

Curriculum Committee Annual Report 2009-2010

Members: Elizabeth Thomas, Chair
Angela Gillis, Provincial Executive Member
Ron Brunton, NSTU Staff Liaison
Mary Anne Alley, Colchester-East Hants
Donald Rice, Lunenburg County
Ernestine Oakley, Halifax County
Michael Soares, Richmond
Dayna Enguehard, Cape Breton
Grant Dunn, Annapolis

Meeting Dates:

October 2, 2009
January 8, 2010
May 7, 2010
Special Consultation – March 12, 2010

Mandate:

The Curriculum Committee has a mandate to study the curriculum and all proposed changes, report its findings and make recommendations to the Provincial Executive, consider resolutions referred by Council and participate in Policy Review. The Committee should divide its area of activities into Curriculum Monitoring, Development of Policy, Study and Research and Communications.

Summary of Activities:

1. Following the recommendations of the Curriculum Committee of 2008 – 2009, we invited several representatives from a variety of divisions within the Nova Scotia Department of Education. Donna Karsten, the Mathematics Coordinator, discussed the mathematics curriculum review process and Nancy MacDonald, the Curriculum and Technology Integration Consultant, provided the “Public School Network Access and Use” Policy. Shannon Delbridge, Director of Corporate Policy Services, and Lawrence Ryan discussed both the EPDC (Education Professional Development Committee) report and the Instructional Leadership Program for principals. Vince Warner, Director of Testing and Evaluation, provided us with a detailed explanation of the philosophy of the Department concerning both assessment and evaluation.
2. The Committee followed the second recommendation and invited Ann Blackwood, Director of English Program Services for the Department of Education, to our first meeting. Along with other representatives previously mentioned, Ms. Blackwood discussed Internet resources and school board policies for their use in classrooms, the supports in place for struggling readers and writers and the resources and expectations for multi-age classrooms. The Committee also presented the Curriculum resolutions from Council 2009 and expressed some concerns about issues such as the lack of a grade nine Social Studies Curriculum and some timetable concerns with the new O2 program. In

addition, Ms. Blackwood made known the current status of the grade three, six and nine literacy and mathematics assessments.

3. The third recommendation was to solicit Local Presidents to invite teachers to provide the Committee with input and suggestions. The Committee asked the NSTU President to send out the request and we received correspondence from members across Nova Scotia. Having input from a variety of teachers allowed our committee to better understand how teachers feel about the current curriculum available and how it develops in their classrooms.
4. The Department of Education asked the NSTU to facilitate a focus group consultation with the Curriculum Committee to examine the opportunities for and obstacles to implementing professional learning communities in the public school system. In addition, members of the Professional Development Committee were asked to join this conversation. The focus group was lead by Shannon Delbridge and Lawrence Ryan. The summary of this feedback has been provided to the Provincial Executive and local leaders.

Recommendations for the Curriculum Committee of 2010 – 2011:

1. The Curriculum Committee should continue to invite the Director of English Program Services to the first meeting of the Committee in the fall and meet with other representatives from the various divisions within the Nova Scotia Department of Education in future meetings.
2. The Curriculum Committee should continue to report the discussions following the each meeting in the “Curriculum Corner.”
3. The Curriculum Committee should discuss and provide a written comment to the Resolutions Committee regarding actions taken on adopted Resolution 2010-43.

Recommendations for Committee Chair 2010-2011:

The Curriculum Committee recommends to the Nominating Committee that Grant Dunn serve as Chair of the Curriculum Committee for the 2010-2011 school year.

Elizabeth Thomas, Digby
Chair 2009-2010