

Public Schools Branch
Twenty First Public Board of Directors Meeting
November 14, 2018

Minutes

The Board of Directors for the Public Schools Branch met on Wednesday, November 14, 2018 at LM Montgomery Elementary.

Present: Susan Willis, Board Chair
Harvey MacEwen
Dale Sabean

Also in Attendance:

Parker Grimmer, Director of Public Schools Branch
Erin Johnston, Assistant Director
Becky Chaisson, Director of Corporate Services
Terri MacAdam, Director of Student Services
Karen Redmond, Manager of Policy and Planning
Janet Perry-Payne, EAL/FAL Program Administrator
Tanya Tremere, Information Officer
Sheri Gauthier, Confidential Board Secretary

1. Call to Order and Welcome

The meeting was called to order at 7:32 p.m. The Board Chair welcomed those in attendance.

2. Approval of Agenda

11/14/01 **It was moved by Harvey MacEwen and seconded by Dale Sabean that the agenda be approved as presented.**

Motion carried.

3. LM Montgomery Elementary Presentation

The Board Chair introduced Principal, Heather Cudmore and invited her to share a few words about her school.

Principal Cudmore welcomed all those in attendance and provided background information to LM Montgomery. Principal Cudmore introduced students Ava Jenkins, Grade 6, Abigail Proctor, Grade 5, and Emma King, Grade 6, who shared their Remembrance Day writings.

The Board Chair expressed her appreciation to Principal Cudmore and the students' writing pieces. During the tour the Board witnessed the colorful artwork of all students which assists in the positive learning environment at LM Montgomery.

4. Minutes of the September 13, 2018 Board of Directors Meeting

11/14/02 **It was moved by Dale Sabean and seconded by Harvey MacEwen that the minutes of the September 13, 2018 Board of Directors Meeting be adopted as presented.**

Motion carried.

5. Director's Report

(The complete Director's Report will be filed with the official minutes).

1. PSB Student Population

The official September 30, 2018 student enrolment for the Public Schools Branch is 19411. There are 161 more students attending one of our 56 schools than there were last year this time. There are more kindergarten students attending classes with 1386 kindergarten students attended PSB classes as opposed to 1249 last year. Grade 9 has the largest population of 1667 students.

2. Additional EAL Staffing

Government approved 25 additional EAL positions in the spring, to be allocated when required recognizing how important it is to have staffing in place in September. At this time, 12.78 of these position have been directed to schools to support EAL students. As of September 19, we had 90 more EAL and FAL students than we did this time last year, which is 1,935 students in 2018 compared to 1,845 in 2017. Some of the notable variances include: Birchwood, 95 students, 11 more than last year; Charlottetown Rural, 150 students, 11 more than last year; Colonel Gray, 302 students , 19 more than last year; Queen Charlotte, 200 students, 34 more than last year; Spring Park, 187 students, 9 more than last year; and West Royalty 101 students, 6 more than last year. We have registered 300 new EAL students into our school system this year.

In addition to these staffing increases, our itinerant model allows us to put resources into schools where students are, and to work directly with small groups of students. These investments, along with the knowledge and experience that has been gained over the years, is allowing us to better support our students.

3. Staffing News

John Cummings began his new role at the Department of Education, Early Learning and Culture in the role of Executive Director of Education Services effective October 17. John continues to be a valued educational leader in his new role as our entire education system now benefits from his experience, talents, and ability, but he is greatly missed here at the PSB where served as the Director of Corporate Services for the past eight years. We wish john success and thank him for the excellent service he provided to the PSB.

We are pleased to announce two new members of our PSB Leadership Team. Erin Johnston and Becky Chassion have recently taken on new roles in the Branch.

Erin Johnston began her new position as the Assistant Director of the Public Schools Branch in late October. Erin has extensive experience as a leader in the PEI public education system. Erin most recently served as the Administrator Support Leader East with the DEELC. Prior to this, Erin held administrative roles at several schools including Prince Street Elementary and St. Louis Elementary Schools.

In her new role as Assistant Director, Erin will collaborate with the PSB Leadership Team to assist with the operations of the PSB. In addition, Erin will support principals with the on-going management of schools and excellence in student achievement. We

are excited that Erin will bring her passion for learning and instructional strengths, and that she continues to be a valued educational leader in her new role.

Becky Chaisson was the successful candidate for the Director of Corporate Services position at the Public Schools Branch. Becky has extensive experience in the PEI public education system, having most recently served as the Financial Services Coordinator, involved with the financial leadership and management of the PSB. In her new role, Becky will collaborate with the Leadership Team to assist with the larger operations of the PSB. In addition, Becky manages the delivery of financial and support services, co-ordinate the data analysis/information systems, and support property services. We are excited that Becky, with her successful track record of serving the PSB, has taken on this new role.

