

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
9TH ASSEMBLY, 8TH SESSION**

TABLED DOCUMENT NO. 25-82(2)

TABLED ON MAY 18, 1982

BRIEF TO THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
COMMISSIONED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF
THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES:

The Board of Trustees of the Yellowknife Separate Education District #2 wishes to apprise the members of this Special Committee on Education of certain concerns arising from the proposals for education in the Northwest Territories as evidenced in the document "Learning: Tradition and Change in the Northwest Territories." The concerns which the Board of Trustees wish to address through this brief are as follows:

- a) The description, present and future, of the Yellowknife Separate Education District #2. (See page 28 of "Learning: Tradition and Change in the Northwest Territories." Copy attached).
- b) The requirement for future Divisional Boards of Education to have and apparently maintain a student enrollment of at least 1,000 students. (See page 30 & 31 of "Learning: Tradition and Change in the Northwest Territories." Copies attached).
- c) The segregation of grades 11 and 12 from the Separate School System. (See page 48 of "Learning: Tradition and Change in the Northwest Territories". Copy attached).

Dealing with these matters in order, the Board of Trustees asks the Committee to consider the following submissions:

- a) The description of the Yellowknife Separate Education District #2 as shown on page 28 of "Learning: Tradition and Change in

the Northwest Territories" is incorrect as the word "Separate" has been omitted. It is the Board of Trustees understanding that this omission is as a result of mere oversight. Nevertheless, the Board of Trustees feels obliged to draw this omission to the attention of this Committee, particularly for purposes of insuring that in any future description of the Divisional Board of Education created in substitution for the present Separate Education District #2, the wording in that description will clearly convey the concept of a Separate School System. It is respectfully submitted that this objective may be most readily achieved by including the words "Separate Catholic Divisional Board of Education" in any description of the Divisional Board of Education created in substitution for the present Separate Education District.

- b) The Board of Trustees has been assured that the Board will continue albeit, as a Board of a yet to be created Separate Catholic Divisional Board of Education. That being so, the reference in "Learning: Tradition and Change in the Northwest Territories" on page 30 & 31 to a minimum student enrollment of 1,000 being necessary for the creation of an educational division should be specifically waived in that said document. There is presently a specific waiver of that requirement in respect of three of the ten proposed education divisions, namely: the Beaufort, Inuvik, and MacKenzie-Great Bear education divisions. Additionally, although not apparently addressed specifically, the Board of

Trustees assumes that if student enrollment were to drop below 1,000 that would not jeopardize the continuation of a Divisional Board of Education. It is therefore, respectfully submitted, that an appropriate course of action by this committee would be to include in "Learning: Tradition and Change in the Northwest Territories" and any documents emanating therefrom a specific waiver of any minimum student enrollment and the maintenance of any minimum student enrollment in respect of the proposed Separate Catholic Education Division which will be created in substitution for the present Separate Education District #2.

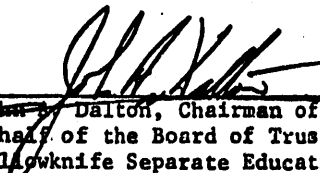
- c) The proposed segregation of grades 11 and 12 from the school system presently administered by the Board of Trustees is viewed with utmost concern. Such a proposal is perceived as having associated with it ramifications which may not be readily apparent and it clearly invites comment with respect the right to maintain and enjoy certain guaranteed religious rights. The Board of Trustees is, however, for the purposes of this brief concerned with the proposed splitting of a viable, healthy system of education. As a Board of a Separate School System, the Board of Trustees is of the view that its mandate it to provide full educational services for those persons of the Roman Catholic faith within its Territorial jurisdiction. Any proposal that would have the result of reducing the ability of the Board of Trustees to provide those services would of nec-

cessity result in both political and legal challenges to such proposals. Such a course of action on the part of the Board must clearly be seen by the members of this Committee as being unavoidable, bearing in mind those legal guarantees afforded Separate School Systems and bearing in mind the accountability required of those invested with the care and stewardship of the Separate School System. It is respectfully submitted that while the concept of an Arctic College serving a high school function for outlying education divisions may well be desirable it is inappropriate to apply those same considerations to the Separate Education District #2. Further, the Board of Trustees respectfully submits that as the Separate School System, as presently established meets all the needs of the community it serves, the removal of grades 11 and 12 will seriously and detrimentally affect the ability of the Board to meet those needs, and accordingly any Separate Catholic Education Division to be created must include grades 11 and 12.

It must be born in mind that the thrust of "Learning: Tradition and Change in the Northwest Territories" is community developed and serviced education. That being the case, it cannot be forgotten that the Roman Catholic community is as much an identifiable community as is an ethnic or cultural group. Clearly, if this Committee is to give effect to meaningful community participation in the creation and maintaining of both educational curricula and systems for the delivery of those curricula effect must be given to the requests of the Board above identified.

Having expressed the foregoing concerns, the Board wishes to indicate that there are many aspects of "Learning: Tradition and Change in the Northwest Territories" that are positive and forward looking with respect to education in the Northwest Territories.

All of which is respectfully submitted,



John A. Dalton, Chairman of the Board on
behalf of the Board of Trustees of the
Yellowknife Separate Education District #2.

