

# Proposed MSBA Convention Resolutions - 2012

## BY-LAWS AMENDMENTS

**BY-LAW #4 – ANNUAL CONVENTION ..... B-01-12**  
(MSBA Executive)

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT an additional section be added to By-Law #4 (12.)  
(g) as follows and the remaining section re-numbered accordingly:**

- (g) **The Resolutions and Policy Committee may declare any board or regional resolution redundant. For the purposes of this section, a resolution may be declared redundant if the same or a similar resolution has been considered at an Annual convention since the most recent general school trustee election. A resolution declared redundant by the Policy and Resolutions Committee may still be brought to convention by the sponsoring board, and will be considered with the consent of two-thirds of the voting delegates.**

Comments:

Throughout the course of recent board visits, association representatives heard repeated concerns around the re-submission of resolutions which have already been debated at a recent annual convention. This proposed by-law amendment would prevent the submission of repeat resolutions between trustee elections unless there is a change in circumstances which would merit reconsideration or the assembly deems reconsideration appropriate.

## MATTERS AFFECTING THE ASSOCIATION

**MSBA MEMBERSHIP FEES ..... M-01-12**  
(MSBA Executive)

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT membership fees paid to MSBA by school boards  
for the period July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013 be \$1,615,522.**

Comments:

The proposed requirement for the 2012-2013 fiscal year represents an increase of 4.4% over the current year. 2.7% of this amount is attributable to increases in annual operating expenditures of the association. The balance of the fee increase – 1.7% is in support of the proposed Education Services/Board Development Consultant position.

The impact of proposed membership fee assessment on member boards is shown in APPENDIX “A” on page 22. Appendix “B” on page 23 provides a breakdown of the membership fee requirement increase with regard to regular operating expenditures and the new consultant position. It also shows the impact of student enrolment changes for each school division.

**MEMBERSHIP IN CANADIAN SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION..... M-02-12**  
(Region 1)

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT the MSBA Executive review in detail the benefits and cost of maintaining membership in the Canadian School Boards Association, submitting a report to the 2013 MSBA Convention for consideration by the members.**

Comments:

Over the past few years there have been discussions and changes at the Canadian School Boards Association. As a result, the provinces of Alberta, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island have withdrawn their membership in CSBA. Further, there have been discussions by Manitoba Trustees as to retaining our membership and at what cost. A formal review of this matter should be undertaken by the Executive with a report submitted to the 2013 Convention for consideration by the members.

**SYMPOSIUM ON MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES..... M-03-12**  
(Regions 5 & 6)

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT MSBA work with Manitoba Education, Manitoba Health and Social Services providers to sponsor a symposium on mental health issues with respect to K-12 school age children and youth.**

Comments:

Mental illness in children is a reality. Dr. Jean M. Clinton from the McMaster University Offord Centre for Child Studies states that: "In Canada, the evidence suggests that between 14-20 percent of children age 4 to 18 suffer from a significant mental illness. That means that approximately 1.2 million children and young people have significant difficulty getting through their day, going to school, enjoying friends and developing skills and talents. The most common issues are anxiety (6.5 percent) conduct problems (3.3 percent,) attention deficit (3.3 percent), depressive disorders (3.1 percent) and substance abuse (0.8 percent). Many of these young people have more than one disorder that causes significant distress and impaired function; often sustained throughout adulthood. Only one in five children in need of treatment, receive it."

The 2006 Kirby Report stated that there was deep concern about the capability of the mental health system to respond to the needs of children and youth. Fragmentation, coupled with underfunding, a shortage of mental health professionals, and a failure to involve younger people and their families in long term treatment solutions, has resulted in the delayed application of adequate treatment interventions.

Providing adequate mental health services to school age children is a responsibility that crosses multiple governmental sectors: Education, Health, Family Services and Consumer Affairs, and Child and Family Services. All sectors have a role to play in the design and implementation of a strategic plan for responsive, community-based mental health services. An opportunity to share the various perspectives of all stakeholders could inform future action and programming for students struggling with mental health issues.

