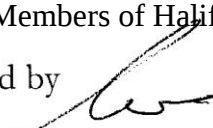


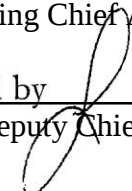
Item No. 3
Halifax Regional Council
March 15, 2011
Committee of the Whole

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

Original Signed by 

SUBMITTED BY:

Wayne Anstey, Acting Chief Administrative Officer

Original Signed by 

Mike Labrecque, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: March 9, 2011

SUBJECT: Renewal of Supplementary Education Funding Agreement

ORIGIN

On March 27, 2007 Halifax Regional Council and the Halifax Regional School Board (HRSB) signed a four year agreement on funding levels and reform of Supplementary Education. This agreement expires at the end of the 2010-2011 fiscal year. HRM and HRSB staff have jointly reviewed the existing agreement and discussed options for any proposed new agreement.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Halifax Regional Council authorize the Mayor and Municipal Clerk to extend the agreement with the Halifax Regional School Board concerning Supplementary Education for a further four year period, as outlined in Attachment 1 of this report.

BACKGROUND

Since 1996-97, HRM Regional Council has debated the issues surrounding Supplementary Education. While Education policy clearly rests with the Provincial Government and the school boards, the HRM Charter requires the municipality to provide supplementary funding to the Halifax Regional School Board (HRSB) for use in the former Cities of Halifax and Dartmouth. These funds are “guaranteed” at the 1995-96 level although the guarantee may be reduced by 10% per year. In addition, HRM has provided funding to the HRSB for use in the former County and in Bedford. No guarantee is attached to these funds. Under the guarantee, HRM must provide at least \$15.3m for supplementary education in the upcoming 2011-12 fiscal year.

As of 2006-07, provincial legislation requires HRM to provide comparable funds to the Conseil Scolaire Acadien Provincial (CSAP), the Province-wide French school board. CSAP, however, is not a party to this agreement. Its position has been that it is neither for nor against supplementary education, but, if HRSB receives such funding it must be shared with CSAP.

In March 2007, Regional Council decided to take a longer term approach to Supplementary Education, by approving a 4-year agreement with the HRSB. The agreement provided predictability for all parties. It decreased the level of funding to the school boards by \$450,000 per year, for a total reduction of \$1.8 million or roughly 9% over the four years.

At the same time, Regional Council agreed to harmonize the Supplementary Education tax rates over a four-year period. All area rates were unified into one residential and one commercial Supplementary Education rate in 2010-11, as seen in the following table.

Historic Supplementary Education Rates (per \$100 of assessment)						
Residential	1997-98	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Halifax	0.140	0.087	0.060	0.055	0.050	0.045
Dartmouth	0.107	0.073	0.057	0.055	0.050	0.045
Bedford/County	-	0.034	0.044	0.045	0.045	0.045
Commercial	1997-98	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Halifax	0.357	0.222	0.166	0.158	0.144	0.133
Dartmouth	0.272	0.188	0.156	0.158	0.144	0.133
Bedford/County	-	0.034	0.126	0.129	0.127	0.133

Another critical part of the 2007 agreement was a commitment by the HRSB that it would maintain the level of funding in Halifax and Dartmouth for the arts and music programs with a goal of enhancing those programs in the Bedford/County areas. Based on discussions with the HRSB, staff can confirm that they have maintained the basic programs in those areas and regionalized programs and services across the Halifax Regional School Board in the majority of categories where staffing and budget has provided for this option. The board has also increased staffing to the arts and music categories since the inception of the current agreement.

DISCUSSION

In reviewing the existing agreement HRM staff concluded that the existing agreement has provided for the better management of education funds. School administrators are no longer required to segment the funds between differently-taxed jurisdictions. It has provided stable, predictable funding and eliminated what frequently had been a divisive issue. The single tax rate for supplementary funding is a more transparent system to taxpayers, making it clear that all taxpayers pay the same tax rate, thus encouraging an equitable distribution of funds for enhanced education. The agreement has allowed the HRSB to focus on its business of education with the certainty of knowing future HRM funding. HRM has been able to focus on other fiscal matters during the period of budget preparation and debate.

