

Public Schools Branch
Thirty-First Public Board of Directors Meeting
October 7, 2020

Minutes

The Board of Directors for the Public Schools Branch met on Wednesday, October 7, 2020 in the Stratford Boardroom at the Stratford Town Hall.

Present: Bethany MacLeod, Board Chair
Mary Jane Ready
Norman Beck

Also in Attendance:

Norbert Carpenter, Acting Director of Public Schools Branch
Erin Johnston, Assistant Director of Public Schools Branch
Karen Redmond, Manager of Policy and Planning
Sheri Gauthier, Confidential Board Secretary

1. CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. The Board Chair welcomed those in attendance.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

10/07/01 It was moved by Norman Beck and seconded by Mary Jane Ready that the agenda be approved.

Motion carried.

3. MINUTES OF THE APRIL 1, 2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS SPECIAL MEETING

10/07/02 It was moved by Mary Jane Ready and seconded by Norman Beck that the minutes of the April 1, 2020 Board of Directors Special Meeting be adopted as presented.

Motion carried.

MINUTES OF THE JUNE 29, 2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

10/07/03 It was moved by Norman Beck and seconded by Mary Jane Ready that the minutes of the June 29, 2020 Board of Directors Meeting be adopted as presented.

Motion carried.

MINUTES OF THE JULY 28, 2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS SPECIAL MEETING

10/07/04 It was moved by Mary Jane Ready and seconded by Norman Beck that the minutes of the July 28, 2020 Board of Directors Special Meeting be adopted as presented.

Motion carried.

MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 2, 2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS SPECIAL MEETING

It was moved by Norman Beck and seconded by Mary Jane Ready that the minutes of the September 2, 2020 Board of Directors Special Meeting be adopted as presented.

Motion carried.

3.1 BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Nothing to report at this time.

4. DIRECTORS' REPORT

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

4.1 Thinking of Westisle

Our thoughts and hearts remain with the entire region of West Prince. The recent tragedies have left the school and community reeling. Student Services were on scene supporting staff and students throughout the ordeal. Staff were all dressed in school colors with treats as students returned on Friday. Attendance is now starting to normalize.

4.2 PREPaRE Training

All school counselors, PSB Psychologists and Counseling Consultants were trained in the spring on PREPaRE workshop 2. This workshop trains school staff in the mental health preparation and response to school crises. Last week, all Principals, Directors, some managers and various members of Student Services were trained in PREPaRE workshop 1. This workshop helps schools establish crisis response teams as well as PSB level teams to prepare for the operational side of crises. The workshop focused more on lockdown, safety and evacuation aspects of crises. Four members of Student Services were trained in March in Philadelphia on the complete PREPaRE training and will now lead this work district wide.

4.3 School Start Up

All 56 schools are up and running and things are going very well. Feedback from schools highlight high levels of cooperation and compliance from staff and students regarding COVID-19 protocols. Student and staff attendance rates are very consistent with previous years.

4.4 Operational Plan

Through a collaborative effort of six PSB Principals in July, the PSB Operational Guidelines were drafted and subsequently approved by CPHO. Principals in all schools

then worked with their administrative teams in August to create school specific plans that were reviewed and approved by both the PSB and CPHO. Working with school staff in late August/early September, these plans were flushed out and implemented. There have been a number of changes along the way that have impacted PSB and school based plans, including updated mask guidelines, access to schools, before and after school activities, school sport, use of change rooms, etc. Thank you to the incredible work of school administrative teams and all staff in finding ways to meet the demands of operational plans.

4.5 Cleaning and Safety Protocols and Supplies

Enhanced cleaning protocols that were approved by the Chief Public Health Office are in place at all PSB schools. Additional staff have been allocated to assist with this process. Cleaning products have also been procured that are safe for staff and students to use for additional cleaning and sanitizing of shared materials. PSB staff continue to develop supply chain options and monitor the inventory of PPE, hand sanitizer and cleaning products at schools to ensure there is adequate supplies available.

4.6 Property Services

West Royalty School - mobiles were successfully attached in order to gain additional learning space for September 2020.

4.7 Sub Pilot Project/Staffing General Update

A Memorandum of Understanding has been signed between the TF and PSB to allow the hiring of fix-term itinerant substitute teachers for 2020. We have negotiated the substitute salary plus benefits. The idea is to hire 11 itinerant substitutes (IS) in the next two weeks. The IS will be housed in a host school where the principal can use them as an extra resource but not in a capacity where they couldn't be pulled at any point in the day to be redeployed to another school or assignment. HR is working on a flow chart to support principals on the process for acquiring substitutes. We received 67 applications.

Accomplishments

- hired 70 new cleaners
- additional clerical support in 47 schools
- 89 uncertified substitutes are now available, which includes 60 new uncertified subs
- 372 certified substitutes are now available, which includes 55 new certified substitutes
- negotiated letters of understanding with each of the CUPE locals and TF with regards to staffing and hiring of temporary positions
 - negotiated terms and conditions for itinerant full year substitutes
 - training and development session for certified substitute teachers. We thank Erin Johnston, Tracy Beaulieu, and Dylan Mullally for preparing the agenda and facilitating the sessions, along with Janet Perry-Payne and Karen Redmond.
 - Collaboration with WCB on providing new work opportunities for injured workers

- Work continues on a plan to address Diversity
- Working on a new staff onboarding program
- Working on HR metrics (e.x. Monthly reports on leave, substitute utilizations)

4.8 Transportation

The PSB Transportation department has posted/filled 34 positions between June and September. A further 16 positions were posted on Monday, October 5, 2020. Three new Transportation Supervisors were hired and Dave Gillis assumed the new role of Director of Transportation, Risk Management, and Records Information Management. A PSB Driver Training Program is being developed that will utilize the internal expertise of driver coaches. Four 2020-21 Itinerant Substitute Drivers will be hired to work in full-time assignments to help alleviate the shortage of school bus driver substitutes.