# EDUCATION FINANCE

## **MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES FOR K-12 STUDENTS.....EF-01-12** (Regions 5 & 6)

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT MSBA urge the Minister of Education to advocate for an increase in access to psychiatry and direct therapeutic services to better respond to all K-12 school-aged children and youth who have severe, chronic mental health issues.**

### Comments:

Mental illness in children is a reality. Dr. Jean M. Clinton from the McMaster University Offord Centre for Child Studies states that: “In Canada, the evidence suggests that between 14-20 percent of children age 4 to 18 suffer from a significant mental illness. That means that approximately 1.2 million children and young people have significant difficulty getting through their day, going to school, enjoying friends and developing skills and talents. The most common issues are anxiety (6.5 percent) conduct problems (3.3 percent,) attention deficit (3.3 percent), depressive disorders (3.1 percent) and substance abuse (0.8 percent). Many of these young people have more than one disorder that causes significant distress and impaired function; often sustained throughout adulthood. Only one in five children in need of treatment receive it.”

The 2006 Kirby Report stated that there was deep concern about the capability of the mental health system to respond to the needs of children and youth. Fragmentation, coupled with underfunding, a shortage of mental health professionals and a failure to involve younger people and their families in long term treatment solutions, has resulted in the delayed application of adequate treatment interventions.

When services can be provided as soon as the need is identified, the impact on children, families and communities can be minimized.

## **OCCUPATIONAL/PHYSIOTHERAPY HEALTH SERVICES.....EF-02-12** (Region 1)

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT MSBA lobby the Province of Manitoba to fund the cost of occupational/physiotherapy health services for school aged children.**

### Comments:

School Divisions are presently required to fund and provide occupational/physiotherapy health services for school aged children through the hiring of staff or contracted services. For example, the Brandon School Division expends \$25,000 annually for these direct external services. Occupational/physiotherapy health services are obviously a health cost and not an education cost. Although the school might be the more appropriate location to provide these services to school age children, the Provincial Health Department not school divisions should be responsible for the costs.

**BILL 13 – PREPARING STUDENTS FOR SUCCESS ACT .....EF-03-12**  
(Region 1)

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT MSBA lobby the Provincial Government to provide the necessary funding to meet the Provincial mandated program under Bill 13 for students to attend school to the age of eighteen (18) years.**

Comments:

The Province of Manitoba recently passed Bill 13 – *Preparing Students for Success Act* mandating students to attend school to the age of eighteen (18). This mandate will require school divisions to incur significant additional costs for off-site programming to meet the requirements of some students and/or to employ additional staff for smaller classes or individual programming. These additional costs should be totally supported by the Provincial Government as the program has been mandated by them with no input from school divisions.

**FULL DAY/EVERY DAY KINDERGARTEN .....EF-04-12**  
(Region 1)

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT MSBA urge the Government of Manitoba to fund full day/every day Kindergarten for those school divisions who choose to offer the program.**

Comments:

Government currently funds Kindergarten on a half time basis. Government has also spoken strongly about and has initiatives in place regarding early childhood education. All current educational research stresses the vital importance of early childhood education particularly in regards to literacy and numeracy development. Further, low early development instrument (EDI) and lack of school preparedness by pre-schoolers extenuates the need for early education for our students. Full day/every day Kindergarten would lend stronger support to the education of all children, the system and to government initiatives, i.e. a strong message would be given to the public/community for public education and the great need for the initiatives in early child development. The Province of Ontario has recently accepted the importance of full day/every day kindergarten commencing on a phase-in basis. The next great development in education must take place in this area if the political will to act exists.