We wish Becky and Erin great success with their new roles in education.

4. Death of a Student

The entire PSB community was shocked and saddened by the death at school on September 14 of Belfast Consolidated grade 5 student Trayton Acton. Trayton was a loved and valued member of the Belfast school community. He died suddenly while participating in the Terry Fox Run, which was an event he loved.

Immediately after his death and for a number of days following, extra counsellors and psychologists were brought into the school to support students and staff one-on-one, and to help guide teachers and parents on how to explain to their young children what happened. The school was closed the day of the funeral.

Our thoughts and deepest sympathy continue to be with Trayton's family, and the students and staff at Belfast Consolidated. We know what a difficult period this has been for the Belfast staff and community. During these saddest and most challenging times, we think of the tremendous responsibility all principals, teachers, support staff, and branch employees hold. Especially during difficult times, we thank everyone for being good to each other and themselves, whenever possible.

5. Bus Safety

On November 1, Dave Gillis and Catherine MacKinnon made a presentation to the Standing Committee on Infrastructure and Energy on the topic of vehicles passing through active flashing school bus red lights. In their presentation that was made at the Assembly Chamber, Cole's Building, it was noted that PSB school bus drivers file approximately 130 reports annually of vehicles passing through blinking red stop lights. As of Oct 31, twenty-four such reports had been filed.

A summary of this report indicated that student safety must be considered a shared responsibility between PSB staff, students and parents, law enforcement, Department of Highway Safety, politicians, community officials, and the travelling public. Effective and ongoing improvements require a co-ordinated, multi-organizational focus on education, awareness, and enforcement. The PSB has committed to continuing its work and advocacy around this subject, particularly in the areas of education and awareness.

6. Late Buses in the Westisle Family of Schools

Students in the Westisle Family are now able to stay after school and still take the bus home, thanks to a pilot project this year, initiated at the request of two Westisle High

School District Advisory Council students. Through funding provided by the Department of Rural Development, two late buses are being provided, two days a week, at a cost of \$18,000 for the school year.

DAC members and school staffs are hoping that students take advantage of the buses because they will see it as a convenient way that allows the opportunity for more students to take part in extracurricular activities like athletics, band, and drama, to enhance their whole learning experience.

Buses pick up students at Westisle High School, as well as Hernewood and M.E. Callaghan intermediate schools and all of the students are dropped off at elementary schools in their home communities. Buses run two days a week.

The Public Schools Branch will be working with schools to get feedback and believe the ridership and the usage of the service will dictate how successful it is and how people view it. There is hope that taking the late bus will catch on quickly.

7. School Closures Due to Weather/Virus

Unusual circumstances led to the closures of some PSB schools twice last month. Strong winds on led to power outages for residents across the Island on Tuesday, October 16 and led to the early closures in several families of schools. Schools in the Westisle and Three Oaks families closed at 12:30 p.m. A power outage in Montague also shut down the Montague family of schools. West Kent Elementary School closed at 1:30 p.m. Power outages provide challenges to learning for many schools in our branch, as water, plumbing, lighting, and heating are effected. At its peak, the windstorm had almost 20,000 Maritime Electric customers without power.

Souris Regional School was closed on Friday, October 26 as custodial staff worked hard to clean and disinfect the school after a nasty norovirus struck the student population on Thursday. All classes were cancelled after close to 100 students and staff in the K-12 school fell ill. The school worked closely with the office of Environmental Health and followed its procedures on how to clean the school. However, due to the school's large size, cleaning efforts were not completed in time for the school to open on Friday. Crews worked through the night Thursday and joined the day crew on Friday to continue the process. The cleaning focused in particular on surfaces that are touched a lot, such as lockers, as well as eating surfaces. Buses serving the school were also cleaned, with handles and seats wiped down. A recommended disinfectant will continue to be used in the school in the short term.

Parents were also asked to keep children out of school until they are symptom-free for at least 48 hours. All nighttime activities were cancelled and the Grant Thornton Intermediate A Girls Provincial Volleyball Championships were moved to Morell. Classes resumed the following Monday.

The PSB is grateful to our cleaning staff, members of the property services department, and our school safety consultant for their efforts. The Branch is also appreciative of parents and students for their understanding and support through these closures.