27 new school buses have been distributed to the following areas:

- Four new gasoline buses to Cardigan Depot
- Nine new gasoline buses (incl. 1 wheelchair unit) to Queens County Depot
- Seven new gasoline buses to Slemon Park Depot
- Seven new gasoline buses to Elmsdale Depot

The development of COVID-19 protocols and procedures for school buses were created and implemented in accordance with CPHO recommendations.

A review of all bus routes was completed to identify the potential to reduced or eliminated transfers for COVID-19 cohort management purposes, as well as reduce loads to a target of 2 students/seat; five additional buses were implemented to further assist in transfer/load reduction goals (1 placed in Summerside; 4 in Charlottetown/Stratford). Route reviews are ongoing to ensure efficient & economical use of 261 buses while maintaining safe locations for pick-up, drop-off and reasonable walk distances.

The PSB continues to work to respond to a shortage of substitute drivers. We continue to reach out to former employees and casual drivers to re-enlist as substitute drivers. We are utilizing our social media and government job platforms to encourage new applicants. A newly developed PSB Bus Driver Training Program is being developed to augment the number of candidates provided through JVI and government-funded programs.

Red Light violations continue to occur. Drivers are obliged to document and report all such incidents to police. We are assisting drivers with training on how best to mitigate the risk, and to prepare drivers for court appearances should they be called as a witness or as a complainant.

4.9 PSB Staffing Announcements

We are pleased to announce that Regan MacLellan will be joining the PSB as a Property Services Supervisor in a temporary position until March 31, 2021. Regan is familiar with our system as he has been working on capital projects for education as a project

leader/manager with the Department of Transportation, Infrastructure and Energy where he has been employed for over 11 years. Regan joined our team on October 5, 2020.

We are pleased to announce that Sparrow McGowan will be joining the PSB as our Senior Communications Officer reporting to the Director's office. Sparrow brings a wealth of experience in the areas of communications and journalism. Sparrow will be working out of the Stratford office and will begin her tenure October 8, 2020.

4.10 Good Things Happening in Island Schools

School Food Project - Over 10,000 students have signed up for the program.

Terry Fox Events- Many schools held very successful Terry Fox events last week.

Schools Sports- We have worked with the PEISAA to launch our fall sports program.

Field Trips- Students have been participating in curriculum related trips throughout the school day.

Jaya's Magic Wheelchair- We have been collaborating with local author, Marlene Bryenton regarding getting hundreds of free books out to children in both English and French.

Diversity Day at Birchwood -On Wednesday September 16th, Birchwood Intermediate hosted a virtual diversity day where speakers presented on the topics of racism, diversity and healthy relationships. Presenters included: Lonnie States, Darell Glenn, Tim Keizer, Kara Stewart, Andrew and Hanniah Fong, and Joel Ward.

5. PSB COVID RESPONSE PLAN

Karen Redmond, Manager of Policy and Planning, provided an update on the PSB COVID Response Plan.

6. POLICY REPORT

6.1 PROPOSED POLICY – 505 RESPECTFUL WORKPLACE POLICY

10/07/06

It was moved by Mary Jane Ready and seconded by Norman Beck that the policy be approved as presented.

Motion carried.

6.2 PROPOSED RESCISSION - ESD - EE RENTAL OF TRANSPORTATION VEHICLES POLICY, JUNE 26, 2008

10/07/07

It was moved by Norman Beck and seconded by Mary Jane Ready that the policy be rescinded.

Motion carried.

6.3 PROPOSED RESCISSION - WSB - 14 TRESPASS TO PROPERTY POLICY, MARCH 26, 1998

10/07/08 It was moved by Mary Jane Ready and seconded by Norman Beck that the policy be rescinded.

Motion carried.

6.4 PROPOSED RESCISSION - WSB - 17 STUDENT ACCESS POLICY

10/07/09 It was moved by Norman Beck and seconded by Mary Jane Ready that the policy be rescinded.

Motion carried.

6.5 PROPOSED RESCISSION - WSB - 22 SECURITY CAMERAS POLICY, JUNE 2005

10/07/10 It was moved by Mary Jane Ready and seconded by Norman Beck that the policy be rescinded.

Motion carried.

6.6 PROPOSED RESCISSION - WSB - 33 SCHOOL FUNDRAISING POLICY, NOVEMBER 17, 2010

10/07/11 It was moved by Norman Beck and seconded by Mary Jane Ready that the policy be rescinded.

Motion carried.

7. PSB BOARD OF DIRECTORS SCHOOL TOUR UPDATE

Norman Beck and Mary Jane Ready are conducting school tours throughout all 56 PSB schools. Norman and Mary Jane provided an update to their recent school tours and noted that they are scheduled to visit four schools per day. Both Director's noted that the visits have been beneficial to gaining a better understanding of each individual school.

Chair MacLeod thanked all PSB staff for their hard work with the 2020-2021 school start up and noted that it was a smooth transition and staff worked hard to bring students back to school safely.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

No new business at this time.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.