At the same time, education remains a Provincial responsibility. HRM has no mandate or responsibility for education and cannot direct the school board as to how to spend funds. Supplementary education remains a cost to the municipality at a time when there are strong demands and pressures on existing services and for new, enhanced services. The existing agreement saved HRM \$1.8m (almost 9%) over its four year life.

In considering the renewal of the agreement, the value of education to Halifax cannot be underestimated. Education ties closely into many community outcome areas including economic prosperity. In reviewing the agreement, staff considered a number of factors. First, there is a decline in provincial funding for education. This is complemented by the increased costs of providing education services. Just like municipal services, education is facing increasing inflationary pressure. Funding reductions under the existing agreement have clearly led to downward pressure on education services in HRM. A gradual decline in student enrollment has offset some of that pressure.

At the same time, HRM Council (and the UNSM) has generally recognized that education is a provincial mandate and not a municipal service. While HRM could make immediate and substantial cuts to supplementary education, such an approach is not in the best interests of the community. Rather, as student enrollment continues to decline it makes more sense to plan for longer-term changes.

Staff of HRM and HRSB did consider a method of determining funding levels based on changes in enrollment and inflation. (Enrollment in HRSB and CSAP, for instance, is estimated to decline by almost 6% over the next four years). While this system would have some appeal, it would be more complex than the current approach of reducing supplementary education funding by a flat amount of \$450,000 per year. On balance, an extension of the current agreement with a reduction of \$450,000 each year is probably the most effective approach.

It is important to recognize that the programs and services provided through Supplementary Funding are meant to be enhancements of the regular programs provided through Provincial funding. Cost pressures related to collective agreement salaries will affect the ability to fund the current FTE's (Full Time Equivalents) since about 95% of the funds go directly to the classroom or supports to students. As the provider of education, ultimately, the board will make decisions to reduce or eliminate some programs.

Past and future funding levels under the proposed new agreement would be:

		Total	Change	
Base Year	2006-2007	20,846,200		
Year 1	2007-2008	20,396,100	-450,100	First Agreement: Total reduction of 1.8m.
Year 2	2008-2009	19,946,100	-450,000	
Year 3	2009-2010	19,496,100	-450,000	
Year 4	2010-2011	19,046,100	-450,000	
Year 1	2011-2012	18,596,100	-450,000	Second Agreement: Total reduction of \$1.8m.
Year 2	2012-2013	18,146,100	-450,000	
Year 3	2013-2014	17,696,100	-450,000	
Year 4	2014-2015	17,246,100	-450,000	
Total			-3,600,100	

Note: Amounts include HRSB and CSAP funds, they exclude any deficit or surplus.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

If approved, funding levels will decline by \$450,000 in 2011-2012 and each year thereafter. This adjustment will be reflected in future area tax rates. Since funds have been raised through an area rate they would not be automatically transferred for use in providing municipal services.

Funding must be split between HRSB and CSAP based on the number of students. Under the proposed agreement the estimated funding levels for each school board are:

	Current	Proposed Agreement			
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
HRSB	18,493,600	18,028,300	17,558,500	17,088,200	16,621,900
CSAP	552,500	567,800	587,600	607,900	624,200
Total	19,046,100	18,596,100	18,146,100	17,696,100	17,246,100

Nothing in the proposed agreement restricts HRM's ability to reduce the level of guaranteed funding. This guarantee can be reduced independent of the amount of funds actually provided. Under the guarantee, HRM must provide at least \$15.3m for supplementary education in the upcoming 2011-12 fiscal year. This is \$3.7m less than the current level of funding. If HRM wished it could reduce the guarantee as low as \$13.5m yet still provide \$18,596,100 in funding as per the proposed agreement.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES/BUSINESS PLAN