8. Kindergarten Registration

Kindergarten registration for the 2019-2020 school year will be held during the week of January 7 to 11, 2019. The decision to move the registration week date from November

was made in response to requests from administrators, school staff, and parents to move this date later in the school year. Details have been posted on the PSB website, and principals have shared the information with their school communities. Children must be 5 years old by December 31, 2019 in order to be eligible for Kindergarten. Parents are asked to register their child for the English Kindergarten Program at his/her zoned elementary school during school hours. If parents are unsure of their school zone, they are asked to please call the Stratford Office (902-368-6990) or the Summerside Office (902-888-8400) or toll-free (1-800-280-7965).

A registration form will be completed at the time of registration. Parents are reminded to bring two pieces of information which verify proof of child's age, like their child's Birth Certificate and PEI Health Card. Verification of home address must also be provided, such as current utility bill. Welcome to Kindergarten sessions for incoming students and their parents will be held in the spring of 2019.

9. Strategic Action Plan

Our 2018-2021 Strategic Action Plan determines what our focus will be for the next three years, and is designed with student success as its primary and overarching goal. The Strategic Action Plan outlines the key strategic priority areas that will be the focus of the Branch for the next three years. Four Strategic Pillars have been identified through the consultation process and our key areas of focus are Student Success, Wellness, Communication, and Resources.

The Strategic Action Plan was developed by undertaking an extensive engagement and consultation process with branch based staff, teachers, administrators and the Board of Directors. Staff had the opportunity to provide feedback through several avenues and team activities. The PSB Strategic Action Plan was formally accepted through resolution by the Board of Directors at their Board of Directors Public meeting on June 13, 2018.

Student success is our main purpose and the reason we exist as an organization. It's our ultimate goal. It is important that we put in place the necessary frameworks, initiatives and supports to allow the PSB to grow and perform at its best. We need to regularly take stock of our accomplishments, big and small, build on our strengths and tackle our challenges. We may need to adjust our course along the way, but our focus will remain the same.

Our current and future students are counting on us. This is our commitment to them.

10. Update on Construction Projects

LM Montgomery – Foundation work is complete. The underground piping and trenching is underway and block work has just begun. The block work is a bit behind schedule due to contractor delays from lack of available work force.

Stratford Elementary – Foundation is complete and block is roughly 70% complete. Due to weather issues they are running behind on the block work and hoarding will have to take place which will further slow the process down. Most of the interior ground work has been completed.

Three Oaks Senior High – This project is 86% complete as of the end of October. Interior work is targeted to be complete by end of January 2019 less any deficiencies. Some key milestones that we recently achieved were that the Gymnasium was turned over on October 15th and the cafeteria was turned over on October 30th.

Morell Early Learning Centre – Moving into the new Centre will take place Friday, November 16th. Project is almost complete, final water hookup will be done once tenants vacate the previous Centre.

11. School Visits

School visits by the Director and Assistant Director have begun. The purpose of these visits include visiting classrooms and meeting with students, teachers and administrators, and conducting a brief informal Administrator Career Interview, this year with as many vice-principals as possible. Erin will visit 27 schools and Parker will visit 29 schools twice respectively.

12. Inspire Awards

The Public Schools Branch believes in celebrating the achievements of students, staff, and other valued members of our educational community. We are once again inviting and encouraging the PSB community to help us recognize individuals for the great things they do to help us all experience success and make the PSB a great place to work and learn.

Nominating someone is simple - just take one or two minutes to complete an electronic nomination form on our PSB website. There were over 500 'Inspire' award recipients last year. Anyone can nominate an employee, student, volunteer, parent or community member. The criterion is simple — they just need to inspire others. Nominees will receive of a small PSB recognition package and a note of thanks for contributing to the PSB community. These awards will arrive by school courier and are delivered by school administrators.

Over 100 Inspire Awards have been delivered to date this year, so we are on track to set a record. The caliber of the nominations has been impressive. Many people are doing wonderful things in the PSB and we thank members of our school communities for nominating deserving candidates.

13. Leadership Retreat

An Educational Leaders' Retreat will take place Nov. 26 and Nov. 27 involving principals, vice-principals, school goals chairs, and with DEELC and PSB directors and leaders. Internationally recognized expert, Dr. Thomas Guskey will lead the learning through the sharing of insights on the *Implementation of Mastery Learning for Success* on the Monday, and *Planning & Evaluating Effective Professional Learning* on the Tuesday. The retreat has been planned in collaboration with the PSB, CSLF, PEI Administrators' Association and PEITF and is taking place over two days during a Joint Staff Development Day and replacing a Principals' meeting.

