

Resolution 2A

EDUCATION FUNDING IN NOVA SCOTIA (PASSED)

⇒ District of East Hants

WHEREAS the Province is taking steps to bring its financial position into balance which is an honorable objective; and

WHEREAS municipalities are concerned about the impact on municipal taxpayers as these decisions are implemented; and

WHEREAS the Province has reduced the overall funding to school boards; and

WHEREAS despite the reduction in overall funding, municipalities are required to pay the same rate per \$100 of uniform assessment as in 2010/2011; and

WHEREAS increases in uniform assessment will result in municipalities paying *more* money in education in 1012-13 compared to the previous year; and

WHEREAS there is only one taxpayer; and

WHEREAS it is fundamentally wrong to mislead taxpayers to think that their financial obligation for education is decreasing while their municipal tax bill is increasing to pay the increased education costs and their Provincial tax obligation is also increasing; and

WHEREAS municipalities struggle to meet financial obligations similar to the provincial government yet finds itself helpless to guard against erosion of taxation ability by the downloading of provincial education costs;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities write the Minister of Education indicating that they make responsible decisions around the split of the financial responsibility for the new education funding amounts between the two orders of government; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities write the Minister of Education requesting that the Department provide to the UNSM the overall Provincial numbers which demonstrate the redistribution of education funding between the Province and municipalities.

Forwarded to:
Minister of the Department of Education

RESPONSE:

This is in response to your letter of October 4, 2012, regarding education funding concerns.

With respect to resolution 2A -Education Funding in Nova Scotia- I understand notification of the decision to maintain the mandatory municipal contribution rate to education at the 2010-11 school level was provided to the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities last year.

Municipal contribution to education is commonplace in this country. As you know, in Nova Scotia it is an established practice that has existed for decades. For the 2012-13 fiscal year, funding to public school education is going down by \$15.4 million, to \$1,044,283,000. The mandatory municipal contribution to education will rise by \$11.2M, to a total of \$202,710,900.

There are a number of education costs such as teachers' pension, health insurance, and P3 school lease costs that are not cost shared with municipalities. When all costs are factored into public school education, the mandatory municipal contribution from Nova Scotia municipalities is approximately 15.7% of the total cost. This compares very favorably with Quebec, and is substantially below contribution rates in Ontario and Western Canada that regularly exceed 20-30% each year.

*The Honourable Ramona Jennex
Minister
November 13, 2012*