**STUDENT SERVICES GRANT .....EF-05-12**  
(Region 1)

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT MSBA lobby the Provincial Government to increase the funding for the Student Services Grant to fully support the programming needs of all students that meet the criteria for Level 1 funding.**

Comments:

Although many school divisions are experiencing a decline in student population across the province, the special needs population is increasing along with the English as an Additional Language students and students living in poverty population. Additionally, level 2 funding support is no longer available to students within the borderline range of cognitive functioning, unless there is a severe behaviour issue. Subsequently, the current level of funding does not cover the costs to adequately meet the needs of all our student population. Manitoba School Divisions must supplement the funding received from the province to meet the Appropriate Educational Programming Regulations and Standards

**FUNDING FOR LEVEL 2 AND LEVEL 3.....EF-06-12**  
(Region 1)

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT MSBA lobby the Provincial Government to increase the funding for level 2 and level 3 categorical grants to help support the costs of maintaining appropriate supports for students.**

Comments:

The funding does not reflect costs related to appropriate programming costs, American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters, transportation costs to access programs not available in the home community. Regulation 155/2005 indicates that students with special needs have a right to be involved in all school activities such as field trips, assemblies and sports days and all extra-curricular activities. The present level of funding does not cover the supports required for before or after school and noon hour supervision.

**CLASS SIZE INITIATIVE.....EF-07-12**  
(Region 1)

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT MSBA lobby the Provincial Government to fully fund capital and operating costs associated with its maximum class size initiative for Kindergarten to Grade 3 classrooms.**

Comments:

This provincial policy direction will require divisions to invest in staff and materials to meet the mandate. In the past, some legislation required school divisions to implement programs or supports and funding needed to meet the obligations was not provided to divisions resulting in local taxpayers funding the difference.

**FUNDING FOR NON-ADJUSTABLE COSTS.....EF-08-12**

(Region 1)

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT MSBA lobby the Provincial Government to review and revise the current funding model to reflect that certain infrastructure, transportation and administration costs are not adjustable and need to be calculated outside of the population based model.**

Comments:

Declining enrollment is a reality in many rural school divisions in the province. The Manitoba Government has a funding formula based on enrollment. Certain costs are not adjustable based on student population.

Many other jurisdictions in the country have done extensive research and developed funding models that reflect the “sticky” costs related to providing a quality education to students regardless of student population. Efficiencies that can be achieved in larger more concentrated populations are not achievable in environments where infrastructure costs are increasing along with transportation costs. There also remains a need to provide administrative supports regardless of student population size to support quality education.

**PROVINCIAL SOFTWARE PACKAGE FOR STUDENT DATA COLLECTION .....EF-09-12**

(Region 3)

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT MSBA petition the Minister of Education to fund a provincial software package and provide appropriate training that supports effective data collection of student learning.**

Comments:

As the provincial government is in the process of implementing provincial report cards and assessment measures to improve communication and reporting to parents, it is vital that school divisions have the appropriate software to implement these programs. Additionally, school divisions are using assessment data to inform educational decisions and a consistent data collection tool would enhance and support good programming decisions.

**PAYMENT OF TUITION FEES .....EF-10-12**

(Region 4)

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT MSBA request the Department of Education to work with Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada to ensure the development of a systematic and regular payment of tuition fees to public school boards by First Nations, without undue hardship to First Nations.**

Comments:

Over the years First Nations with students in public schools have generated tuition fees owed for the attendance of these First Nation students and while some First Nations have made regular efforts to reimburse school divisions which are owed these fees, some are less able to do so.

Since these funds for student tuition fees originate from the federal government, and since the federal per student funding falls below that provided for provincial public schools, it has been a burden for First Nations to complete the payment of these outstanding tuition fees to school divisions.

As tuition fees owed are held to be an asset to a public school division, the outstanding tuition fees limit the funds available to the school division

**FUNDING FOR FIRST NATIONS SCHOOLS .....EF-11-12**  
(Regions 5 & 6)

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT MSBA urge the Province of Manitoba to lobby the Federal Government to ensure equitable, stable and secure funding for First Nations schools in order to improve the quality of education and success rate for First Nations students.**

Comments:

“First Nations youth are the youngest and fastest-growing segment of our population. Their share of the labour force will triple over the next 20 years. First Nations youth who complete high school are twice as likely to be employed, and those who get university degrees triple their earning potential. Increasing their graduation rates to match those of other Canadians would inject an additional \$71-billion into Canada’s economy over the next 10 years...

