

**Public Schools Branch**  
Thirty-Third Public Board of Directors Meeting  
February 10, 2021

Minutes

The Board of Directors for the Public Schools Branch met on Wednesday, February 10, 2021 virtually via Webex.

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  
Becky Chaisson, Director of Corporate Services  
Dave Gillis, Director of Transportation, Risk Management and RIM  
Karen Redmond, Manager of Policy and Planning  
Terri MacAdam, Director of Student Services  
Sheri Gauthier, Confidential Board Secretary  
Sparrow McGowan, Senior Communications Officer  
Carolyn Duguay Johnston, Student Services Research Consultant  
Sean Cain, IT/Data Consultant

**1. CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME**

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 p.m. Board Chair MacLeod welcomed all in attendance.

**2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

02/10/01 It was moved by Mary Jane Ready and seconded by Norman Beck that the agenda be approved. Motion carried.

**3. MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 10, 2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

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

**3.1 BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

No business to report at this time.

**4. ACTING DIRECTORS' REPORT**

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

Acting Director, Norbert Carpenter shared the following report.

## **Director/Assistant Director**

### **COVID-19 Update**

Schools continue to benefit from the effective strategies implemented by the Chief Public Health Office (CPHO). We have officially surpassed the halfway point of the school year and in-class learning has continued with only a two week migration to remote learning for three of our high schools in December. Individual schools continue to work with operational plans and make adjustments where necessary. Leadership at the Public Schools Branch (PSB) has met several times to analyze and revamp our COVID-19 response following the one positive case at Charlottetown Rural High School. Collaboration amongst the PSB, the Department of Education and Lifelong Learning (DELL) and the CPHO continues.

**School Operational Plans** - Throughout the month of January, all 56 plans have been reviewed by school administrative teams, including collaborative conversations with school staffs' around any changes or edits.

**March Parent Teacher Interviews** - In consultation with the DELL and CPHO, in-person PT interviews will proceed for K-9 schools in a similar fashion to November.

**PowerSchool** - An implementation team has been working hard to plan and prepare for the change from Trevlac/SAS to PowerSchool for the fall of 2021. This will mark a complete overall of the student information system.

**Respectful Workplace Policy** - Principals will be reviewing the Respectful Workplace policy with their staffs' during the months of January and February.

**Community Use of Facilities** - Schools are available for community groups to access at the schools discretion.

**Before and After School Activities** - Programs in schools are alive and well. Basketball continues with success, music programs are ongoing, clubs and groups are occurring. A high school debating competition, drama festival and band days are all being planned in accordance with PSB and CPHO guidelines.

**Family Literacy Day** - Many schools celebrated Family Literacy Day on January 27th with a variety of activities.

**Winter Wellness Day** - First annual Winter Wellness Day was celebrated on January 29th. Many schools spent lots of fun time outdoors.

### **Student Services**

The student services department is happy to welcome Sandra Jay to our senior management team. Sandra joined the team last month in the position of Student Services Manager.

We have been successful in lobbying for an addition to our complement of school counsellors. Thirteen new positions have been added. Much of this has translated into

percentage increases for individual schools. Twenty-one schools saw increases to their counseling allotment.

Work continues on our Inclusion Model research.

### **Human Resources/Policy and Planning**

Human Resources has been working with various divisions at the Public Service Commission regarding recruitment and training/development opportunities for new employees. This also includes collaboration with Skills PEI, Post-secondary Institutions, Immigration and other stakeholders.

The Itinerant sub model for teachers and bus drivers has been working well.

### **Policy and Planning Projects Highlights**

**Respectful Workplace Support Document** - After the Board of Directors approved the Respectful Workplace policy, the Branch started work on a support document to further assist employees.

**Student Investigation and Search Policy** - Public consultation is currently underway on the Student Investigation and Search policy which concludes the end of this month. Feedback will be considered before it is approved.

**Gender Diversity Guidelines** - The PSB has been following the Alberta Gender Diversity Guidelines for some time and is currently collaborating with other partners to develop PEI specific guidelines.

**Telework Procedures** - Work is almost complete on the PSB's Telework procedures. The procedures will provide a formal framework for this type of working arrangement.

**Criminal Record Checks/Vulnerable Sector Checks** - Policy documents are being revised to ensure the request for potential employees or volunteers to provide a vulnerable sector check meets the issuing criteria under the *Criminal Records Act*.

**Non-medical Mask Procedure** - The Non-medical Mask procedure is being reviewed to determine if any changes are needed.

### **Corporate Services**

**Finance** - We are pleased to announce that we have hired a new Accounting Supervisor, Kim MacArthur. Kim comes to us with many years of experience in the Accounting field and we look forward to having her on our team. We are quickly approaching the fiscal year end of March 31, 2021 so we are working with schools to manage their budgets accordingly. This fiscal year has been a different one so the team is working hard to prepare for the year end work that is required.

**Payroll** - The payroll team continues to provide payroll services to our employees. This year is a different year with many casual and temporary employees which is something that the team continues to support.

**Safety Services** - We were fortunate to be able to hire an additional safety officer, Angie MacCaul who will be working with the current team to provide additional support and services to the system. There is significant work being done on the safety program, including the training and education for staff. Safety of our staff and students is a priority and this work is important for all levels of the PSB to participate in.

**Property Services** - The property services team has been very busy with all the requests and needs of the buildings. In addition to the regular day to day items, maintenance staff are working on many special projects and capital requests. Some of these include water bottle filling stations installations, locker repairs, lighting upgrades, bathroom upgrades and instructional room upgrades or relocations. The team is also involved in the planning committees for the five major construction projects that are currently being worked on including West Royalty Elementary, Eliot River Elementary, Montague Consolidated, Sherwood Elementary and Stratford School. PSB staff will play a large role in these five projects that will be ongoing for the next 3-5 years.

**Transportation**

Transportation Services is pleased to report that our inaugural PSB School Bus Driver Training course was completed last week. Our initial cohort of driver trainees took their school bus driver’s test at the Department of Highway Safety, and “all passed with flying colors”. This result speaks volumes to the dedication and effort of our transportation team in the development of curriculum and materials, the delivery and presentation of the program, and the overall preparation of these drivers to enter our fold as qualified and competent school bus drivers!

Additional courses are expected to be required and delivered in the future, as 174 of our 256 regular school bus drivers are eligible to retire within the next five years.

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Finally a huge thank you to all our staff and students for their continued work and dedication throughout the first half of the school year. Please remember to follow us on our social media accounts: Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. We are using these platforms more consistently to keep the public updated.

**5. INVOICE APPROVAL**

02/10/03

**It was moved by Mary Jane Ready and seconded by Norman Beck that invoice #323347 dated February 8, 2021 in the amount of \$121,661.95 for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) supplies be approved as presented. Motion carried.**

**6. INCLUSION PRESENTATION**

Carolyn Duguay Johnston, Student Services Research Consultant, provided a presentation and update on work regarding the inclusion project.

**7. POWERSCHOOL UPDATE**

Sean Cain, IT/Data Consultant, provided an update on PowerSchool.

**8. SCHOOL BUS DRIVER TRAINING**

Dave Gillis, Director of Transportation, Risk Management and RIM, provided an update to the recent school bus driver training program. The PSB was seeing a shortage in substitute bus drivers and proceeded to develop their own school bus driver training program. The first cohort finished the driver training course the week of February 1<sup>st</sup> and are all working as substitute drivers.

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.