

Curriculum Corner



As another school year winds down, my time with the Curriculum Committee comes to an end. It's hard to believe that two years have gone by and my term is over. This last year I had the pleasure of being the Chair for the Committee. The duties were not too taxing as Ron Brunton organized and prepared the agendas for the meetings. Thanks to all

committee members for their patience and to Ron for his efforts.

The May 13 meeting began with a review of the Department of Education memo from March 2011 that described the adoption of the Western and Northern Protocol Mathematics program. An implementation schedule is still yet to be decided, but, the program is already underway in a number of provinces and territories. We had the opportunity to examine an overview of the Nova Scotia Virtual School Online Learning Centre. I was surprised and impressed with the list of resources, guides and materials available. Users can connect easily at the following website; <http://nsvs.ednet.ns.ca>. The committee encourages members to take a look at the site; there is a lot of resource material available.

Committee members expressed their colleagues' frustration with the iNSchool implementation. The implementation should have been slower, involved more teacher in-service and been piloted in fewer schools. One member mentioned that staff were finding it time consuming to enter individual student assessment information for each outcome. The committee received a report from our liaison with the Comité representative.

The committee also examined the Minister's response to the Black Learners Advisory Committee (BLAC) Report & Review. We discussed the progress on the recommendations and how it would be reviewed. The report had 63 recommendations that require a vision and plan for implementation. We also looked at Dr. Ben Levin's *Steps to Effective and Sustainable Public Education in Nova Scotia*, which raised a number of points in the ensuing discussion. Although the report was not focused on education funding, there was an undercurrent of cost reduction throughout the report.

Sylvia Paris and Paul Ashe from the African Services Division of the Department of Education presented during the afternoon session. Their presentation highlighted the recommendations of the BLAC Report and the TRIPOD Survey data. The TRIPOD Survey was done with a number of schools in November of 2009. It surveyed students on a variety of topics from school safety and academic achievement, to teacher-student interactions and students' perceptions of school in general. The report was broken down by questions, responses and then by student cultural background. It raises a number of interesting points regarding education for African Nova Scotian and Mi'kmaq students.

Thanks again to all who served on the committee over the last two years. I enjoyed my work with the committee, and especially enjoyed having the opportunities to meet and have conversation with personnel from the Department of Education.

—Grant Dunn, Chair (outgoing)

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