Investing in First Nations is a long-term, sustainable stimulus plan for Canada’s economy. And yet our learners languish. First Nations children receive \$2,000 less per year than non-aboriginal students. Schools lack libraries, computers, even heat and drinking water. Some of our communities lack permanent schools. Simple fairness dictates that we address this intolerable inequity.

*Grand Chief Shawn Atleo  
February 19, 2010 – Globe and Mail*

Federally funded First Nations schools are supported at a level below provincially funded schools. First Nations students often attend poor facilities with inadequate resources and experience high teacher turnover.

**CONNECTIVITY FOR 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY LEARNING .....EF-12-12**  
(Region 1 and Region 3)

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT MSBA lobby provincial and federal governments to provide the necessary infrastructure to ensure high quality, high speed connectivity to serve the learning needs of 21<sup>st</sup> century students in Manitoba regardless of where they may live in the province.**

Comments:

The current level of connectivity available in Manitoba schools often falls far short of what is needed to meet the programming needs of students. This is particularly so in northern and rural school divisions across the province.

The long-standing federal promise of broadband access for every community remains unfulfilled. In Manitoba, organizations like MSBA and MASS have been asking the government for over 7 years to create equal connectivity to all schools in Manitoba. The Manitoba Network Initiative (MTS) for fibre networks is not only too expensive but does not serve the speed required to service the 21<sup>st</sup> century classroom. Many divisions in Manitoba and most city divisions have given up and “laid their own fibre”. Costs for connectivity infrastructure are significant and some divisions have taken out a ten year loan to finance their tech plans. For others, costs are simply prohibitive. In Manitoba, the government has fallen short in connecting all school divisions with equal technological access. Both the federal government and the Province of Manitoba need to be held accountable for the connectivity deficiencies across the province which continues to disadvantage Manitoba students and schools.

**AMENDMENT TO MSBA POLICY EF-01-08, re BROADBAND ACCESS.....EF-13-12**  
(Regions 5 & 6)

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT the following statement be added to current Manitoba School Boards Association Policy EF-01-08, Education Funding and School Finance:**

- *That affordable, high-speed, high-capacity broadband access be provided for all Manitoba students regardless of where they attend school within Manitoba.*

Comments:

Information technology has the potential to be a real equalizer in providing Manitoba students access to a broad range of learning opportunities currently unavailable to many schools and students living in rural, northern and remote regions of the province. High-speed, high-capacity information technology to permit such access is cost prohibitive for many of Manitoba’s school divisions and local ratepayers. The provincial schools funding model should provide the necessary financial support to ensure that high quality, high capacity 21<sup>st</sup> century information technology is readily available for all students regardless of where they may live in the province.

# STUDENTS & INSTRUCTION

## **K-3 CLASS SIZE LIMITATION..... SI-02-12** (Regions 5 & 6)

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT MSBA urge the Minister of Education to adopt flexible and practical rules with respect to the application and implementation of the cap of 20 students in grades K-3 including permitting school divisions to meet the guidelines if 90% of its grade K-3 classes are at 20 students or less and thereby allowing a maximum of 10% of its grade K-3 classes to exceed the limit of 20 students.**

### Comments:

If the Province were to apply the class size limitation of 20 students in grades K-3 in a rigid and inflexible manner, there will no doubt be unintended consequences. The consequences could include the relocation of students, changes to catchment boundaries, more restrictions on the acceptance of Schools of Choice students, burdens on parents who are in-division Schools of Choice parents who have exercised in-division Schools of Choice so that their children can be attending the school in which the students daycare centre is located, and increased costs associated with the creation of additional classrooms to stay within the limitation. In addition, if the implementation caused the creation of very small classes, with perhaps 10 students in a class, social and emotional interactions in such a small group can be a limiting factor to the learning environment.

It is anticipated that there may be schools where there could be one or more grade K-3 classes that exceed the class size limit by 1 or 2 students. It would seem reasonable to allow flexibility to school divisions to operate some classes at that level where it is impractical and costly to create additional classes, if the vast majority of the school division's classes are at, or below the class size limit. This flexibility was provided to school districts in Ontario when they implemented a similar class size cap for their Primary classes over a five year period from 2003 to 2008.

