we have programming around LD; we do have four personnel who we dedicate for that and they work with our resource teachers in the schools. We believe we've accomplished a lot, so if there are issues, we would like to know about them, because every individual is different. There's a point, when we're

looking at how best to support a student, that we're also providing them students with tools and adaptations so that they can compensate for some of those things and stepping back a little from the remediation. There's a balance there, obviously. I would like to talk to you more about that.

- (Geoff Cainen) Just before you leave the mic, do you drink tea?
- No.
 - (Geoff Cainen) Because I do and I was going to tell you to come to my office; I want to sit down and have a cup of tea with you. We need to talk.
- I drink water.
 - (Geoff Cainen) I thought she said wine.
- I want to acknowledge all the great work the SOC has done. It's a really hard job and I would definitely not want to be in your shoes. I guess I'm not really understanding or maybe it's not clear to me, the issue around catchment and why it's not being considered in this process.
 - (Heather Mackenzie-Carey) It is, we just haven't gotten to it yet.
- But that could have a huge impact on your five, possibly eight, options. I guess I'm not understanding why catchment isn't being done until after this part. I understand the process. But the process seems backwards a bit.
 - (Gary Walker) Catchment, to you, means?
- Well, I think it's boundaries. They could change those boundaries.
 - (Gary Walker) In what we call our drop downs, we may only get to one item, and not get to catchment. Our recommendation might be to not change catchments. We started at our last two meetings with maps taking a two kilometer radius around the town to see what groups of kids are going where, and how far they are going on the buses in certain directions. The committee has taken that apart. We can actually see where the children live on the map and things like, can these five kids go over here, because they're going an hour that way, can they come over this way. Bubby sits with us and explains that all to us. The parents seem to know it better because when we point to a map, they're on top of us. We are getting to that, but before we do, we can't move anybody unless we create space. If we do status quo, there is no catchment because there is nowhere to put kids. We know if we can move kids certain ways, we've talked about it, the conversation of do you want to take that child in grade 5 and move them for a year when they have one more year to finish.
- If you did think about catchment in different ways, you might have more scenarios, and that's what I'm wondering.
 - (Gary Walker) Catchment is #2, so we do have to consider it.
 - (Siobhan Doyle) So far, what Gary is saying, is that if we start with high schools, which is where we started, and we've got two high schools – we've got Bridgewater and we've got Park View. Either we move some kids into Park View

and then talk about catchment or move kids into Bridgewater High School and then talk about catchment. The only two ways to do that was to look at the scenarios; the first scenario is status quo, and that moves nobody; the second scenario is to move Bridgewater, so that's a possibility to look at catchments, which we are doing; the third option would be to move grade 9s from the feeder schools, and then look at catchments, but by moving the grade 9s, we've already figured out that that's not helpful for anybody. Really, the only scenario of moving the kids into Park View from Bridgewater and then look at catchments, and that's exactly what we're doing next week. If you have an interesting way of looking at catchments, I would like to hear it.

- We have three rural high school. Where does New Germany fit into all of this?
 - (Geoff Cainen) Thank you. That's a very good question. The Long Range Outlook for the South Shore Regional School Board, if we looked at it tonight, and flipped to the back page, New Germany Rural High and that feeder area is the next area to be looked at next year. It's very difficult to take the entire structure at once and look at it. So, this well come forward as the first piece, and next year, if the Board so chooses to go through the school review process for that family of schools, that will be looked at. And that could have, and I'm just putting it all out there, it could have ramifications back here. We need to, at some point, say what could that do to the Park View family? Is it possible for recommendations to come in two, four, five years out, based on the review they do in that area? It's an interesting area, in that the high school is far enough away, and we have students on the far end of the New Germany area who, if you didn't have the elementaries or the high school, students would have a fair distance to come all the way in. I'm certainly aware of the Pine Grove and West Northfield areas and the complicated factor around there and some decisions that were made in the past, but it does have to be looked at. It's just trying to figure out the pieces of the puzzle one at a time. This one is first, and next year is New Germany.
- Isn't Blue Rocks to Park View the same as New Germany to Park View?
 - (Gilbert Jackson) The kids that live at the far end of Barss' Corner, in order to get to Park View, is much further than from Blue Rocks.
- What about the Springfield area line?
 - (Gilbert Jackson) That's not the furthest point in the catchment area. The furthest point is actually up the Barss' Corner Road. Students going from Barss' Corner Road coming to the school, that route alone takes about an hour, and then you have to get them to Park View. It's not up for review right now, but that's the situation you're dealing with in that community.
- Well why hasn't it been looked at?
 - (Geoff Cainen) I promise you we will be looking at that next year.