This report complies with the Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating, Project and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Project and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The HRSB has been consulted over the past few months. CSAP has been notified that negotiations are underway, but, it is not a party to the agreement. The proposed direction is close to the existing agreement and consistent with policy over the past four year and no specific communication plan with the public is required.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Regional Council could maintain supplementary education funding at the current level of \$19,046,100 per year. This option will help reduce salary cost pressures that will ultimately result in cuts to programs and services.
2. Regional Council could opt to provide some consideration for future cost escalation (inflation) by adding a 1% escalation factor to the per-student funding to the school boards. This would allow the HRSB and CSAP to maintain more of their supplementary education funding programs. Under this approach the 2011-2012 budget would be almost flat. Over 4 years it would reduce by an estimated \$400,000 or 2% of the total.
3. Regional Council could opt to reduce both the guarantee and the supplementary funding by the legislated 10% per annum. This would produce a decrease of \$1.8m per year and allow a reduction in the supplementary education tax rates. Or, HRM Regional Council could reduce the 2011-2012 to the guaranteed amount of \$15.3m (a reduction of \$3.7m plus the allowable \$1.8m) for a total reduction of \$5.5m.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 - Proposed Agreement - Supplementary Education Funding, 2011-2014

Attachment 2 - Agreement - Supplementary Education Funding, 2007-2010

Attachment 3 - Arts and Music Discussion

Attachment 4 - Supplementary Fund – FTE's by Year

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/cagenda.html> then choose the appropriate meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

Report Prepared by: Andre MacNeil, Financial Consultant, 490-6241

Report Approved by: _____
Bruce Fisher, Manager, Fiscal & Tax Policy, 490-4491

Report Approved by: _____
Cathie O'Toole, CGA, Director of Finance, 490-6308

Original Signed

AGREEMENT
Supplementary Education Funding
February 2011

Introduction

Both HRM and Halifax Regional School Board (HRSB) recognize the need to develop a long term supplementary education funding.

Supplementary education funding provides significant benefits to students of the Halifax Regional School Board. During the 2007-2011 time frames HRM and the HRSB had an agreed level of education funding. This agreement replaces that agreement of March 2007.

Guiding Principles

1. Supplementary education funding is supported by HRM and HRSB as a means of enhancing the Public School Program (PSP) through augmenting existing PSP Programs and/or providing new programs and services not covered by the PSP.
2. HRM and HRSB support stable and predictable supplementary education funding.
3. HRM and HRSB support supplementary education funding being available on an equitable basis to all students and schools throughout the municipality based on HRSB's assessment of educational needs.
4. HRM and HRSB support a standardized supplementary education funding tax rate throughout the entire HRM.

Proposal

1. In 2010-2011 Halifax Regional Municipality provided \$19,046,100 in education funding to the Halifax Regional School Board and to Conseil Scolaire Acadien Provincial (CSAP).
2. Total supplementary funding, to be shared between HRSB and Conseil Scolaire Acadien Provincial (CSAP), shall be provided in the following annual amounts for the next four fiscal years:

2011-12	-	\$18,596,100
2012-13	-	\$18,146,100
2013-14	-	\$17,696,100
2014-15	-	\$17,246,100

SIGNED, SEALED AND DELIVERED) **HALIFAX REGIONAL SCHOOL BOARD**
In the presence of)
)
per: _____) per: _____

)
)
per: _____)
)
)
Sealed, Delivered and Attested)
by the proper signing officers o)
Halifax Regional Municipality)
duly authorized on that behalf)
in the presence of:)
)
per: _____)
)
)
per: _____)
)
)

per: _____

HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

per: _____
MAYOR

per: _____
MUNICIPAL CLERK

**Attachment Two -
AGREEMENT
Supplementary Education Funding
March 2007**

Introduction

Both HRM and HRSB recognize the need to develop a long term resolution to the issues surrounding supplementary education funding.

Supplementary education funding provides significant benefits to students of the Halifax Regional School Board. However, the annual process of determining the amount of funding, and its purpose, has created tensions between the Board and HRM.

While there have been several initiatives over the past few years to resolve these issues, final resolution has not been reached.