## **TRANSFER OF STUDENT CUMULATIVE FILES ..... SI-03-12** (Region 1)

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT MSBA request The Canadian School Boards Association to initiate a dialogue with The Council of Ministers of Education Canada to facilitate the efficient inter-provincial exchange of pupil information (i.e. cumulative files, special education information) for the appropriate placement of K-12 students transferring between public schools in provincial/territorial jurisdictions.**

### Comments:

Student cumulative files contain important information to support appropriate programming for students and these files currently are not being shared between provinces in an efficient manner,

if they are shared at all. This situation works to the disadvantage of students in terms of their appropriate placement and required support to be successful learners.

**EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PARTNERSHIPS.....SI-04-12**  
(Region 3)

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT MSBA petition the Provincial Government to implement a Public Awareness Campaign for strong early childhood education partnerships with parents and the broader community.**

Comments:

Over the past several years there has been considerable evidence linking strong pre-school programs with student readiness for academic success. EDI results strongly indicate that many of our children are entering the school system without the required tools. Parents play an important role in preparing their children for school and it is for this reason that a strong public awareness campaign could provide vital supports to pre-school children and their parents.

**SCHOOL BOARDS**

**SCHOOL REVIEW PROCESS GUIDELINES .....SB-01-12**  
(MSBA Executive and Regions 5 & 6)

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Province of Manitoba work with MSBA to review the impact of changing community demographics/school enrolments on public schools and by June 2013, develop clear guidelines for school review processes and local decision-making with regard to school infrastructure usage.**

Comments:

Demographic changes in Manitoba over the past two decades have had a significant impact upon student enrolment numbers and patterns in K-12 public schools across the province. Enrolment declines and shifts coupled with the challenges of aging infrastructure and restrictions on school board decision-making with regard to school infrastructure have had the effect of increasing school division operating expenditures and at the same time restricting school board flexibility to address facilities issues.

A cross-Canada comparison of current school review processes legislation and policy reveals that Manitoba's legislation places the most restrictions, by far, on school board decision-making in this regard. Moreover, where other provinces have articulated, either in legislation or policy, minimal process requirements for review and decision-making processes about school facilities, Manitoba's legislation is largely silent in this area.

School boards in Manitoba are charged with ensuring appropriate response to student learning needs in a cost-effective manner that takes into account community priorities and perspectives. Decisions about school facilities should properly be determined by school boards and their communities through a comprehensive and inclusive process of review and consultation.

**MORATORIUM ON SCHOOL CLOSURE .....SB-02-12**  
(Regions 5 & 6)

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Province of Manitoba end the moratorium on school closure.**

Comments:

The Provincial moratorium on school closure prevents Manitoba School Divisions from effectively managing 'Operating and Capital' expenditures. The operation of school buildings with low enrollments and in close proximity to one another, leads to costly duplication of services. Every dollar that is spent on unnecessary staffing levels and capital expenditures takes away resources from classroom programs.

Over the past twenty years the St. James-Assiniboia School Division has consolidated or closed 16 schools and that has allowed the reallocation of funds, which were used to enhance existing programs in remaining schools.

By not allowing school divisions to work with their local community in trying to determine the best way to allocate resources and enhance programming the provincial government is greatly restricting the ability of school divisions to manage their affairs in a cost-effective manner which best serves the interests of students and communities.

**TRANSPORTATION**

**SCHOOL BUS SAFETY ..... T-01-12**  
(Region 1)

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT MSBA lobby the Province of Manitoba Justice Department to enforce the traffic laws regarding school bus drive bys when red flashing lights are operating and the stop arm is out while loading/unloading students.**

Comments:

The safety of students is very important to school divisions including school bus safety. School Divisions strive to provide a safe environment for our transported students by providing training for both our school bus drivers and students. It is frustrating when drivers of vehicles who pass school buses through the flashing overhead lights while loading school children are not prosecuted according to the law. The safety of our students is important and Provincial enforcement of the law regarding school bus pass-bys is necessary.

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