14. Good Things Happening In Island Schools

A Night on the Roof at Mt. Stewart Consolidated

Last year, the Mt. Stewart Consolidated principal and vice-principal made a bet with the students that they would spend a night on the roof of the school if raised over \$7000 in their fundraising campaign. It was a lofty goal, as high as the roof of the school, but the students enthusiastically met it and raised the required funds. Unfortunately, it was not possible to stay on the roof until repairs were completed over the summer. Principal Mary Kendrick and Vice-principal Melissa MacKinnon came good with their promise, though, and on Friday night, September 8, they stayed the night on the school roof after working many hours that week preparing and welcoming staff and students. Equally special about this night was that they didn't actually spend it alone. Many of their

students came and visited them that night after they too had spent their first two busy days back at school. These two school leaders are appreciated by their community and the Branch for their dedication to building relationships with their students and their families. This was just one example of how Mary and Melissa go above and beyond every day for, not only students, but staff at the school as well. They are working hard to maintain a family-like atmosphere at their school and they are an inspiration for their school community.

No Stone Left Alone

Many students from Summerside, Charlottetown, and other communities participated in No Stone Left Alone ceremonies last week at several cemeteries across the Island. Students from Elm Street Elementary, Eliot River Elementary and other schools repeated the action of acknowledging the veteran whose grave they visited and then placing a poppy on it. Holding activities like No Stone Left Alone not only honours veterans, and it also teaches kids about history and civic duty. It is also more interactive than more traditional Remembrance Day ceremonies.

Retired Brig.-Gen. Eric Goodwin, military liaison for the No Stone Left Alone Foundation on PEI said he could not be happier with the results so far. "It's fabulous. Every year on November 11 we look to see how many youth there are in the crowds and the more youth the better. They're the future," he said. Goodwin reached out to Island schools earlier in the year and a number volunteered to participate.

The No Stone Left Alone movement started in Alberta in 2011 when Maureen G. Bianchini-Purvis turned her own family's tradition of placing a poppy on their grandmother's grave before Remembrance Day into an organized effort to do the same for every deceased veteran in Canada.

6. Policy Report

The Board Chair called upon Karen Redmond, Manager Policy and Planning, to present the policy report.

6.1 Proposed Policy - Alcohol and Drugs Policy (PSB - 606)

11/14/03 **It was moved by Dale Sabean and seconded by Harvey MacEwen that the policy be adopted as presented.**

Motion carried.

6.2 Proposed Policy – Harassment in the Workplace Interim Policy (PSB - 505) (replaces ESD and WSB)

11/14/04 **It was moved by Dale Sabean and seconded by Harvey MacEwen that the policy be adopted as presented.**

Motion carried.

6.3 Proposed Rescission – School Safety Policy - (ESD – ADD)

11/14/05 **It was moved by Harvey MacEwen and seconded by Dale Sabean that the policy be rescinded.**

Motion carried.

6.4 Proposed Rescission - Parent Teacher Conferences Policy (ESD – GCMC)

11/14/06

It was moved by Dale Sabean and seconded by Harvey MacEwen that the policy be rescinded.

Motion carried.

6.5 Proposed Rescission - Band/Instrumental Music Program Policy (ESD – IHAG)

11/14/07

It was moved by Harvey MacEwen and seconded by Dale Sabean that the policy be rescinded.

Motion carried.

6.6 Proposed Rescission - Inclusive Education Policy (ESD – IHBA)

11/14/08

It was moved by Harvey MacEwen and seconded by Dale Sabean that the policy be rescinded.

Motion carried.

It was noted that all information from this policy will be included to create one document in partnership with Student Services. This policy is being rescinded as it does not reflect the current policy.

6.7 Proposed Rescission - Research Requests from External Agencies Policy (ESD – LC)

11/14/09

It was moved by Harvey MacEwen and seconded by Dale Sabean that the policy be rescinded.

Motion carried.

6.8 Proposed Rescission - Research Requests from External Agencies Policy (WSB - #36)

11/14/10

It was moved by Dale Sabean and seconded by Harvey MacEwen that the policy be rescinded.

Motion carried.

7. EAL Presentation

The Board Chair welcomed Janet Perry-Payne, EAL/FAL Program Administrator, to the floor. Janet provided a presentation and update on population growth, immigration and new language learners.

8. Continuum of Support Presentation

Terri MacAdam, Director of Student Services, provided a presentation and discussed continuum of support and developmental stages of students.

9. Financial Update

Becky Chaisson, Director of Finance, provided an overview of the 2018-2019 Forecast and shared that the projected deficit is \$345,951.

10. Charlottetown Area School Review Update

The Board Chair noted that work has continued behind the scenes. The Board of Directors met several times over the past few months since the motion was put forward in September 2018 to address capacity issues at Spring Park Elementary.

The Board Chair thanked the Public Schools Branch staff for providing data for review during this process. Upon review of the 2018 enrolments, Spring Park Elementary continues to gradually increase.

11. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:53 p.m.