

TRUSTEES DECLINE

To Accede to the Teacher's Request for a Reconsideration of Salaries.

Statements Made by the Teachers are Characterized as Inaccurate.

At last night's meeting of the Trustee Board, the teachers' protest against the recent cut in salaries was severely criticized by several members of the board, and the teachers will be notified that the trustees cannot comply with their request to have the salaries readjusted.

Chairman Hayward presided, and all the members with the exception of Trustee Lovell were present.

Mrs. Scalfie, secretary of the local Council of Women, forwarded a copy of the resolution passed by the Council, protesting against the recent cut in salaries and the levying of a fee in the High School.

Miss Mable Bunting, pupil teacher, who had been acting as substitute for Miss Arowsmith, informed the board that she has accepted a school in the country.

Col. Baker, minister of education, wrote enclosing a copy of the changes to the act and regulations recently passed by the Council of Public Instruction. The communication was received and filed.

Mrs. A. Glover, of Humboldt street, asked permission to send her child to the South Park school. Referred to a committee to report on each for the board.

H. Fairall, of Victoria West, in answer to a communication from the secretary asking why Mr. Fairall wished his children to attend the Central school replied that he was tired of the whole business and suggested that the trustees send the trustee officer to compel his children to attend school. Received and laid on the table.

W. J. Dowler acknowledged the receipt of the board's estimates for the coming year. Received and filed.

J. N. Muir, fourth assistant of the High school offered to take the rest of the term for nothing. He also asked that the pupils in that division be allowed to attend the rest of the term without a fee. Received and laid on the table.

Donald Dallas, first teacher in Rock Bay school, asked for an increased salary. Received and laid on the table.

Miss Kermoch, first assistant, and Mr. J. Stephenson, second assistant in the Victoria West school, protested against receiving less salary than the teachers in similar positions in the other schools.

Principal Tait wrote regarding the matter, and also asking that he be given the same salary as the other principals. These communications were referred to a special committee consisting of Mrs. Grant and Messrs. Belyea and McMicking.

The following communication was received from the "Victoria Teachers' Association":

To the Board of School Trustees: Mrs. Grant and Gentlemen—Inasmuch as at a meeting of the trustee board it was resolved to reduce teachers' salaries, we, the members of the Victoria Teachers' Institute, respectfully petition that the action of your board be reconsidered, for these reasons:

1. That considering the responsibility attached to the positions and the nature of the service which we render, the present salaries are not commensurate with the wishes of the majority of the citizens.

2. That should the proposed reduction take effect, the salaries in Victoria would be far below those paid in any other city or town of the province.

3. And further we would respectfully direct the attention of trustees of Vancouver for the current year, viz., fifty-two thousand and eighty-five dollars, uncontrolled, and seventy thousand dollars for necessary building repairs and additions.

4. That should such action must be necessary, the result in the loss of the profession of its best teachers, and the consequent lowering of the status of the schools.

5. That there are open to the board other avenues of retrenchment not attended with such serious consequences to the cause of education.

E. F. DORAN, Secretary of Victoria Teachers' Institute. Trustee Belyea was of the opinion that the teachers should receive the respect that a statement—a statement full of inaccuracies—he was at a loss which way to treat them. When teachers were simply talking through their teeth and bonnets. The covert threat in the communication which meant that the teachers would either resign or not do their work, was anything but creditable to them. The dignity of the communication was received and filed without answering the same. If any teacher feels aggrieved, this is the time to get out. When teachers say that the salaries here are lower than in any other city in the province they are saying what is inaccurate. The salaries in Vancouver, New Westminster and Nanaimo are lower. To say that there are other avenues of retrenchment, they probably meant the telephones and the secretary's salary, which in all amounted to \$920 per year. The teachers don't elect the trustees, neither did anonymous writers in the newspapers. The teachers go too far when they send such a statement.

Trustee McMicking thought the teachers were a little hasty in sending such a communication. Some of their assertions were mere speculations. Such a reduction could not be made without some discrepancies, which would be rectified by the board.

Chairman Hayward also considered the statement of the teachers grossly inaccurate. The salaries in Vancouver are not higher than in this city.

Trustee Yates moved that the Teachers' Association be informed that as the estimates are already in the hands of the board, it is not possible to see its way clear at the present time, to comply with the request of the teachers.

Trustee McMicking in seconding the resolution, stated that he did not think the teachers were entirely responsible for their action. They were urged on by agitators and demagogues, and after giving the reduction more consideration a better feeling would exist among them.

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