- Well it should be looked at now. I live in Turner Heights and I had the choice between Park View and New Germany. I chose Park View because it was a bigger school. It was a big mistake on my behalf. Just my own personal feeling. Everybody is different. The kids need a choice. Not every child does well in every school system. I did well in a smaller school where I could get the extra help I needed. When you have a bigger school that's flooded with all these kids, you get lost if you're not academically strong or athletically gifted. My own personal feelings. I was a number. My mom was dying, and when my grandfather came to find me, they couldn't find me because he didn't know my student number. Now, since I have your attention. You talked about moving the 5s and 6s in with 7s, 8s, and 9s. How does that affect programming, busing, time start in the morning, curriculum? What about the iPad program? Bridgewater has a fantastic iPad program that sets the kids up for university because they need to know how to use the technology. Park View doesn't have the iPad program. Did you look at the births for your upcoming numbers? Did you go back to all the births?
 - (Geoff Cainen) I'm going to try to ...
- You want my notes?
 - (Geoff Cainen) No thanks. I've got them right here; all verbatim. Thank you. Was Mr. DeWolfe the principal when you were here?
- No, that was back when there used to be a thousand kids here. I was here then.
 - (Geoff Cainen) We're only going to go to a population, if we move the schools, of around 850. I just want to go back to your very end question about birth rates, etc. One of the things we did in preparing for this, in terms of the Long Range Outlook and for the School Options Committee, is we sent our info to all of the municipalities and we had their staff fill in a large component of information around potential housing developments, birth rates (we were able to get that information from government statistics). All of that is built into the information we gave the SOC through the Long Range Outlook. I know Mr. DeWolfe wants to talk about combining the grade levels and the iPads.
 - (Jeff DeWolfe) It's a recommendation on the table around moving the 5s and 6s. What we see happening at Bridgewater Elementary is, and it's on our list and there might be some alterations done, there are a lot of students who need special spaces. Even though it's not at capacity yet, we really have to be careful of that capacity number because to be at 100% capacity, it would be crowded; so, to create some space, we could potentially create a middle school. Configurations in the province vary; they can go 5-9, they can go 6-8, they can go 5-8. So either a 6-9 or a 5-9, and we have the space in the building if the 10-12s weren't there. That's kind of the scenario that the SOC has looked at. We're not making that recommendation, but that's a scenario that came up. You could separate the 5s and 6s on one floor so they're kind of separate from the 7s and 8s. That's the typical way they organize those schools. As far as the expectations around

technology integration, we believe strongly, as you said, thank you, that we need to teach the students to use technology responsibly and ethically. We believe it's a valuable learning tool. We do believe it's only a tool and not to be used all the time and is only to be used when appropriate. We are proud of the efforts that have happened at Bridgewater. There is no question that they have embraced our program and we've seen a lot of great things they've done there. I would like to acknowledge that. We have made it very clear in this process, that we have the same expectation of Park View when the renovation is complete.

- I'd like to thank the SOC for their efforts in all of this. It seems the Board has already made their decisions and it's just using them as a scapegoat.
- I promise this is going to be the last time I'm going to make a comment. You talking about technology reminded me of something that, on Monday, I learned, when I went to the grade 9 meeting for the parents and I'm wondering if the members of the committee are aware of this, because many of you are elementary school students and not at the point where you're having to help your child choose their courses for next year. But what I wasn't aware of, was that there is actually a virtual school aspect for high school. What we're looking at is the potential for optimizing the courses. If there's a course that can't be offered, or can't be scheduled within our small school, students do actually have the opportunity to take it virtually. Has that been brought up?
 - (Jeff DeWolfe) Absolutely. We have virtual school courses being offered at both schools and throughout our Board. The numbers, provincially, are actually spiking now. This semester, the enrolment has grown almost to the point where it's challenging our capacity. They're looking at creating a second generation of virtual schools. In other words, changing the way they're delivering them, slightly, and expanding them. That will definitely be a growing option.
- Regarding catchment areas. About 12-13 years ago, I was working for the education department in the UK and at that time, we got rid of catchment areas. Any child could go to whatever school they wanted. I'm wondering if that is something that has been considered by the committee.
 - (Geoff Cainen) I'm not sure you're looking for a real answer. But I think it's a wonderful idea. I think one of the stumbling block is the infrastructure we have around transportation. If I had my way, we would have no boundaries and it would be an open system. I totally agree.
- I just have one question. You talk about less teachers if they joined schools and they won't need them. The Bridgewater school would be just 7-9, etc. What about the administration staff? As of right now, today, for an example, the vice-principal of my son's school called me first thing with an educational problem he was having that wasn't diagnosed earlier. Is that something that's going to happen if these two schools collide? Will he get recognized as a disability, learning disability, any type of disability?

- (Jeff DeWolfe) We have high expectations of our administrators. They are the second most influential on the achievement and success of your child, next to the teacher. So I would hope that you would get that in every school. Our allocation of administrators is based on ratios, so more students will impact the number of administrators.
- So you could have a principal and three vice-principals?
 - (Jeff DeWolfe) Potentially, depending on the numbers. What I'm saying is, the same amount of time would be there, and the expectation is the same.
- I see the Pre-IB information night information night over there. I'm certainly thinking that students who go to Park View next year in grade 10, they are part of the IB process. My child is in grade 9 right now at Bridgewater, so she will not have started the AP process but will arrive at Park View in grade 11, potentially. What are her options going to be?
 - (Jeff DeWolfe) I know this has come up. The SOC will make a decision and they will make a recommendation to the governing Board and the governing Board will make a decision. At that time, we will immediately start to respond to whatever decision that is. So, if indeed, the decision is that they move, then I know this is a big issue. We talked about this as a possible scenario, because it has come up. We would then look at ways to make sure that every student has the opportunity.
- But they won't be able to start IB. So will AP be still offered to the students coming from Bridgewater?
 - (Jeff DeWolfe) We are not getting ahead of ourselves, because we do not know what the decision is. But we have played with a couple of different scenarios, just from the start. Mr. Cainen has actually made contact with the province and asked a question about that, in the event that it does happen. So I'm telling you that we will respond to those concerns immediately after decisions are made.

Mr. Walker called for final questions. Hearing none, he encouraged public to send their comments and questions to your SAC members, as they are the voice at the table. Their information can be found on the various schools' websites.

Thanks to everyone for coming out. The SOC will meet next week. The last public meeting date has not yet been decided, as it had to be changed so that Board Members could attend. (It was originally planned on a regular Board Meeting night, so had to be re-scheduled.)

The meeting adjourned at 8:34 p.m.