Staff of HRM and HRSB have recently met to develop this joint proposal for presentation to HRM Council and the Halifax Regional School Board. With full staff support of both organizations, this proposal can resolve the long standing issues regarding supplementary funding.

Guiding Principles

1. Supplementary education funding is supported by HRM and HRSB as a means of enhancing the Public School Program(PSP) through augmenting existing PSP Programs and/or providing new programs and services not covered by the PSP.
2. HRM and HRSB support stable and predictable supplementary education funding.
3. HRM and HRSB support supplementary education funding being available on an equitable basis to all students and schools throughout the municipality based on HRSB's assessment of educational needs.
4. HRM and HRSB support a standardized supplementary education funding tax rate throughout the entire HRM.

Proposal

1. In 2006-07, total supplementary funding for all three areas was \$20,846,200. This consists of Supplementary Education funds levied under Section 530 et seq of the Municipal Government Act (MGA) and area rates targeted for education that are levied under other sections of the MGA. Included in this total is \$2,204,800 of area rates in Halifax and Dartmouth for arts and music. The combined residential tax rates in Halifax were 8.7 cents, Dartmouth 7.3 cents and Bedford/County 3.4 cents.

2. Total supplementary funding, to be shared between HRSB and Conseil Scolaire Acadien Provincial (CSAP), shall be provided in the following annual amounts for the next four fiscal years:

2007-08	-	\$20,396,100
2008-09	-	\$19,946,100
2009-10	-	\$19,496,100
2010-11	-	\$19,046,100

HRSB will not request or seek funds beyond these amounts.

3. HRM shall set the annual tax rates necessary to raise the total supplementary funding as outlined in section 2. The tax rates set within Halifax, Dartmouth and Bedford/County shall be modified over the 4 year period from 2007-08 to 2010-11 such that in 2010-11, the tax rate shall be uniform across the entire HRM.

4. HRM and HRSB will conduct a joint review of this agreement for December 1, 2010 that will consider an extension or renewal of this agreement. That review will look at the current state of educational funding including provincial funding, trends in education and education costs, the consumer price index, HRM's tax base and student enrollment.

5. HRSB commits to maintaining the current level of supplementary education funds spent on arts and music programs in Halifax and Dartmouth with a goal of enhancing these programs over the next four years in the Bedford/County area.

6. There will be no specific educational area rates for targeted areas within the HRM without the approval of HRSB.

7. HRM and HRSB will jointly seek the required changes to the Municipal Government Act including providing the authority to fund an area rate or combination of area rates under this agreement without restriction on where in HRM those funds can be spent. These changes will be effective April 1, 2007.

8. Every year, the HRSB will prepare a brochure in co-operation with HRM that outlines the current years supplementary fund and how/where it will be spent. This brochure will highlight the partnership with HRM in providing this funding and allocating resources to enhance the learning opportunities of HRM children. This brochure will be sent home from schools.

9. The parties acknowledge the requirement to allocate a portion of funding to CSAP as required by Sections 530A and 530B of the Municipal Government Act (MGA). The dollar amounts to be shared shall be allocated as per the formula in Section 530A of the MGA.

10. HRSB agrees to submit to HRM the annual supplementary fund budget and audited financial statements.

11. Nothing in this agreement alters those parts of Section 530 et seq of the MGA which limits the ability of HRM Regional Council to phase-out supplementary education. Council agrees not to exercise the right to phase-out supplementary education during the life of this agreement.
12. This agreement is conditional upon the required changes to the MGA being passed by the House of Assembly and receiving assent and proclamation.
13. This agreement shall remain in effect until March 31st, 2011, however, either party may terminate the agreement earlier by providing a minimum twelve months written notice.

WITNESS that this agreement, made in triplicate, was properly executed by the respective Parties on this ____ Day of _____, A.D., 2007.

SIGNED, SEALED AND DELIVERED	)	<u>HALIFAX REGIONAL SCHOOL BOARD</u>
In the presence of	)	
	)	
per: _____	)	per: _____
	)	
	)	
per: _____	)	per: _____
	)	
	)	
Sealed, Delivered and Attested	)	<u>HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY</u>
by the proper signing officers of	)	
Halifax Regional Municipality	)	
duly authorized on that behalf	)	per: _____
in the presence of:	)	MAYOR
	)	
per: _____	)	per: _____
	)	MUNICIPAL CLERK
	)	
per: _____	)	
	)	
	)	

Arts and Music Discussion

Music

In 2006-2007, the Music allocation provided enhanced classroom music to elementary schools in Halifax and Dartmouth as it had been historically staffed. In an attempt to regionalize services since areas served by the former Halifax County-Bedford District Board now contributed to the HRM Supplementary Education Tax, enhanced music for elementary schools was extended to all schools (10.0 FTEs to 16.4 FTEs). Enrolment decline and the decrease of scheduled music time at the junior high level by the Department of Education have contributed to the decline in the total allocation to 11.8 FTEs.

Fine Arts

The Fine Arts allocation has risen from 16.5 FTEs to 19.7 FTEs over the past four years. Fine Arts is the historical name of the “All City” programs in both the former cities of Halifax and Dartmouth.

Expansion of the current “All City” programs that have historically been offered in Halifax and Dartmouth have been extended to the former County board. There are now two choirs based at O’Connell Drive. The HRSB East Elementary Choir is for Grades 4-6 and the HRSB East Youth Choir is for Grades 7-12. Both of these choirs are open to boys and girls. Students from across the former County schools as far as the Eastern Shore area now attend programs at the Dartmouth Music Centre.

Additionally, the board has initiated the St. Margaret’s Bay Boys Choir (Grades 4-6) for 35 students and the Cantatrice Girls Choir at Cavalier Drive School (Grades 7-12) for 60 students.

Included in this allocation is 2.0 FTEs for Art consultants for the schools in the Halifax West and J. L. Ilesley Families of Schools that provide support to teachers in the delivery of art programs within their classes. The pottery lab based out of the Isabel MacDonald Professional Development Centre in Halifax is now being utilized by students across the board who are bussed to the site for the program. The board is exploring the possibility of an expansion to this program.

Art Instruction

Historically, the SF Art allocation provided enhanced Art for Grades 4-6 in Halifax and enhanced Art for junior high schools in Halifax and Dartmouth. With declining enrolment, the extra allocation at elementary was added to the junior high allocation and re-distributed to all junior highs in the board.

In addition, the Prince Andrew Family of Schools chose to use 1.0 FTE for an Art consultant that provides support to teachers in the delivery of art programs within their classes.

Attachment #4
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SUPPLEMENTARY FUND - FTEs BY YEAR

	BUDGET 2006-2007	BUDGET 2007-2008	BUDGET 2008-2009	BUDGET 2009-2010	BUDGET 2010-2011
HRSB Supplementary Funding Revenues	20,277,800	19,863,400	19,418,200	18,960,000	18,493,600
Allocated Teachers					
Classrooms & Jr. High Specialists	77.9	84.3	56.5	47.9	58.7
Physical Education	5.7	12.2	11.5	11.0	11.1
Music	10.0	16.4	14.9	13.6	11.8
Fine Arts	16.5	18.5	18.9	19.1	19.7
Art Instruction	17.7	17.7	17.2	13.3	16.5
ESL	11.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Junior High Support Teachers	7.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Sub-total	146.3	149.1	119.0	104.9	117.8
Special Education					
Central Allocations:					
Resource Teachers	39.8	36.8	39.5	39.3	39.3
Special Congregated Classes	5.0	5.0	3.0	0.0	0.0
Social Workers	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0
EPAs	46.9	44.0	37.0	32.0	27.0
Family Allocations:					0.0
Behavior Support and CDST	4.0	4.0	6.0	6.0	6.0
Sub-total	101.7	95.8	91.5	83.3	78.3
Library and Guidance					
Guidance	10.4	10.4	10.4	10.4	10.4
Library Support Specialists	57.9	57.9	67.0	67.0	67.0
Sub-total	68.3	68.3	77.4	77.4	77.4
School Administration					
Vice Principal/Principal	11.6	11.1	21.1	21.1	0.0
Sub-total	11.6	11.1	21.1	21.1	0.0
Other					
Student Services Secretaries	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7
4 Plus Teachers/ELO	7.0	7.0	9.0	9.0	9.0
Secretaries	9.8	10.4	11.1	11.1	1.0
African NS Student Support	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0
Sub-total	20.5	21.1	23.8	23.8	13.7
	BUDGET 2006-2007	BUDGET 2007-2008	BUDGET 2008-2009	BUDGET 2009-2010	BUDGET 2010-2011
Teaching Staff	230.1	229.4	205.0	187.7	179.5
Support Staff	118.3	116.0	127.8	122.8	107.7

SUPPLEMENTARY FUND - FTE CHANGES BY YEAR

Page 2 of 3

SUPPLEMENTARY FUND - FTEs BY YEAR

	Employee Group	BUDGET 2007-2008	BUDGET 2008-2009	BUDGET 2009-2010	BUDGET 2010-2011
Allocated Teachers					
Classrooms & Jr. High Specialists	NSTU	84.3	56.5	47.9	58.7
Physical Education	NSTU	12.2	11.5	11.0	11.1
Music	NSTU	16.4	14.9	13.6	11.8
Fine Arts	NSTU	18.5	18.9	19.1	19.7
Art Instruction	NSTU	17.7	17.2	13.3	16.5
ESL	NSTU	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Junior High Support Teachers	NSTU	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
		149.1	119.0	104.9	117.8
Special Education					
Central Allocations:					
Resource Teachers	NSTU	36.8	39.5	39.3	39.3
Special Congregated Classes	NSTU	5.0	3.0	0.0	0.0
Social Workers	NSTU	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0
EPAs	CUPE	44.0	37.0	32.0	27.0
Family Allocations:					
Behavior Support and CDST	NSTU	4.0	6.0	6.0	6.0
		95.8	91.5	83.3	78.3
Library and Guidance					
Guidance	NSTU	10.4	10.4	10.4	10.4
Library Support Specialists	CUPE	57.9	67.0	67.0	67.0
		68.3	77.4	77.4	77.4
School Administration					
Vice Principal/Principal	NSTU	11.1	21.1	21.1	0.0
		11.1	21.1	21.1	0.0
Other					
Student Services Secretaries	NSGEU	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7
4 Plus Teachers/ELO	NSTU/CUPE	7.0	9.0	9.0	9.0
Secretaries	NSGEU	10.4	11.1	11.1	1.0
African NS Student Support Workers	CUPE	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0
		21.1	23.8	23.8	13.7
		BUDGET 2007-2008	BUDGET 2008-2009	BUDGET 2009-2010	BUDGET 2010-2011
Teaching Staff		229.4	205.0	187.7	179.5
Support Staff		116.0	127.8	122.8	107.7

Supplementary Funding Changes:

Halifax Regional School Board	19,863,400	19,418,200	18,960,000	18,493,600
% Change		-2.2%	-2.4%	-2.5%
Conseil scolaire acadien provincial	532,700	527,900	536,100	552,500
% Change		-0.9%	1.6%	3.1%
Total Supplementary Funding	20,396,100	19,946,100	19,496,100	19,046,100
% Change		-2.2%	-2.3%	-2.3%

Contract Rate Changes:**NSTU**

Effective Date	01/08/2007	01/08/2008	01/08/2009	01/08/2010
% Rate Increase	2.90%	2.90%	2.90%	**

CUPE

Effective Date	01/08/2007	01/08/2008	01/08/2009	01/08/2010
% Rate Increase	2.90%	2.90%	**	**

NSGEU

Effective Date	01/10/2007	01/10/2008	01/10/2009	01/10/2010
% Rate Increase	2.90%	2.90%	2.90%	2.90%

** Currently under negotiation

Music and Arts Budget	3,020,100	3,426,100	3,261,200	3,501,200
% Change		13.4%	-4.8%	7.4%
% of Total Supp Fund Budget	15.2%	17.6%	17.2%	18.9%